

LEADERSHIP SECRETS OF DAVID O. OYEDEPO

*...the secrets
of men
are in their
stories*



MORACK AKIN-DAVID



*...the secrets
of men
are in their
stories*



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CLOUD OF WITNESSES

This book truly chronicles the leadership peculiarity of a course mate, friend and fellow brother in the faith. I feel that the puzzles and amazement of what I saw in him during our school days as students of architecture, has at the minimum become evident as seen in Canaan Land and the establishment of Covenant University (CU), a firstclassprivateUniversityinNigeria.Isayatminimum becauseonlyGodknowswhereHeisyettakingmyfriend

and Bishop to, who remains a wonder to me. He is in a few words an enigma to the glory of God.

Dr. Johnson Adefila

Pastor and Coordinator,

*The Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG), Family Praise Chapel,
Atlanta Georgia , USA.*

May I congratulate you for this text in your hands. This book is not about a person, but about a proven way God can turn a person that allows Him into an institution for all to see. Morack Akin-David by the help of the Holy Spirit has x-rayed such a man- Dr. David O. Oyedepo.

Pastor John Izebere

Associate Pastor, Faith Tabernacle, Ota, Nigeria.

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This is a classic write-up put together by a faithful protégé on a sage, a faith personified personality, a man who lives heaven on earth simply called Dr. David Oyedepo.

Pastor Seyi Elliot

Associate Pastor, Faith Tabernacle, Ota, Nigeria.

Contained in this book that could only have been authored by an ardent follower are the nuggets that have made a global legend and most impactful and dynamic Ministries of Bishop David Oyedepo. Because God is not a respecter of persons, anyone that commits to the virtues of God's servant contained in this book is sure to have a place at the top.

Pastor David Ogedengbe

Regional Pastor, Faith Tabernacle, Ota, Nigeria

This work is a product of years of consistent and genuine followership, properly packaged and well presented. It will truly be a blessing to many generations.

Pastor Abraham John-Oze

Associate pastor, Faith Tabernacle, Ota, Nigeria

This soul-stimulating, energy-renewing, and resultfilled book - *Leadership Secrets of David Oyedepo* lends credence to the fact that those conscious followers like Morack Akin-David, are being transformed as agents of change under the leadership of Dr. David Oyedepo. It is a must-read for every aspiring and forward-looking leader of this generation. Make this book your leadership benchmark!

Dr. Derrick C. Samuels

The Host of “Evening with Dr. Derrick”

President, Derrick Samuels Leadership Institute

Houston, TX, USA

This book is the compilation of the revelation of the 'ultimate secrets' of what makes the beacon of our time, Bishop David Olaniyi Oyedepo, who he is. Most of us under his tutelage in the Commission are exposed to these truthful facts, but Morack Akin-David has brought *Papa's* leadership skills into a broader perspective that inspires the leader in the reader. Kudos, Pastor Mo!

Mrs.Yemisi Lawale

CEO, Zion Estate Limited Surulere, Lagos, Nigeria

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“There are those who know history

There are those who write history

There are those who make history”

Pastor E.A. Adeboye General Overseer, RCCG.

*...At the Sunday thanksgiving Service
commemorating the 25th Anniversary of
Living Faith Church Worldwide,
(a.k.a Winners Chapel International) under
the Leadership of Bishop David O. Oyedepo.
7th May, 2006*

*“We are not achievers; we are only beneficiaries of His grace. A sense of
achievement will normally stir pride but a sense*

of engracement will provoke praise”

David O. Oyedepo

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“I don't need to begin to ask you whether or not you know that Bishop David Oyedepo is a man of influence. You may not like him, you may not agree with him, but you cannot ignore him.”

...At the 60th birthday celebration of Bishop David O. Oyedepo. 27th September, 2014
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“...A time is coming when some of us will be flying in the air, and some will be saying we

*don't know what they are using... let me tell you what I am using:
I am sold out to God.”*

David O. Oyedepo,

*October 4, 1983
When his ministry was yet an infant, barely few months after inauguration*

“If there is anything you can notice in the life of Bishop David Oyedepo, it is that he is a man of focus. He knows where he is going [and] there is nothing you can do to deter him from

reaching where he is going.”

Pastor E.A. Adeboye

...At the 60th birthday celebration of Bishop David O. Oyedepo. 27th September, 2014

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Dedication

T

o all emerging leaders the world over, to all followers of Bishop David Oyedepo around the world, and especially to you, my valued reader.

Acknowledgement

F

oremost, I am indebted to my Pastor and mentor, Bishop David Olaniyi Oyedepo. He offered me the platform to kindle and maximize

my leadership potential. His priceless investment and influence on me has generated this book. This book is a product of many years of tutelage under his shielding umbrella. This book therefore, is my little contribution to the body of

knowledge.

Doubtless, over the years, I have benefitted from the rich resources of many great scholars and leaders: topmost is Dr Myles Munroe, the world renowned potential and personal development advocate. Others are: Bill Newman, the great Australian leadership coach, John

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C. Maxwell, a technocrat in the world of leadership, and a host of others.

My warmest thanks to the team of seasoned assessors and editors, for their thoroughness in the assessment and editing of this book. They patiently paid incisive attention to ensuring that the facts and figures presented in this book truly tally with what obtains. My appreciation goes to Dayo Adeniran (D1). His valuable input in this book will no doubt generate a compelling readership. A big thanks to my friend, and associate, Solomon Okpa, the CEO of *Write-For-Me*, for his unrivaled enthusiasm and optimism over this book.

I appreciate Deacon Jimi Ademosu, former Chairman, Deacons Assembly of Faith Tabernacle, Canaan Land, Ota. His injection of ideas has made me wiser and smarter in getting this work done. Many thanks go to my wife, Folakemi, and to my sons, Ireymi and Obayemisi, for their sacrifice and support. They allowed me to go on a two-week retreat to embark on the preliminary stage of the work of this book.

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To all of my students at the Word of Faith Bible Institute (WOFBI) Lagos (especially Yaba Study Center), I say thanks. I remain amazed at the confidence you repose in me as well as your encouraging remarks during and after each session. I really appreciate God for the privilege of service over the years. I acknowledge all of my partners in this kingdom adventure of discoveries. Your names are too numerous to be enumerated, yet one thing is certain; you will always remain part of my success story.

To you all I say a million thanks.

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Preface

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his book is a product of many years of painstaking examination conducted on the lifestyle of a revered personality, a pragmatic

leader, and a mentor of peerless pedigree, Dr. David Olaniyi Oyedepo. I enrolled in David Oyedepo's school of thought in 1996, focusing on his exceptional leadership and entrepreneurial expertise. Sometime in 2004, I began to pay meticulous attention to all of his speeches and sermons, especially his personal stories. Aside the books of great writers in our contemporary world, the major raw material explored in packaging this book is my various jottings of over a decade under the direct teachings of this dynamic scholar and spiritual leader.

The reality of writing this book began to dawn on me when a new set of pastors were ordained by the laying on of hands by

Bishop David Oyedepo in February, 2009. I was one of them. From that moment, every Sunday through the year 2009 and a portion of 2010, we were under his direct tutelage: a special weekly leadership empowerment session. At that time, he revealed to us some hidden leadership secrets which had propelled him to become a global wonder. One Sunday afternoon, as he was recalling his Christian days as a youth, he paused and gave his reason for revealing such vital secrets to us, "Because I know some of you are writers," he said, putting us in the right perspective ahead of time. To me it did not sound like anything casual as some probably might have taken it. Right there I knew it was time to expedite action on my dream of writing about him.

This book therefore is the perspective of a curious close observer who for close to two decades has repeatedly heard from the "horse's mouth", facts and figures. This book is packaged to arouse and enhance your leadership potentials and possibility. It is put together to show you how to, without stress, become an outstanding and pragmatic leader by simply following the path charted by a tested, proven and approved pathfinder, the man of God, David Oyedepo.

Indeed, the hallmark of true leadership is the willingness and ability of the leader to rise up to the responsibility and challenge of personal example. According to the school of thought of the renowned legendary author and

professor of Literature, Chinua Achebe:

"Leadership is a sacred trust like priesthood in civilized, humane religion. No one gets into it lightly or unadvisedly. Because it demands qualities of mind and discipline of body and will far beyond the needs of the ordinary citizen. Any one who offers himself or herself or is offered to society for leadership must be aware of the unusually high demands of the roles and should, if in doubt whatsoever, firmly refuse the prompting".

Generally, it is rare to find deposited in a single entity, almost all the known vital leadership and entrepreneurial attributes. But by divine election, one man is found in the continent of Africa,

whose notable leadership, entrepreneurial and intercontinental impact has generated ripples of amazement in our contemporary world. This sage is a man that typifies almost all known irrefutable qualities of a leader, championing chains of trans-generational organizational entities under a harsh economic and socio-political climate with such unconquerable tenacity and high tension will-power.

It is therefore with great excitement that I invite you to come along with me on an expository and extraordinary adventure as we unveil the secrets behind the unbeatable global exploits of a bundle of Godly wisdom and reservoir of innovation and creativity. He is Dr. David O. Oyedepo.

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“If a man writes a better book, preaches a better sermon, or makes a better mouse-trap than his neighbor, tho' he builds his house in the woods, the world will make a beaten path to his

door”

Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803 - 1882) U.S. poet and essayist

is commanded!”

David O. Oyedepo

SPIRITUALITY

“It is your level of

David O. Oyedepo.

S

pirituality can be defined as having an ongoing, progressive personal relationship with God. David Oyedepo's life exemplifies spirituality. It

all began when he took a decision as a boy of 15 to accept Jesus Christ as his Lord and personal Savior. At 22, after reading the book, *The Man God Uses* by Oswald J. Smith, an awesome affection for God and His kingdom grew in his heart and since that time he had been sold out to God in his dedication and commitment. Through the book, the Lord expanded his understanding of the scripture in the book of Matthew 6:33 and from the pages of the scripture the Lord spoke to him: *“Seek ye first my kingdom, and all those things that others are dying to get shall be added unto you.”* That encounter has been the force that has powered his unrepentant affection towards God, resulting in monumental accomplishment in his Ministry. He always refers to that encounter as the

jackpot of destiny fondly coded as “Code 633.”

At the age of 23, David was on a mountain in a solitary place, searching and researching on the book of Ezekiel; and on the third day he heard the Lord say: “I have touched your tongue with a coal of fire and from today as you say it, you will see it”.

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“The goal of spirituality”, according to Father Martin Pable, is “growth in our relationship with God. This assumes that we already have a relationship with God. The task is to develop and deepen it, much like any other relationship. To do so requires spiritual discipline, such as Scripture reading and personal prayer”. It is good to sound an alert that spirituality here differs from religiosity. Religiosity is the general term used to refer to the numerous aspects of religious activity. Spirituality is not religion. Religion is man's frantic effort (using various avenues) to access God, but spirituality borders on personal relationship with God. It is not all about being morally upright or simply being nice or generous to others. Father Martin Pable posits that spirituality is not exclusively about the “practices such as praying, attending Mass, going to confession, helping neighbors. None of this is wrong, of course, but it does not get to the heart of spirituality.”

This is factual, after all, it is not impossible to succeed in doing all of the above for the wrong reasons: to avoid going to hell, to feel good about oneself or just to impress one's neighbor. Spirituality is simply a personal relationship and a one-on-one communication with God. Spirituality sets the platform for speaking directly to God and hearing directly from God. This is the highest point of spirituality.

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David Oyedepo's exercise of spiritual supremacy over the devil began right from his father's house, when as a boy he called for a family meeting. Every member of the family gathered, thinking it was David's father that had called the meeting; only to realize that it was David who had masterminded it. Then David, virtually the shortest amongst them, stood and confidently released his bombshell: “I have been told of all the things you have been doing in this family in the name of witchcraft,” he opened up as every eye focused on him, wondering what sort of effrontery he had. Then he gave them the shocker, “From today,” he raised his

voice the best he could. "If I hear of such again, then know that someone more than you is here! His name is Jesus Christ!" the meeting closed, no comment, no question! Everybody left the meeting wondering what would become of this audacious boy in future.

David, by revelation through the bible and books written by seasoned and anointed men of God, knew that he was never at the same level as the devil and all his agents and agencies. According to the book of Ephesians, he is indeed far *above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come*[1:21]

Spirituality is also walking in the light of the scripture to command your expectation (or desire). Spirituality is

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nurturing one's conscience within the framework of God's word. It is a booster, the promoter and catalyst of life and destiny. David Oyedepo said, "Spirituality is not a thing wished, it is a thing worked out." True Christianity can only operate on the platform of spirituality. Your spiritual connectivity is a vital security channel for the prosperity of your destiny. Carnality has no place in a spiritual environment. What is carnality? The word "carnal" comes from a Greek word that means having the nature of the flesh. Another way of expressing it is to be controlled by the senses or governed by human nature. It can also be described simply as worldly or worldliness.

In other words, when one is said not to be spiritual, then one is carnal. Paul, in his epistle to the Roman Christians wrote, "For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace" [8:6]. Carnality is the direct opposite of spirituality. Spirituality is the only environment in which any man can access God. Spirituality is an act of devotion to the Supreme Being, the Creator. Spirituality is worshiping God through such platforms as prayer and fasting, paying attention to the Word of God and undiluted intimacy with the Person of the Holy Spirit. The boundless advantage of spirituality cannot be overstated as reflected in the life and Ministry of David Oyedepo. They are as follows:

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1. ACCESS TO THE SUPERNATURAL

The depth of a man's spirituality determines the extent of his access to the

supernatural, and the extent of his access to the supernatural largely determines the degree of his supremacy in the spirit realm. The illumination David caught from the account of Smith Wigglesworth when he was 25 years old, from a book authored by Stanley Frodsham triggered his spiritual superiority mentality over the devil. He confessed; “By the light of heaven I took a flight above all devils... I was looking for any devil to kill”. He emphatically posits that every demon strolling the street of humanity is an illegal immigrant, and that the kingdom police force (born again Christians) is licensed to arrest them and cast them in jail where they belong. Several times through his platform, he has unequivocally, unapologetically and confidently challenged and confronted all identifiable satanic operators, collaborators and sponsors in Nigeria in particular, and the coast of Africa in general, raining irrevocable curses and prophecies against them.

His aggressive campaign does not spare every political figure responsible for the African political and socioeconomic decadence; including every leader that brought Africa and Nigeria in particular, to the present

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state of degradation and deprivation. For example, a callous military dictator once ruled Nigeria in the 1990s who subjected Nigerians to moral and mental incarceration and rigour. David Oyedepo got aroused during one early morning service and decreed divine judgment against him. Not too long after, the oppressor died so cheaply, keeping the average Nigerian spellbound. Also, sometimes ago, Gadhafi of Libya was in Nigeria and made a statement the man of God considered blasphemous as well as inimical to the sovereign integrity of Nigeria. The man of fearless spirit got aroused and again placed on him an inescapable verdict that would end his era. Not too long after, crisis began in Libya and Gadhafi's life was unexpectedly terminated.

The man David Oyedepo is the only protégé of Benson Idahosa (of blessed memory) that does it the way Idahosa would when he was alive, ruthlessly tormenting the kingdom of darkness with the scintillating edges of the sword of the Spirit. Once during his sermon in Faith Tabernacle, he made it clear that “Prophets are spiritual territorial commanders, all the forces of Ota knew when a prophet arrived there!” He got to the country of Liberia on July 20, 2009 for a 3-day Empowerment Summit/Crusade in the city of Monrovia. Somehow he was lodged in the same hotel where the “Queen of

Sheba”, a demonic African principality and notorious witch worshipped by many was lodged. All of a sudden, the force of the Spirit began to torment the devil, and he (the devil) was “no longer at ease”. Without notice, the “Queen of Sheba” sneaked out of town unceremoniously! Here is a portion of the report as captured in the media:

“Queen of Sheba is known in that part of Africa as the infamous follower of Lucifer and has for the past 46 years practiced deep and superior Satanism. The queen has been coroneted with blood on three different occasions, and has been enthroned as the matriarch or the Sovereign Imperial Empress of a special cult called the African Nubian Nation. Her arrival at the invitation of certain groups and traditional leaders in Liberia had raised concern in some Christian quarters. David Oyedepo had made a declaration in one of the evening crusades; “cast the devil out of Liberia for prosperity.” Immediately the Bishop stepped on the hotel ground, the “Queen of Sheba” packed out of the hotel without the hotel authorities knowing, en route the airport.” (*Liberian National newspaper, National Chronicles of Friday, July 24, 2009*).

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David Oyedepo declared: “Witches and wizards are mere spiritual insects. When you speak in tongues (spiritual utterances), you are throwing spiritual insecticide which they cannot stand, resist or survive.”

The supernatural acts in his life and Ministry manifest in various ways. For instance, during one of the annual 21-day prayer and fasting programmes in one of the Winners' Chapel International Zonal viewing Centers in Lagos, the technical crew was fixing the satellite dish in preparation for a live broadcast from Faith Tabernacle, Canaan Land, Ota (the International headquarters of Winners' Chapel International). Then as a member of the crew climbed up to set the dish at the required angle, he broke the roof of a man's fish pond. Then he went to the man to report, to apologize and to offer to repair the broken roof. The man asked, “Which Church do you belong to?” And the young man told him, “Winners' Chapel Sir.” The man adjusted himself and said, “You mean Bishop David Oyedepo's Church?” The young man answered in the affirmative. The man began to express his unreserved respect for David Oyedepo, and among other things he said, “I don't go on any journey without holding at least one of his books. That is one Pastor that I respect when it comes to the understanding of

operations in the supernatural!”

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The man was later identified as a high ranking member of a non-Christian religion called the Grail Movement. It will suffice to say that the broken roof matter ended naturally there. Certainly, the man did not give such expression to impress or make anyone feel good. This is a clear validation of David Oyedepo's spiritual integrity. Truly, the depth of a man's spirituality determines his rating in the supernatural realm.

2. SPIRITUAL SENSITIVITY

The degree of your sensitivity is a function of your level of spirituality. David Oyedepo's heart has always been beating for God from boyhood. God spoke to him at the age of 27 to look for a quiet place so He could expose to him His agenda for his life. David was about to be told his area of core relevance to humanity. In swift response his area of core relevance to humanity. In swift response hour long experience with God. His great empire of multifaceted institutions as witnessed today came as a result of that 18-hour long encounter. It is your level of connectivity that determines your level of spirituality and your level of spirituality determines the degree of your sensitivity. And once you have gotten that rare but freely-given connection to God, you would acquire an unerring roadmap that can lead you to your own “treasure-island”.

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In the early days of his Ministry, David Oyedepo was sensitive enough to notice in the course of his sermon, the countenance of a church member who was downcast, and after that evening service he instructed that the entire offering collected should be packaged and given to the member. That is the power of sacrifice and inspirational example that earns its own many happy returns on the investment you have put into other people's happiness. A person who sows these seeds of kindness enjoys a perpetual harvest. In order to follow God and act not on impulse, but on His unfailing prompting, do not just do it, do it right. Be Spiritually sensitive enough to be on the wavelength of God, the originator of destiny-changing signals to His chosen winners!

According to David Oyedepo our struggle is simply due to lack of access to the voice of the Lord, so we swim against the tide most of the time. Spirituality is the only

platform for fulfilling any divine assignment. The undoing of many destinies is in the area of not seeing or hearing ahead. It ends a destiny in a world of denial, hindrances, frustration and disappointment. Where people find themselves tomorrow is a function of what they learn, what they hear, what they see and who shows them. The fact that an idea sounds right does not make it right most of the time. A man's idea cannot deliver God's ideals. Nobody can deliver divine assignments on the platform of carnality. Carnality may land a man in [moral] calamity. Divine

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sensitivity is the antidote to human presumptions. Insensitivity is the bane of humanity, which often sets the pace for a comedy of tragic errors that plays out in our world today every ticking second leading to disastrous consequences.

3. ACCESS TO DIVINE DIRECTION

“O LORD, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps.” Jeremiah 10:23.

It is a proven assertion that the whole world steps aside to let him pass, who knows where he is going. The greatest thing in the world is not, however, so much about where we are going, but in what direction we are moving. To get your bearing right in the journey of life, you must position yourself to the right spiritual frequency to pick the unfailing directives from God, which is forever right on course. This requires ultra-sensitivity to spiritual vibrations and signals from Heaven.

Spirituality enhances your sense of direction. Vision tells and shows you what to do but direction shows you how to go about it. It is good to understand that the building block of spirituality is the Word access and the ministry of prayer and fasting. It is not enough to make sure you're on the right track; you must also make sure

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you're going in the right direction. He who takes a wrong direction has a long road ahead. It is however comforting that the steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord. Direction is a product of spirituality. David Oyedepo will always enthuse, “we get things done easily and worry-free because we do not engage in

anything except it is commanded”.

The greatest craving of humanity is the ability to pick every signal that matters in our quest for advancement. Until a man is supernaturally enabled to pick divine voice, divine direction remains mere daydreaming. In 1989 at Kaduna, where Living Faith Church (Winners' Chapel) began, the time came to move out of a rented facility. A new property of about 150 acres had been bought, and development had begun. Not less than 180 pillars had been erected from the depth beneath. But suddenly, David Oyedepo heard the voice of the Lord so audibly that he could not pretend not to have heard: “*Should the church move to that place, it will be the end of the Ministry,*” the voice warned. That was the last time he stepped on that property, the investment notwithstanding, all in total surrender to divine direction. It is not everyone that can pick such signals in the midst of excitement to move from rented to owned property, particularly considering the enthusiasm and the huge investment that had gone into such a major

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project. Indeed, a good degree of spirituality will always engender a good sense of direction.

David, in 1983 was reading a Christian magazine called “The New Wine”. As he was engrossed and fascinated by the content of the magazine, another instruction was issued to him from the Lord, saying: *The word I put into your mouth, commit it into writing and I will put the same unction on the spoken word to rest on the written word.* That was the divine directive that gave birth to Dominion Publishing House (DPH). The first two books: The Law of Faith and Miracle Seed were published in 1985. Now DPH has published over 60 titles till date on an industrial scale, with state of the art equipment and with updated technology. DPH stands out as a Ministry that runs independently within the Ministry, a most flourishing production line of best-seller titles that have continued to enrich dreams, transform lives, educate minds and inspire souls, setting new gold standards on how millions can achieve their manifest destiny long denied them through ignorance, satanic manipulations, household enemies or all of the above acting in harmony.

Knowing the sound of God's voice is the best thing that can ever happen to any man on earth, such a man can never be misguided. The Psalmist says it all in the book of Psalms; “Blessed is the people that know the joyful

sound, they shall walk O Lord in the light of your countenance” [89:15]. One fateful Saturday, in the month of March 1996, during a series of seminars, he got the directive from the Lord: *“It is time to get the aircraft”*. According to him, it was not premeditated, it was not in the plan and budget for that moment but he picked the directive. The same day, he mounted the pulpit and announced just the same way he had heard: *“It is time to get our aircraft”*. There and then, an offering was raised for it just once, as if it was for the purchase of a bicycle. Yet, in December that same year, the plane was delivered debt-free, stress-free and worry-free.

When his Church was to move from the 3,000 capacity auditorium to a bigger place, David Oyedepo was taken to the proposed site, far away from the town, a forest situated on the outskirts of Ota town in Ogun State, Nigeria. After what seemed like an endless journey, the team got to a place that could best be described as a forest of a thousand demons. His first reaction was that of repulsion. As far as he was concerned, it did not make sense at all to go that far away from where people resided and where the church could be accessed much easier in Lagos. Nevertheless, as he lifted his voice to lead a prayer of thanksgiving for safe arrival at the faraway jungle, the voice of the Lord banged the door of his heart, issuing the directive, saying: *This is the place!*

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Now the same forest that once accommodated dreaded demonic spirits, now accommodates the International Headquarters of David Oyedepo Ministries International, a well over 5,000 acre complex which contains the 50,000 capacity auditorium (the largest church auditorium in the world), where 4 services take place in succession every Sunday, with an average attendance of over 40,000 worshippers per service. It also accommodates the educational arm of the Ministry, including Covenant University (CU), Faith Academy Secondary School, Covenant University Day Secondary School and Kingdom Heritage Primary School. Also there are financial institutions, a gas station, table and sachet water factory, restaurants, groceries, modern bookshop outlets, an automobile shop, a woodwork shop, guest houses and a host of others. Indeed, the noiseless enlargement of Canaan land territory is boundless. All because someone listened and obeyed a divine directive. Certainly, there is an inseparable connection between divine direction and spiritual sensitivity. Divine

direction is impossible without spiritual sensitivity. It is the prime tool with which to pick any signal from God with respect to what next to do.

4. ACCESS TO REVELATION

Revelation is a spiritual connection to the mind of God with regard to His agenda towards humanity in a particular dispensation. According to David Oyedepo,

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the quest for revelation is a life-long quest for everyone who desires to see a glorious destiny. At 23, he was meditating on the book of Jeremiah. Then his eyes suddenly got glued to Jeremiah 29:11 which reads: “For I know the plan that I have towards you, the plan of welfare and not of evil to give you a hope and a future” (RSV). From that time he knew that his glorious future was guaranteed. To prove this, according to him, he bought 400 postcards to share his new discovery with his friends. He wrote on each postcard this short message: “Your future is not in your plan, it is in His plan.” Then he posted them to 400 people, his friends. He always look at for whom to share every new revelation with.

In 1984, when the membership of his church was still few, David Oyedepo refused to take it casually despite the fact that the church had kicked off barely five months earlier. He inquired of the Lord in a 3-day prayer and fasting “Why is this church not growing?” Then the Lord opened his eyes and revealed to him a thick layer of darkness upon the church. And the Lord told him: “That is the blindfolding weapon of the devil that misrepresents what I am doing in this church.” Immediately, he challenged the satanic manipulation in the name of Jesus! And off the layer of darkness rolled away as when one 'folds a mat' off the church. That is the power of revelation!.

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When a man is spiritually inclined, his access to revelation cannot be blocked by any resistance. In 1982, at the age of 28, David Oyedepo saw a flying wing by revelation, and as he watched with unusual attention, he heard the voice of the Lord: “*That is an aircraft, and that is you inside bearing the everlasting gospel of Jesus Christ around the world.*” That revelation came to reality in the year 1996, when at the age of 42; David took delivery of the first aircraft purchased

by his Ministry, debt-free. The revelation of how to run a stress-free and debt-free organization was exposed to him on October 4, 1981 when he was pondering on the Word of God. When he saw what God was saying in Deuteronomy: "...But thou shall not borrow, because a borrower is a servant to the lender..." [15:6]. Right there, David vowed: "Lord, I shall never borrow even if I have to go hungry".

David Oyedepo is sitting on a multi-million dollar, multi-national institution, and operates a debt-free and stress-free platform of divine supply. He had several times and openly challenged any individual or organization who may want to claim to have lent him money at any point in time under any circumstances. None has ever appeared. It is a policy in his organization that borrowing from any source to power any project will be considered a total violation of God's prescription known as: the borrower is subject to the lender. David

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Oyedepo believes that: "When God gives a vision, He makes the provision to accomplish it. [Hence] anything that God will not do let it remain undone." Revelation is what empowers true Christianity. Revelation makes Christianity prosperous and excitingly adventurous.

5. GRACE OF PATIENCE

Patience is a priceless virtue that involves a lot of waiting, but its weight in gold is assured at the end of the day. We must learn that, like farmers, we can't sow and reap the same day. Patience is one of the fruits of the spirit and it is a vital virtue in the school of spirituality. In 1970, David Oyedepo at the age of 16 attended a conference tagged "God is not Slow" and on that day, he was imparted with the virtue of patience. The scripture reveals in Paul's letter to the saints of Hebrews "But thou have need of patience after which ye shall receive the promise...." [10:36].

He is a man given unto the virtue of patience. This attribute is traceable to his days with his grandmother. According to him, one day, as a young boy, he was about going out with his peers to play. His grandmother called him and told him to sit back. Then she intoned in the local dialect: "*Eniti o joko ko le j'oga* (Whoever refuses to settle down (and get serious) can never gain mastery in anything in life.)" David obeyed his grandmother and

now that obedience is generating the incalculable dividends of mastery to him. Patience is not only how long you wait but what you do, your composure, and comportment while you wait. Stooping to conquer sure carries some charming ring of truth. David Oyedepo was called into ministry in 1981 but was not hasty to launch until after twenty-eight months of intense spiritual preparation. He officially entered ministry in 1983. That's patience.

There was no single typewriter in his ministry in 1982 when it was revealed that a printing press will operate at an industrial scale. The prophecy did not manifest until 1985 and presently fully in operation as the prophecy specified. That's patience. There was no single landed property anywhere for his Ministry when he received a revelation at the age of 28 in 1982, that: "at the base of this ministry, a tent shall be built that would sit 50,000 people". But it came to fulfillment seventeen years later in 1999. That is patience. David was 45 years old when Faith Tabernacle, Canaan Land, an architectural feat that generated global wide amazement, the first of its kind [according to Guinness Book of Records], was dedicated.

There were only six people in a prayer room called "Power House" when David Oyedepo addressed the people saying, "The destiny of this generation has been committed into our hands." Today the entire world is his

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constituency in terms of coverage. Despite all the glorious revelations and prophecies of the Power House in 1982, his Ministry did not take delivery of the first set of musical instrument until December 1986; three years after the church Ministry began. For all these David Oyedepo was never tempted to help God by begging or borrowing. Many contemporary Chief Executive Officers and General Overseers of organizations are debtors to financial houses and servants to lenders today just to attain a desired goal, but David Oyedepo is simply operating on the platform of covenant provisions.

David Oyedepo's patience has been justified, with a rich harvest of world-class monuments, inspirational moments and momentous deeds that have become a daily staple in the trailblazing life of David Oyedepo. The world gladly puts their stock in iconic brands that he has given to the world: "If a man writes a better book, preaches a better sermon, or makes a better mouse-trap than his neighbour,

tho' he builds his house in the woods, the world will make a beaten path to his door” [Ralph Waldo Emerson]. God's promises and covenant will always get delivered to those who dare to wait for him. It is written in the book of Isaiah: “And I will wait upon the Lord, that hides his face from the house of Jacob, and I will look for him.” [8: 17].

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6. HEART OF GRATITUDE

Gratitude is not only the greatest of virtues, but the parent of others - Cicero

Gratitude is an expression of appreciation to a benefactor. Indeed if the only good thing you ever said in your whole life was “thank you”. it would be well sufficient. David Oyedepo is a man full of gratitude to God with regard to all that had been unfolded and delivered to the entire Ministry. He is fully aware that the only way for sustainable prosperity and advancement for any individual and organization is perpetual praise of the giver. The truth is you cannot praise or thank God too much. Too much of every praise and worship to the Lord is wonderful! As it rises to heavenly places, it flings open the windows of Heaven and the inner chamber of the heart of God Almighty so you can have infinite access to His mind and treasures without end!

David Oyedepo is armed with the secret that it is not all who win, that sweat to win. Some, the exclusive club of a select few, enjoy the Grace of Ease, and Ease of Grace in everything they lay their hands on. They succeed beyond the wildest imagination, surpassing the expectations of those who labour but are denied the flavour of Divine favour which only comes from on High! It is praise that puts a man in the realm of triumph

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and ushers him to the presence of the Lord to behold his amazing glory, splendour and awesome majesty incomparable to the greatest splendour on earth! It is praise that puts a man in the realm of triumph. Thanksgiving is the therapy for anxiety and worry. That is why he remained cool, calm and unperturbed when waiting on the Lord for the reality of God's promises according to the revelation and prophecies that had gone ahead of his Ministry. He knows that in waiting there will be no wailing, but hailing about the goodness of the Lord, because in His presence is joy everlasting and at His right hand there is pleasure forevermore. David Oyedepo has the understanding that celebrating the future reality today, the situation notwithstanding, is the key that

unlocks speedy divine manifestation. And praise is that key.

Praise is the appreciation in anticipation of what the future has to offer. The Winners' family has become the perfect signature for the unusual and contagious art of praise to the Lord. Even when David Oyedepo is not really speaking to anyone, one would still hear him say things like: "Praise God, Hallelujah". His friend, Mike Murdock observed this during a visit. In the time they had together, he told him: I have counted 72 times that you said "Praise God... hallelujah... blessed be God.... David is a praise addict. He believes it is continuous

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appreciation of the doings of the Lord that provokes continuous flow of grace. Everyone in Winners' Chapel International has been nurtured in the school of gratitude so much so that it has become the natural attitude of any genuine Winner. Praise is a spiritual habitat for supernatural growth in any system, including personal life, family life, Ministry and any other organization whatsoever. David Oyedepo is a joyful soul full of praise to the Lord and he is forever passing it down to all that come in contact with him, great or small, or in - between, come rain, come shine.

There are indeed souls in the world which have the gift of finding joy everywhere and of leaving and multiplying them when they go. David is the man to beat in this praise and joy department. The good Lord inhabits the .praise and genuine flow of appreciation of His people. The unusual dimension of growth witnessed in his Ministry all around the world where the Ministry is represented was brought to bear on the platform of praise unto the Lord. The Winners family is synonymous with praise; every genuine member is a praise addict. Long ago, during one of the praise sessions in Kaduna Church, a woman was dancing like a "mad person." There was this man very close to her during the same service, a first time worshiper perhaps, who had been watching her. Then at a point the man could not hold it any longer and he

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exclaimed in Pidgin, "*you bi soja?*" meaning, "Are you a soldier?" Well, that was the miracle dance that ended years of barrenness in the woman's life. She made this known in her testimony afterward, when she brought her baby to the altar for dedication.

Crazy things happen under the prophetic cloud of David Oyedepo's Ministry. A woman once told me, "In your Church I know you praise God very well. Though we don't use drums in our Church but whenever I come to your Church, I dance very well." The Winners' family is generally known to be a high praise and "wild" dance affair, generating harvests of unthinkable but undeniable signs and wonders and miracles.

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*And now the hour has
come...*

VISION

"Every vision is without life, it is faith that injects life into a vision. There is no life in every

*good plan; it is action that
injects life into any plan"*

David O. Oyedepo.

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he subject of vision is inevitable for any man that desires a future. Henry Miller said, "Every moment is a golden one for him who has the

vision to recognize it as such." Pastor (Mrs.) Faith Oyedepo once emphatically asserted that "the greatest calamity in human race is for a man not to know where he is going much less how to get there." She termed such predicament as utter confusion. Vision is simply the discovery of potentials. What really is the meaning of the word vision?

There are several ways to define the word vision, without losing sight of the key word. Vision may simply be described as the faculty or state of being able to see. For an organization, the word vision can be described as a statement of foresight towards the objectives and development of the organization. Vision also refers to something observable, most times involving the supernatural power. It involves a mental image often filled with supernatural features. A vision also may have something to do with an individual's or organization's core purpose for existence. Vision is the ability to think or plan about the future with imagination and wisdom. Vision can be used as a principal tool to motivate other people, or workers of an establishment because it always contains compelling and inspiring messages.

Bill Copeland, private investigator and a author once said, “You've removed most of the road blocks to success when you know the difference between motion and direction.” David Oyedepo describes vision as “the unfolding of God's plan or purpose for your life.” At this point it is good we remove the ambiguities that come with the subject of vision. A vision is synonymous with a dream (not the dream that comes when deep sleep falls upon men on the bed). Dream in this context is capturing a picture of the future from the present, what you can see yourself becoming in future. That is what a vision is. Vision is the art of seeing the invisible. To be the best, a trailblazer must not only dare to beat the best, but must be reignited from within to embark on a neverending journey of discovery, recognizing old milestones, while envisioning the future with fresh and original eyes. Bill Newman, a distinguished Australian speaker and writer puts it this way:

“Visionisthekeytounderstandingleadership. Without vision you are just playing games with your life. Men and women with vision see more and further than others. Leaders haveempiresintheirbrains”.

Indeed, right from boyhood, David Oyedepo has been a man of vision, a man that had an empire in his brain in a Brave New World where the empire of ideas now reigns

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supreme. And with such brains that always tick with the well-orchestratedandflawlessSwissChronometer,they've got the uncanny ability to think the unthinkable, do the unimaginableandachievethetheimpossible.Suchvisionaries donotseeanycontradictioninbuildingmagnificentcastles intheair,intherealmof dreams;butaresmartenoughto wake up to the concrete reality of getting the right foundationthatwillmaketheirdreamscometrueandgive their five-star dream well-structured fortification that will helptheedificesstandthetestof time.

David Oyedepo fits perfectly this descriptive definition of leadership. From boyhood he had been carrying in his brain a multi-million dollar empire, that would straddle the world and whose sun would not set because it draws its inspirational and architectural energy from the source: Lord God Almighty. It's what has made everything he has laid his mind, hands and heart on to be

peerless: the first of its kind, from thoughts to finish: a true master class that has continued to draw worldwide welcome, rousing applause and standing ovation.

Winners see daydreaming without concrete action as mere wishful thinking and they know that by the winning combination of well-honed instinct, gut feelings, experience and exposure, we create our future by what we dream today, but even much more than this,

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no dream comes true until you wake up and go to work. However, those who have ever made telltale impact that carries weight and have become gold-standard in their generation know that it makes sound and good sense to dream in Technicolor, while adding a sound effect that will resonate around the world and make a forever statement without saying a word.

Mansions might be made of walls and beams; but a home or place of worship and learning is built with love and dreams. David Oyedepo is a dreamer unlike any other. His own brand of dreaming is so contagious that he has set many others to dreaming and achieving. His dreams made real, keeps flourishing with the speed of thought and have become so charming beyond the singing of it. David had a vision of 50,000-seat-capacity Church auditorium in a forest, with many other mega churches across the nation of Nigeria and the continent of Africa. He had in his brain Covenant University Ota, Landmark University Omu-Aran, many model secondary schools (Faith Academy) and primary schools (Kingdom Heritage School) scattered all over Nigeria. Encapsulated in his dream was a private hanger that would house Dominion Airline someday.

Indeed a life of legacy begins from having a sense of vision. David Oyedepo is really a man of vision,

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propelling him to be the navigator of change and unstoppable roaring driver of innovation. In all his amazing life, he loves to seize the moment of excited curiosity. He goes for feats with his amazing turn of speed to achieve what others consider a mission impossible. That's David, a typical example of a kingdom gladiator; using the cutting-edge of creative thoughts to conquer new frontiers in a world where only the people with ideas reign supreme. From the outset of his life he had an outsized, but God-powered vision, bigger than anyone's disbelief. He believed like the legendary Thomas Edison that if we all

did things we were capable of doing we would literally astound ourselves. He knew from the budding of his life that has now flourished beyond belief and far beyond the singing of it that in order to fulfill his colourful destiny, well-laid by God even before he was formed in his mother's womb, he must be the change he craved to see in the world.

Without doubt, climbing the height of leadership in life is impossible without a sense of vision. It will not be out of context to say that leadership virtue was in-born in David Oyedepo. In the year 2012, during the annual Shiloh event, he told the humorous story of his childhood act of curiosity. As a smart and inquisitive boy of about 12, having been fascinated by the legendary biblical story of Moses, he deliberately visited

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a carpentry shed in his village, and requested he wanted a rod. The carpenter looked at him strangely, captivated by his childhood innocence, he asked: "A rod? What kind of rod, my boy?" David, without wasting a microsecond, replied with unflinching confidence and deep sense of urgency: "Rod of Moses."

The carpenter became much more interested, and he queried again: "Rod of Moses, for what?" The curious child, David answered: "to divide the red sea!" The carpenter laughed hilariously, wondering what manner of a child would this be, conceiving such initiative at such a tender age. Well, the man granted him his request and he watched David as he walked away with excitement mingled with cheerful countenance beaming with apparent satisfaction. But running in the wondering mind of the generous carpenter was just one question: "But what does this child think he's doing?"

Any exemplary life has its root in vision consciousness. It all begins from having a sense of vision and burning balls of fire in the belly. It's what will make the trailblazer shun the paths well-trodden in favour of heading for where there is no path, and ending up leaving a trail others may feel happy to follow. Vision, of the firebrand kind, will ignite one to cue in to this sense of purposeful wanderlust that is however guided by

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divine compass: Simply follow the plans of God, as revealed through diverse spiritual channels, including all the five senses and the sixth sense, which is the

domain of all intuitions. One should also be awake to the truth well told that it is not trespassing when you cross your own boundaries, or the ones that have stood still for almost eternity unchallenged and unexplored.

There is indeed pretty much more to explore in the world around us, the world within and the world above. John D. Rockefeller once said, “The road to happiness lies in two simple principles: find out what interests you and that you can do well; and when you find it, put your whole soul into it; every bit of energy and ambition and natural ability you have.” Step by step, precept by precept, inspiration after inspiration, not to mention perspiration after perspiration, because new discoveries amount to 90% perspiration and 10% inspiration, the rewarding conquest of the world unknown builds up. Apparently David Oyedepo found what interested him and unrepentantly he pursued it with his might. He once warned, “Do not mistake passion for vision, passion only gives birth to vision”. Indeed it is passion that powers vision but it is not synonymous with vision. It is vision that shows the way. It is vision that drives you in the direction of your purpose for living. Vision is miles apart from ambition. Genuine vision is freely given by

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God, while ambition, usually craftily made of a sterner stuff, is engineered by men to satisfy personal cravings. Ideally, vision is never self-generated, vision is inspired by God. Elihu Darachel, the Buzite, and the youngest of Job's sympathizers, unequivocally confessed in the book of Job that “There is a spirit in man and the inspiration of the almighty gives them understanding” [32:8]. The word “understanding” here represents all the spiritual expositions man requires for outstanding performance in whatever he does. Only the creator can guarantee such.

Vision is not your personal decision; vision is a discovery of the essence of your existence. Vision is the answer to the question of purpose for living. Nothing truly prospers outside of the platform of vision. Money flows in the direction of your vision. Just as your body moves in the direction of your eyes, so also your future inclines towards the direction of your vision. Just think about it, and if you're not yet into the flow, get down on it right away. It's never too late to become what God has ordained you to be, you can well be the change you want to see in the world. Rather than being happy as a mere passenger, decide to be the driver of positive change in the journey of life. The most agreeable thing in life is worthy achievement. As a true, thoroughbred heir and genuine crowned

prince in heavenly places, you must let

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your Heaven-sent dream illuminate the paths your mission should take.

Never allow yourself to be swayed by the seductive tempting parking stops on your path. You have all it takes to steer yourself in any direction you choose, defying gravity and sanity all at once. Remember, the man with fresh ideas is often considered a crank, until the idea succeeds. “The world we live in,” admonishes LeVar Burton, “is the one we dared to create. We create our world with every thought that we think, with every word that we speak and with every action that we take”. The word “impossible” only exists in the dictionary of fools or the stone-cold dead. If your mind can conceive it, and your heart can believe it, then you can achieve it. The difficult is that which can be done immediately; The Impossible is that which takes a little while, but as proved beyond all reasonable and unreasonable doubts in the life of David Oyedepo, it is achievable. It has been proved time and again that most notions of impossibility have been gallantly defeated by the unbelievable feats of great achievers in our world. Nothing really is impossible.

Definiteness of purpose, powered by the illuminating light, and contagious energy of a dream is the starting point of all achievement. Above all, unless you're

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inspired to do something beyond what you have already mastered, you will never grow up. But everything starts with a dream: the imprint of God's design for you in your mind which keeps developing until its manifestation of the concrete picture comes alive, after you've given it all you've got. All things are possible until they are proved impossible. Thoughts and dreams become things. Choose the wise and timeless ones that will take you and the world around you places. Dreams are worth holding fast onto, come what may, as it sometimes takes a good while before some dreams can take shape-and go places. But whatever it takes, it is important not to lose sight of the goal, it's important to keep the target in sight. “Hold fast onto your dreams,” chimes a wise counsel. “For when dreams die, life is like a broken-winged bird that cannot fly.” That must be the received wisdom of Langston Hughes. In achieving dreams, following the footsteps and the tune-steps of David Oyedepo, is the eternal words of Jennifer Genereux Davis, who was generous with these great

inspirational lines of timeless value:

“A dream is a seed, the seed of a tree. A tree full of life and the things you can be. Your dreams are the windows through which you can see a hint of your future and the things you will be. Each night when you sleep, you're feeding the seed, the seed of the tree of who you could be.”

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Dreaming can thus be seen as painting through your mind. Its redeeming features and priceless assets cannot be wished away. The story was narrated of Victor Frankl, who was a Viennese psychiatrist before the Nazis apprehended him and put him into the concentration camp. Despite the exposure of the victims to diseases and starvation, Victor Frankl was determined never to succumb to such a health hazard. How did he make it? Here was his eye-opening, mindblowing, intriguing, revelation:

“There is only one reason why I am here today. What kept me alive was you (referring to his audience)”. Others gave up hope. I dreamed. I dreamt that someday I would be here telling you how I, Victor Frankl had survived the Nazis concentration camps. I've never been here before, I've never seen any of you before, I've never given this speech before. But in my dreams, I have stood before you and said these words a thousand times....”

Dreams help keep hope alive and build up the refreshing wells of life-sustaining faith that washes away the treachery of fate or the cosmic roll of the dice of death. Dreams empower, reinforce, inspire and live happily ever after to tell mind-mending, soul-stirring and heart

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uplifting success stories that will set the world to dreaming and believing. There is no great leader who is not a dreamer. Martin Luther King Jr., a mentee of Mahatma Ghandi, was an American Baptist Church minister and a prominent leader in the AfricanAmerican civil rights movement. He gave one of the hottest and most popular speeches in the history of human quest for equal rights and justice. His speech was captioned: “I Have a Dream” which he delivered at the threshold of the Lincoln Memorial in 1963. His dream encompassed a lineup of great attainments for sustainable peaceful and harmonious co-existence of the entire human race. Martin Luther King Jr. declared after the 1963 March on

Washington DC soil:

“...Even though we face the difficulties of today and tomorrow, I still have a dream...I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed: 'We hold these truths to be selfevident, that all men are created equal.' I have a dream that one day on the red hills of Georgia, the sons of former slaves and the sons of former slave owners will be able to sit down together at the table of brotherhood.

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I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character. I have a dream today!

I have a dream that one day, down in Alabama, with its vicious racists...little black boys and black girls will be able to join hands with little white boys and white girls as sisters and brothers. I have a dream today! “

Today, the dream is a reality in the United States of America and it is evident to the whole world. Barack Obama, the first Afro-American President of the United States of America, a protégé of Martin Luther King Jr. is dream come true. Indeed it is a dreamers' world.

According to David Oyedepo, it is vision and revelation that dispels every trace of assumption. Vision cannot be assumed. Vision is not fulfilled by exertion of personal strength; it is the creator that empowers us to fulfill our mission. He posits point blank that “no man has the mental capacity to create a vision.” It is the prerogative of the creator to unfold a vision. Man can only, through conscious and curious cravings, discover a purpose.

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And vision is the access route to discovering purpose. That is where vision in many dimensions will beat ambition hands-down. It's the picture developed from God's THEATRE of DREAMS to inspire His chosen vessel to be the best he can ever hope to be in the quest to have his destiny transformed, and leave the world a better, happier, safer place than he met it.

A man given to truly arresting picturesque language, David Oyedepo echoed unequivocally that “God's TV (Telling-Vision) is 24 hours of the seven days of

the week”. That is to say God unfolds vision to every heart daily that opens to connect to it, every ticking second of the day. Vision is the platform through which your purpose for living is delivered direct without the quirks of distortions that may come your way if you're hooked to different channels of transmission. Every product from the manufacturer comes with instructional documentation that gives step by step procedure of proper functionality of the product as packaged by the manufacturer. Until the detail of this documentation is known, the product cannot be put to proper engagement. That is where the subject of vision comes in. What vision does is to take you back to your source, and the original custodian of the blueprint of your destiny. He is your creator.

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Your vision points you to your place of relevance in humanity. Vision, like faith, is not a cushion for you to fall back upon; it is your working energy. There can only be one purpose for living per person. The purpose of a product is never determined in the market, but from the factory. Your purpose was packaged in you by your creator, but only vision can expose it to you. Bill Newman in his book *10 Laws of Leadership* wrote:

“vision is a comprehensive sense of where you are going, how you are going to get there and what you will do after you get there. Vision is feeling challenged by the world around you and being compelled to make a mark on it through the force of your own ideas, personality, resources and desires.”

Most times, many are lost and confused when vision is defined with respect to purpose. Usually it is vision that points an individual to purpose. Vision is the platform through which the creator points an individual to his or her purpose for living. Vision is motivated by personal craving for discovery of the answer to the questions: What? Why? Where? When? For example, what is my reason for living? Why are things not progressing? Where is my place of relevance? When is my life taking

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shape? Ruminating on the analysis of John C. Maxwell, one quickly realizes that truly, a sense of vision is what provides a picture of a waiting future; supplying the answer to the question, what? A sense of mission provides purpose, supplying the answer to the question, why? However, it is strategy that provides a plan, invariably supplying an answer to the question, how? With passion and

desperation in your craving for an answer, through meditation on the pages of the scripture or through sessions of painting some pictures of your future desire, vision will result. What vision does is to present your purpose to you in a format that cannot be doubted.

David Oyedepo once noted that nothing motivates like a dream you have conceived. Most time, it is expected of a dream to attract attacks and mockery. Just the same way David Oyedepo experienced when he started. But a dream does not bow to opposing forces. Neither does it bow to intellectual disagreement. Once he had excitedly shown his first 2 published books (Law of Faith and Miracle Seed) to a senior minister at a programme as part of the testimonies of what God had begun to do in his infant Ministry. Naturally, one would expect some motivational or at least some encouraging words. But what did he get? The senior Minister on seeing the books

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mused and with a sneer, said, “Well, you've tried... but my own will soon be out too... and you can be sure it will be better packaged...” Interestingly, according to David Oyedepo, the man is yet to publish one book. Over 60 titles have been rolled out from the stable of Dominion Publishing House, with over 10 Million copies in circulation, all authored by Dr. David Oyedepo (some authored by Faith his wife and few co-authored by both), creating waves of testimonies across the world.

The works of geniuses and the immortals, through the ages have been known to provoke violent opposition, and even death, by mediocre minds, whose visions are clouded by prejudice, ill-will or virulent symptoms of inferiority complex. All the truly great in the world had their fair share of it, which sometimes did not lead to hearty cheers. Our Lord Jesus Christ; the Early Apostles and great men of vision and burning faith; and some of the greatest inventors and entrepreneurs of our times: Henry Ford, William Wrigley Jr., George Eastman; Thomas A. Edison, Galileo; and so much more! And coming home, David has not been immune from the envious darts of detractors and busybody nitpickers. Some thrown with the unrelieved savagery of hired assassins. But in all these, he is being more than a conqueror, moving from strength to strength, and

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becoming the worthy brand the world prefers to put their stock in; that which deserves to lead, leads.

Thus a dream, which is straight from the heart of God, and delivered right on hand by the unchallengeable power of God, does not bow to opposing forces. The carrier of such awesome power should know that it is all that he's got. So he should not compromise himself. In the same rich vein of form and staying power, a dream will never consent to bow to intellectual disagreement. The irresistible force of a dream, powered when you make that move, can shove out of the way any seemingly immovable body of opposition. But this can only come when you achieve the transmutation of your dreams into a potent energy that will pull down all strongholds on your way to secure the ultimate victory.

A dream does not require any form of external support; neither is it affected by any economic or political policy. The surest and guaranteed platform for accomplishment is catching your dream from scriptures. The Bible is a dream book. A dream is the celebration of the discovery of a desired future. Scripturally, a dream is what you have discovered but in the natural, a dream is what you personally long to see. The practical engagement of your discovery, and the delivery of the same, is what is called success. In this

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wise, the following lyrical lines are in tune with how to go about to connect to the power of dreams in a neverceasing manner:

DID is a word of achievement

WON'T is a word of retreat

CAN is a word of duty

MUST is a word of commitment

TRY is a word of each hour

It does not do any harm to dream, as long as you get up and hustle when the alarm goes off. Everything comes to him who hustles while he waits. And the right angle for approaching challenges to any God-inspired dream is invariably through the try-angle. In the battle to achieve great feats on earth, one must overcome wishful thinking by making proactive moves and sail out without delay to reach new shores and capture new frontiers. He who does not dare will never get his share of glory. The world always steps aside to let him pass who knows where he is going. Although the past informs the future, we should never lose sight of the fact that the past should serve faithfully as a guidepost and never as a hitching post. So get out of your comfort zone. Sail into the world yet undiscovered and conquer new frontiers in the world out there, leaving indelible trails the world will follow all through eternity. It's possible. With the Power of

Dreams!

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HOW YOU CAN CATCH VISION

Just as Jean Houston once enthused; “we have all the extraordinary coded within us waiting to be released.” The following are the certified channels to catch a God- ordained vision.

LOOK UP!

The Creator is the originator of every destiny. He is the One to look up to; because He has the blueprint with Him. Note that your faith is your life. Your faith is your essence of existence, the soul and reason- the why of your being. Without faith you cannot access your God, and vision is not what you create, neither is it a product of personal decision. Vision is received as delivered by the Custodian: God. It is our own duty as men and women to proceed as though the limits of our abilities do not exist. Remember, you can do all things through Christ who has strengthened you, with everyday allround reinforcement, to be on top of your world. It takes a determined soul, and an enthusiastic spirit to succeed in anything in life. What we need most in our present age are more people who specialize in the impossible. You should also bear in your mind that the set time has one advantage over every other-it's your own. Therefore, take the following steps:

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1. Maintain a close uninterrupted relationship with your creator, the sole Custodian of vision: Get acquainted with the originator of your purpose for living. The Word of God is clear on it as written in the book of Job: *Acquaint now thyself unto God and thou shall have peace, thereby good shall come unto thee*” [21:22]. The secret code of every destiny is in the custody of the maker of mankind. Whether or not you access yours is a function of the degree of your affinity with the divinity. The great Psalmist gives us the clue on how to link up with the secret code of our lives, he says, “*these secrets of God is with them that fear Him and he will show them...*” [25:14]. Indeed these secret things belong to God, only what He shows us is all we have as the book of Deuteronomy also expresses it. [29:29].

HOW?

Through the study of the Word of God; everyone's reason for living is written on the pages of the scripture. It is possible to dream scripturally. Jesus was offered the scripture one day and what was placed before Him was exactly what was written concerning His purpose for living. It was Isaiah 61:1-3. The Bible is indeed a dream book and the most authentic platform to capture a genuine picture of your future assignment. According to David Oyedepo, the Bible is not a religion book, it is the

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creator's manual for profitable living. It is the creator's manual to maximize your destiny. It is the manufacturer's manual made up of instructions. The Bible is higher in rank than philosophy and scientific books. That authenticity has been validated (endorsed) by scientists and philosophers from all ages. As it is written in the book of Acts of the Apostles: *“for in Him we live and move and have our being: as certain also of your poets have said, “for we are also His offspring”* [17:28]. The Book is superior to all books. According to David Oyedepo, the Bible is not a mystical book to be conjured; it is a practical book to be practically applied.

a. Through anointed and inspirational books: According to David Oyedepo, anointed books are the finished products of the combination of scriptural ingredients relevant to your area of need as extracted from the scriptures by the apostles and prophets. For example, after reading a book titled *“The Man God Uses”* by Oswald J. Smith in 1976, David took a decision to become sold out to God. That is, he dedicated his life totally to God. According to his school of thought, Christianity is not politics; it is a management of destiny. Your spiritual connectivity is a vital security channel for the prosperity of your destiny. Our habit, character and attitudes are the forces negotiating our capacity

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to achieve much. It is not great might that makes great men.

b.. Through prayer and fasting with earnest expectation to receive the answer to your greatest quest:

Prayer seasoned with fasting is a spiritual engagement that empowers any person to effectively connect the divinity and to directly download his or her essence of existence on the earth. In the school of prayer, faith is the only platform of communication. Prayer and fasting

without faith is mere religious struggle in futility. Yet faith thrives on the premises of the potency of the Word of God. Faith therefore is a supernatural power generator that draws its strength from the Word platform. Hence, effective prayer and fasting is absolutely dependent on the power of faith. The greatest leader of all time, Jesus, gave a candid exposition in the book of Mark concerning what translates prayer to tangible delivery. He said: *“Whatsoever ye ask when ye pray believe that you have received them and ye shall have them”* [11:24].

c. Through quietness and solitude, the voice of the Spirit can be accessed: David Oyedepo caught his vision in the solitude of a hotel room in a town far from his place of domicile. It was a divine encounter never to be forgotten forever. In

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Bill Newman's book, 10 Laws of Leadership, he said:

“Great vision comes from being quiet, still, often alone. Every leader needs to spend time in solitude and reflection. We live in a crazy rat-race world. Find a place where you can enjoy solitude, in a quiet place will come your best ideas.”

Vision is in phases and at each point you retrace your step to seek wisdom to carry on from the creator. But remember, life, as it has been asserted, is a question, if you don't have the answer at your disposal; circumstances may drop many [confusing] answers into your mind. Vision therefore is the life-wire of any meaningful achievement in life. Go for vision!

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the Spirit of wisdom.

[July 1983](#)

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WISDOM

“Wisdom is doing things God's way. Wisdom is divine ability to make reasonable decisions and set tangible goals on ways of achieving one's vision. It is divine sense of handling issues...the best possible way”

David O. Oyedepo

isdom is the principal in the school of leadership. Simply put, wisdom is making the best use of knowledge. Wisdom is not

limited to knowing what to do; it also requires knowing what to do next, and even anticipating events before they come to pass, and planning ahead to meet challenges head-on. According to Bill Newman, one of the tests of leadership is the ability to recognize a problem before it becomes an emergency.

David Oyedepo is a man of wisdom. According to him, wisdom is the ability to know what to do and doing it. It is the ability to know where to go and going there. It is the ability to know what to say and saying it. He equipped himself through reading and research before he entered into the ministry. Truly, he who makes quick use of the moment is a genius of prudence. David Oyedepo reads books with much expectation of definite encounter. It's after all the mind that makes the body rich. He had encountered great men and women with indelible impartation that has translated to his personal and organizational transformation. The more you read the right books, the easier it is to lead. The essence of an original genius is to reduce the complexities of life into the simplest forms that can help aid understanding of

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the target audience; a priceless treasure one can acquire reading the right books. For example, the root of his absolute dedication to God with a seal of an oath is traceable to his experience from the book titled, "The Man God Uses" from where he became sold out to God and has since then been way up in his phenomenal rise, in right standing with God and in proclaiming His allconquering words of redemption, deliverance, holiness and righteous prosperity to the ever-growing congregation of the saints he ministers to, and the world at large.

According to David, he got saved in 1969 but by the close of 1970, he had explored the New Testament comfortably, particularly the first five books: Matthew, Mark, Luke, John and Acts of the Apostles, so much that each of the chapters had formed a part of him. That is an expression of unmatched eagerness in the pursuit of spiritual nourishment and empowerment. His much celebrated

encounter with the secret of divine unending supply is linked with his contact with Gloria Copeland through her book titled “*God's will is Prosperity*” where the mystery of divine supply was unveiled to him. The vision that gave birth to “Dominion Publishing House” was from his encounter with a magazine captioned “*New Wine.*”

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David Oyedepo maximized available resources to acquire knowledge in his days of youth. Through books, he encountered great men in the faith such as: The Apostle of Faith - Smith Wigglesworth, A.A. Allen - a great healing Evangelist, Kenneth E. Hagin - the father of the faith movement, T.L. Osborn: a great revivalist and healing evangelist, Oswald J. Smith and other anointed men of God. In his quest for more and definite divine encounter, he left the shores of Nigeria to attend a camp meeting in Tulsa, Oklahoma, United States, where he had an encounter of a lifetime with Kenneth E. Hagin's Ministry. At that camp meeting he had prayed, “Lord, whatever is at work in Hagin, I need it.” The answer to his short heart-felt prayer is the secret behind his sweat-less, stress-free exploit he enjoys in his pulpit Ministry. According to him, the voice of the Lord echoed in his ears in the course of the camp meeting as the man of God (Kenneth Hagin) ministered, saying: “*My son, David, the baton is passed on to you.*”

One fundamental approach to getting wisdom is reading relevant materials, print or electronic, as well as scrupulously studying through all available means, great achievers that have commanded one's admiration. The author of Fifth Discipline, Peter Senge, asserts: “As a leader, no significant change will occur unless it is driven

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from the top.” Knowledge acquisition is very vital to getting wisdom. Thomas Edison in all his wealth of knowledge and experience submitted:

“Wedonotknowonemillionthpartof one percent about anything. We do not know what light is. We do not know what electricityis.Wedonotknowwhatgravityis. Wedonotknowanythingaboutmagnetism. Wehavealotof hypotheses,butthat isall.”

Paying the cost of knowledge acquisition pays off in the long run. The search for truth is the noblest occupation and pursuit of man and its publication is a duty.

To help drive home this assertion, an Arabian proverb acknowledges that there are four sorts of men:

He who thinks he knows, and knows not, he is a fool; shun him.

He who knows not, and knows not he knows not; he is a fool; shun him.

He who knows, and knows not he knows; he is asleep; wake him.

He who knows, and knows he knows; he is wise; follow him.

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It is always the mind that makes the body rich. You should not spare any expense to feed it and nourish it with never-ending happy returns of good, mindexpanding and life-transforming books. Books are the lighthouse to the mind, guiding you to safe and rewarding shores beyond unimaginable frontiers. Books are the transmission of civilization. In order to excel in Ministry; David Oyedepo researched on biographies and autobiographies of great achievers in Ministry and organizations. World history, after all said and done, is nothing but the autobiography of great men and women, who by the magnetic pull of their earthly exploits, rise to become immortals. In his book, *Quality is Free*, management expert, Phillip B. Cosby writes,

“There is a theory of human behavior that says people subconsciously retard their own intellectual growth. They come to rely on clichés and habits. Once they reach the age of their own personal comfort with the world, they stop learning and their minds run on idle for the rest of their days. They may progress organizationally, they may be ambitious and eager, and they may even work night and day, but they learn no more.”

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Before the establishment of Covenant University, David Oyedepo researched on a number of schools in advanced countries including the Harvard University, Oral Roberts University in the United States and a host of others. Also, before the establishment of Landmark University, he went into research on agricultural institutions around the world, including a major Agricultural Institution in Israel. That shows the extent to which his inclination to knowledge acquisition is.

One important element of wisdom as exemplified by David Oyedepo is insight. It is the most needed instrument of wisdom to address any given situation. Qualitative insight facilitates excellence in life. In 1994, David was invited by a group of students to Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria. After his

teaching, a curious student approached him and said: “Sir, you have quoted 68 scriptures to the letter.” He did that without opening the Bible because the lighting in the venue was not bright enough to read or check the texts. More so, the pulpit arranged for him was too high for his usage, so he resolved to rely solely on the Holy Ghost for what to say. The student, who remained amazed couldn't but ask: “Sir, did you cram them?” David smiled and answered, “No, I ate them.”

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Certainly, his answer to the student's question was borne out of deep insight, as it is written in the book of Jeremiah thus: “Thy words were found and I did eat them...” [15:16]. Epictetus said “Only the educated are free.”

David Oyedepo is a great man that has a bunch of great men inside of him. He will always talk about his spiritual family tree. He is surrounded by a cloud of great achievers who help spread the gospel in the original revelation to him. David is an extraordinary man of God in whose life you cannot spot any hypocrisy as he practises what he preaches and invites all to come aboard to taste and enjoy the sweet nectar of the true Living God that he serves. He has often traced his spiritual family tree to kingdom giants such as Kenneth E. Hagin, who also happened to be immensely imparted by Smith Wigglesworth and was fired up by the ministry of E.W. Kenyon. He studied T.L. Osborn, whose ministry has made tremendous impact, commanding followership around the world. David researched on Kenneth Copeland, a great proponent of kingdom prosperity. He took time to study E.W. Kenyon, a great faith preacher who had influenced great men such as Kenneth E. Hagin. He read materials on great men

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like John Wesley, Billy Graham and a host of others. No man can be called friendless when he has God and the sweet companionship of good books. When anyone sells you a book he does not only sell you just twelve ounces of paper and ink, he sells you a whole new life. In the lyrical lines of the legendary Emily Dickinson:

There is no frigate like a book To take us to lands away
Nor any courses like a page Of prancing poetry
This travel may the poorest take Without offence or toil
How frugal is the chariot

That bears the human soul

When others fail him, the wise man looks to the neverfailing companionship of books. Books are the everburning lamps of accumulated wisdom. And to the frame comes these eternal words of wisdom from Robert G. Ingersoll: “If you are poor I will tell you how you can become rich; richer than any millionaire: Learn to love good books.” There are treasures in books that all the money in the world cannot buy, but

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that the poorest labourer can have for nothing. The great author and speaker, Anthony Robbin, in his best seller, *Awaken the Giant Within*, said, “The power of reading a great book is that you think like the author.” David Oyedepo did not only read books, he equally read great people. He keeps talking about the anointing for boldness, the audacity of faith he contracted from Archbishop Benson Idahosa and the anointing he drew from Pastor E. A. Adeboye for unending enlargement of coast. David has never taken any impartation casually all his life. When talking about those who cherish impartation from men of a higher spiritual order in Ministry, David Oyedepo is second to none. Indeed, mentoring is a vital instrument in the School of Wisdom. He is encompassed with a stunning galaxy of truly iconic global mentors.

Wisdom helps in getting things done in the most cost effective ways. During the construction of Faith tabernacle at Canaan Land Ota, a long Trailer was to be driven into the main auditorium. Then it was realized that the construction had got to a point such that it would be impossible for the trailer to drive in except part of the structure was demolished, which would be tantamount to wastage of resources: construction

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materials, time and money. David Oyedepo met the men at the construction site looking very worried. After telling him about their predicament, he paused a little and pronto the insight flooded his mind on what to do. Then he asked, “What is the height of the trailer's tyre?” he was told 1.6 meters. He asked again, “how many meters would be required for the trailer to enter: he was told 90 inches. Pronto, he counseled that the tyres of the trailer be deflated to reduce the height. When it was done, the trailer was simply pulled into the auditorium. That was wisdom at work.

David Oyedepo is constantly in touch with the Word of God without any worldly interruption. When it was time to build Faith Tabernacle and he presented the architectural design to professionals in Building Technology, just as revealed to him by the Holy Ghost, he was counseled against such an idea because it totally violated the principles of building. How can one build a 50,000 seat capacity auditorium without pillars scattered within and without? He was also told to jettison the thought of dedicating such a complicated complex in 12 months! Indeed one would sympathize with their fears and reservations but that was the way this man of wisdom had downloaded it from above. Robert Heinlein once said, “Always listen to experts,

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they will tell you what can't be done and why. Then do it”.

Harry Emerson Fosdick also said, “The world is moving so fast these days that the man who says it can't be done is generally interrupted by someone doing it.” Faith Tabernacle was built to the amazement of experts, and according to David Oyedepo, “without any foreign aid either financial or expertise.” This year, 2015, makes it the sixteenth year after we witnessed the official dedication of Faith Tabernacle on September 18th 1999. Faith Tabernacle is standing strong still in its imposing magnificence. In his book, Towards Mental Exploits, David Oyedepo defined wisdom from above as the one that is:

Far above other forms of wisdom, this kind of wisdom comes from God. It is the kind of wisdom that brings you promotion; honor, favor and glory...people with heavenly vision are trusted human beings who have no hidden agenda in their lives”.

In a nutshell, there is no human situation without a wisdom solution.

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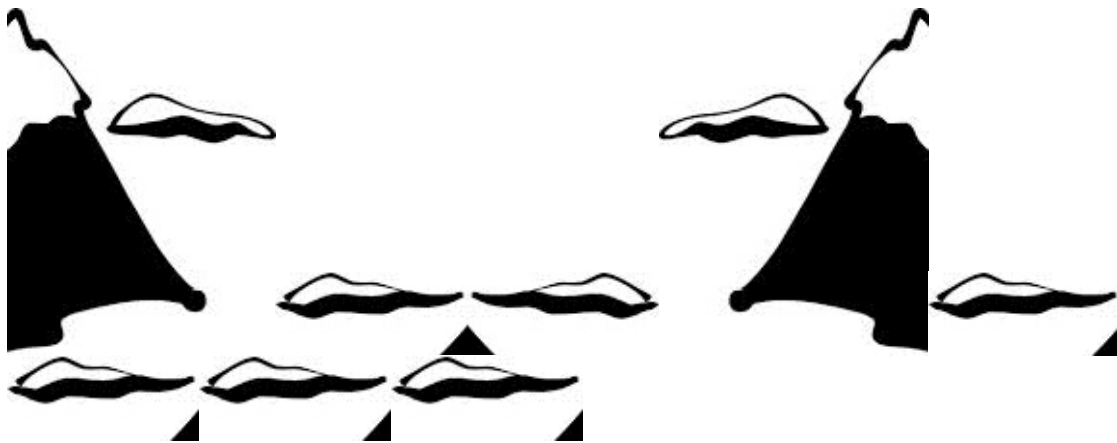
“Two months, too much..!”

2

COURAGE

“Just one obstacle is enough to truncate a global vision but courage is what you need to deal a deadly blow on it.”

- David O. Oyedepo.



I RESOLVE...

To strip the soul of all pretense,
To hold each day in reverence,
To keep the head and heart apace,
To make this world a worth-while place,
To share my bread with those in need,
To tolerate a neighbour's creed,
To keep a stride without a strut,
To make a home in manse or hut,
To have the grit to grin at loss,
To master life and be its boss! *Anonymous*

C

courage has been defined as the ability to do something dangerous, or to face pain or opposition without showing fear. The

dictionary has several synonyms to qualify courage, such as: bravery, valour, fearlessness audacity, chivalry, heroism, confidence, nerve and a few nicknames such as guts, grit, gristle, backbone, pluck, and spunk. Bill Newman in his wealth of experience declared:

“...but whatever the name; it never met its match. The heights of the Himalayas only encourage it. The depths of the Caribbean merely excite it. The sounds of war stimulate it. The difficulty of a job motivates it. The demands of competition

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inspire it. Criticism challenges it, adventure arouses it, danger incites it; threat quickens it.”

Not that alone, Newman goes ahead and defined courage as another word for inner strength, presence of mind against odds, determination to hang in there, to venture, persevere, and withstand hardship.

“It's what makes the amputees reject pity and continue to take life by the throat. It is what forces every married couple having trouble, never to say, “Let's terminate”. It's what encourages the divorcee to face tomorrow. It's what keeps a nation free in spite of attacks. Are you ready to run when the heat rises? [Are you] about to quit? [Well], every day, in some way, your courage will be tested. Real courage is saying, yes to life, not backing down when we face adversity. Courage is doing what you're afraid to do - there can be no courage when you're scared”.

There is no better way to describe the dimension of David Oyedepo's courage. The closest synonym to his

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kind of courage is simply fearlessness. The genesis of his fearlessness is traceable to when as a vibrant young Christian at 25 he read an eye-opening encounter of Smith Wigglesworth, a renowned Apostle of Faith. He read an account on the life of Smith Wigglesworth via his biography authored by Stanley Frodsham on how Smith belittled a demon. An ugly creature was rocking in a chair in Smith Wigglesworth's living room. The noise of the rocking chair was so disturbing that Smith Wigglesworth came out of the room holding a lantern to know what it was. On seeing the ugly creature with two horns on the head (a devil), Smith Wigglesworth hissed at it and said, “I didn't know it was you,

devil.” He went back to his room and slept restfully.

After reading the book, David Oyedepo said, “I saw the littleness of the devil.” From that day, his perspective of the devils changed and he began to display a superiority attitude over all devils. According to him, after his encounter via the book on the life of Smith Wigglesworth, he arose and was looking for the devil or any of his agents to kill! Courage arouses boldness, confidence and it is daring. Thomas Paine once boldly confessed thus:

“I love the man who can smile in trouble; that can gather strength from distress, and

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grow brave by reflection. ‘Tis the business of little minds to shrink, but he whose heart is firm, and whose conscience approves his conduct, will pursue his principles to death.”

Just after his encounter with Smith Wigglesworth, he was ministering to secondary school students in a village notoriously known for witchcraft. In the middle of his preaching, he paused, and announced to the audience: “how many people here are witches? If you are, stand up,” he ordered. Virtually everyone stood up. Then he told them to sit and announced again in case someone stood by mistake the first time: “I mean how many people are practicing witches here?” Then a lot of people stood up again. He called one of them and asked without any apology: “what do you do with the devil?” The individual answered, “Anytime we want to drink blood, we would go to the highway and cause some accident...” Then David cut in with all sense of spiritual superiority: “what if people like us are coming?” The self-acclaimed witch answered: “whenever we sense a higher power, we clear off the highway.”

According to David Oyedepo, Christianity without empowerment is a great risk and that risk can be deadly.

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The mental illness of his nephew in 1983 comes to mind once again. The illness had defied all human efforts to calm him down. The boy was almost becoming violent before David Oyedepo's arrival. But the moment the boy in his mental imbalance saw him, he recognized him and prostrated before him. The people were surprised and out of curiosity they asked him, “Do you know him?” the boy said, “Yes, my uncle” (And he mentioned his name without missing it).

Then David instructed, “Release him and put him in my vehicle and let me see the devil that will enter my car with him.” That was the end of that insanity. The boy later went to school, got married and is doing well till date. From the fringes of lunacy, the victim rose to become a victor and a success story, updated every day, all thanks to the minister of God, who by the right unction passed onto him by Christ the author and finisher of our faith, who has come to set the captives free!

His divine encounter of 1976, where he experienced a terrific transference of the Spirit of boldness when listening to an audio tape of a message preached by A.A. Allen, is still generating series of brave feats till date. He was so sure beyond reasonable doubt when it happened to him. He was only 22 years old then and he has never looked back in daring to conquer where the

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very giants dread to tread. “Whatever you can do, or dream you can, begin it. Boldness has genius, power and magic in it,” reassures Goethe. David Oyedepo said: “Every kingdom prince is a kingdom principality set over a territory to put to check every principality from hell.” His war campaign is not only launched against invisible enemies alone, but his audacity also led him to confront every human agent crossing his way unto exploits in the kingdom. In 1991, David Oyedepo was surrounded by fierce looking armed gang. Then he stood with his arms akimbo and roared like a ravening lion, “In the name of Jesus!” They all took to their heels shouting repeatedly, “He has a gun!”

A man of courage is not scared by the threatening sound of the opposition's roar; rather it gears him up to dare. In 1984 at Kaduna, during a 5-day crusade which had been planned and given approval by the appropriate authority for the facility to be used, while the programme was on, information was suddenly passed to David Oyedepo that the crusade should stop because the approval had been withdrawn. With fury in his heart, and fierceness of anger in his countenance, David went straight to the office of the officer that had sent the message and flung his door open without knocking. He looked him in the eyes and grasped his two hands. Then he uttered some

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high level language (tongues) at his face and threw the officer's hand on the officer's chest, saying, “Ten of you cannot ask us to vacate this facility till we are

through”. He went out and slammed the door behind him. The crusade was held without further interruption. Courage!

Another day, a young man was sent to him with an official letter that the church should vacate the place of their regular worship in Kaduna within ten days. The lion in him stirred up again in anger. He roared at the messenger: “Tell those who sent you, in ten days you are all dead men!” The man suddenly became jittery and he began to beg, “Please sir, I was sent”. He roared at him again, “Yes, all of you will be dead in your attempt to eject us.” That was the last time they came with such a notice. David Oyedepo posits that a good degree of spiritual violence is not negotiable to engage in a spiritual fight and attain victory. For instance, it takes a high level of spirituality and good degree of courage to “abandon” a flourishing church in a densely populated Lagos suburb for a wilderness at Ota, several kilometers away from where members are evidently highly concentrated. It is only a strange dimension of courage that would make a leader leave certainty for uncertainty as long as church growth theory is concerned. He knows

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not his strength who has not met adversity. Heaven always prepares a good man with crosses. He who wants a place in the sun should expect blisters. Truth well told, everything about the move from Lagos to the other side of midnight in Ota was a total violation of every known principle of church growth. But the movement was in obedience to a divine marching order that brooks no retreat, no surrender. Just trust and obey, for there is no other way to perform mind-bending and nerve-jangling exploits for the glory and advertisement of God's power that will lead more souls to the Kingdom.

The only known cure for fear is faith. Yet, faith and work are like soul and body, hand and heart. Let us all surrender to faith and good works that work in unison to fulfill God's divine designs for our lives. God had told David the first time he arrived at the far away forest; “this is the place.” Every other thing therefore became secondary as far as he was concerned. Then he stood behind the podium on 17, September 1998 and boldly declared that Faith Tabernacle would be dedicated by September 18, 1999. According to David Oyedepo, such a project, ordinarily, was “...technically impossible, logistically unthinkable and [practically illogical,]” because the design was not yet ready, and it would have to go through a lot of bureaucratic processes

for approval. All the technical, structural and mechanical logistics had to be perfected before commencement. All these couldn't have taken less than seven months to be in place. The question was; would such a magnificent monument be completed in five months? Yet in 1998, a historic ground-breaking was done and by 18th September, 1999, a city began to emerge in the centre of the formerly dreaded forest of witches and horrific spirits. The imposing largest church auditorium in the world as recorded in Guinness Book of Records, now strategically sits in its magnificence and splendour in the city known as Canaan Land today.

Faith is the subtle chain which binds us to the infinite and resonates with that reassuring, unchanging world that has changed so many destinies in the past from story to glory that all shall be well no matter what the devil may say; the Lord will have His ultimate way to prevail. With God, all things are possible! Never aspire in your life to be a “might-have-been.” Go for it with boldness of imagination and never-faltering steps in the right direction once you can get the cue from the sure, unfailing source: the Lord Almighty. To hit the right stride and get your bearing right, all you need is courage after the vision or revelation. All goes if courage goes! More often than not however, it is in plainly and

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thoughtlessly refusing divine directive that makes men victims of their personal projections. Today, there cannot be any technical or professional explanation for the economic position and the dimension of church growth in David Oyedepo's Ministries Worldwide, particularly as experienced at the headquarters in Canaan land. The facility is almost becoming overstressed by reason of the influx of multitude into every service including Sundays and night vigils, all because someone was daring enough to follow the voice of the invisible One, whose dwelling is in the light. The annual Shiloh event has since been decentralized through viewing centres across Lagos State and various mission stations across Nigeria, African towns and cities and other parts of the world. Yet, the crowd recorded yearly still remains unexplainable. All because somebody was and still is courageous enough to turn his back to human theories and facts in pursuit of a God given vision.

Building a city in the wilderness with ever functional infrastructure and amenities to serve the residents of the entire community is simply amazing: the

University community, the secondary school community, the church and secretariat workers, the artisans and the business environment. It becomes more amazing in a country where the very basic amenities (including

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electricity, water supply, and road network) are languishing in decadence due to poor management and maintenance. This is a city where, among other things, is installed a 500KVA battery-run electric power generating set; of course without fuel. Amazing things happen daily in this 'city in the desert' that calls for public attention. In November, 2011, far away in South Korea, Covenant University won a gold medal at the Young Inventors International contest, once more showcasing the glory of Nigeria. Without doubt, Canaan Land is a city of a sort, affording all manners of goodness.

On Sunday March 1, 2009, the second Sunday service kicked off at Faith Tabernacle. It simply meant the congregation had exceeded the 50,000 seat capacity church auditorium. The multiplication experienced in 2009 was not unconnected with the maiden 21 days fasting and prayer platform that God commanded David Oyedepo to declare to the entire Winners' family worldwide to usher the Ministry and the Winners' family into the fullness of God's agenda for the year. One of the major effects generated by this spiritual engagement is unhindered church growth. Multitudes are attracted to the Winners' family by reason of the strange testimonies shared by those whom God has

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touched in a definite way that you cannot just keep close to your chest. The year 2009 was more or less a year of spiritual adventure dedicated solely to fasting and prayer, coupled with regular specialized outreaches. It was no wonder, therefore, that on 17 January 2010, the servant of God declared the commencement of the third service on a Sunday morning at Faith Tabernacle. The traffic of people and vehicles experienced in Canaan Land at every meeting has no mental or human explanation.

David Oyedepo will always help his skeptics with statements such as “God speaks according to His size, divine insight is what enhances the delivery of divine agenda. David Oyedepo indeed is an apostle of faith. He is an indefatigable leader who keeps scaling heights of exploits in leaps and bounds, the opposition notwithstanding. He posits that every true vision places the

visionary at an advantage on the strength of faith. He once charged his teaming pastors: “As long as there is still room in the inn, we must keep going out to bring in more souls.” He has a high powered spiritually inspired approach to getting every outreach mandate delivered. On Sunday, February 13, 2011 a couple of weeks after the annual 21-day prayer and fasting, the servant of God pronounced the commencement of the

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4th service on Sunday morning because he heard God speak to him from Isaiah 54:2-3 saying, “Enlarge the place of thy tent....” While many were excited about it, the skeptics simply held their peace watching and wondering: “What... Why... and How?” When the day came, 20,000 new worshippers were added to Faith Tabernacle! Currently, 4 anointed services are running in succession each Sunday morning, at Faith Tabernacle, all irresistibly impactful with bundles of unprecedented testimonies trailing each.

No challenge ever intimidates David Oyedepo. Before the dedication of Faith Tabernacle in September 1999, it did not appear, humanly speaking, that September 18, 1999 would become a reality. Some nay-sayers who were alien to the mind of God on the project took merry turns to wave it off as pure hallucination and mindless fantasy. But he was not perturbed, neither yielded to the professional suggestions given by economists and financial analysts. He was quiet, waiting to receive a signal from above. Then God told him: *“It took me six days to create heaven and the earth; I will not need two months to finish an ordinary building, twomonths toomuch!”*

The work was completed in a logic-defying, sanitymocking, but God-edifying manner, and the entire

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financial requirement was met without pressure. Andrew Jackson once said, “One man with courage is a majority”. David Oyedepo's courage has been a source of encouragement to many of his followers and has won many followers to him globally. Thomas Paine was very correct when he asserted that “There are too many people praying for mountains of difficulty to be removed, when what they really need is the courage to climb”. It has been proved by great achievers that, there is no wisdom or counsel that can resist or circumvent the firm resolve of a determined soul. According to Omar Bradley, “Courage is the capacity to perform properly even when scared half to death.”

A man of courage is full of faith. Here are the words of Reinhold Niebuhr, "Lord, grant me the serenity to accept things I cannot change, the courage to change things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference". According to Edgar A. Guest, "courage isn't a brilliant dash, a daring deed in a moment's flash. It isn't an instantaneous thing, but it's something deep in the soul of man that is always working to serve some plan" . Petit-Senn puts it this way, "True courage is like a kite; a contrary wind raises it higher." The Word of the Lord caps it up in the book of Deuteronomy, "Be strong and courageous! Do not be afraid of them! The Lord your

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God will go ahead of you. He will neither fail you nor forsake you." [31: 1]. Courage is a booster of dreams; it is an enhancement of exploits. It is a catalyst for accomplishment. Courage will always complement something in your life against every form of challenge. Courage combats and conquers fear on your path to fulfillment of purpose. Courage is a high speed inner force that drives you in the direction of your vision, the barriers notwithstanding.

TO THE QUITTER

The world won't care if you quit
The world won't whine if you fail; The busy world won't notice it,
No matter how loudly you wail.
Nobody will worry
That you have relinquished the fight And gone down,
But it's only the things that you do That is worthwhile and gets you renowned
The quitters are quickly forgotten; Of them the world spends little time; And a few e'er care
That you've not the courage
Or patience to climb

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So give up and quit in despair,
And take your place back on the shelf; But don't think the world's going to care;
You are injuring only yourself

- Anonymous

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*"If it goes wrong, I am
responsible, if it goes well, you*

made it happen.”

- David Oyedepo

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DIPLOMACY

“Don't lead your team with a whip, give them a dream and help them reach it.”

Bill Newman

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ne major priority of any leader should be earning the loyalty of the team. The reason is not far-fetched, if, as it has been said, that,

without vision people perish, then the converse is true: without people, vision perishes. Earning the loyalty of the team however, cannot be achieved by force or coercion. It can be effectively achieved by constant enthusiasm and curious sensitivity to the plights of each member of the team. Each one is given room for growth and guaranteed a sense of belonging in the system. This is where diplomacy plays a major role in leadership for maximum impact and delivery. Who is a diplomatic leader? A diplomatic leader is a leader who can deal with situations in a manner that does not offend or hurt those involved. Just like apostle Paul said in the book of Acts when addressing the assembly of Elders before Ananias the High Priest, he said, among other things, that: “and herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offence towards God and towards men” [23:17].

A diplomatic person is an individual who makes conscious efforts in order to make beneficial or mutual relationship with others. In most instances, a diplomatic person does not only avoid offending people, he is also

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skillful in diligently praising others for their achievements. Contrary to the opinion of many, diplomacy is not equal to hypocrisy, lying, gossip, favouritism or compromise. Diplomacy is not about pleasing everyone, which obviously is an effort in futility. The greatest leader of all times, Jesus, liberally employed diplomacy in dealing with the complexity of the people at such a difficult dispensation. The accusation of the “adulterous woman” quickly comes to mind. She was brought before Jesus for two purposes; first to challenge His

intelligence, and two, to make Him offend against the law of the land. The Law of Moses clearly specified that such an accused, after two or three witnesses, should be stoned to death. The only escape route in such a challenging situation is the corridor of diplomacy. “Cast the first stone,” Jesus intoned, “anyone of you who has never sinned before.” Jesus shifted his eyes from them to allow the accusers reason diligently and judge. The truth was, there was none of them whose hand had not been dipped in sin. The case decided itself in the end, as the accusers dropped their stones and returned to their tents one by one. One life was saved, Jesus was justified. Case closed. Indeed, diplomacy enhances a leader's capability in dealing with critical issues among people of varied temperaments and beliefs.

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Diplomacy is the skill to consider in attending to other people's feelings. Bill Newman generously counseled; “Don't lead your team with a whip, give them a dream and help them reach it.” Leadership is what is in you that you give to others. It is a general notion that if you don't have anything in you, then you've got nothing to offer others. Leadership quality is to be consciously cultivated and not assumed. It is essentially in your ability to carry others along with you, showing good example and maintaining a sense of honesty by practising what you are promoting.

Apostle Paul was one of the most skillful diplomatic leaders the world has ever witnessed (second only to Jesus Christ; even, his trainer and mentor, Gamaliel queued behind him). Paul employed the skill of diplomacy to unify peoples of diverse beliefs, races and languages. He wrote in his first letter to the Corinthians:

“Give no offense, either to the Jews or to the Greeks or to the church of God, even as I also please all men in all things, not seeking my own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved” [10:32-33].

The statement, “even as I also please all men in all things,” does not mean that Paul made an effort to

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please everybody, rather he made an effort to meet everyone's emotional and spiritual needs.

The counsel of Paul's tutor and mentor, a Doctor of law, Gamaliel, in the Council

of the High Priest and Temple Captains was also a display of diplomacy. At that time, it was a difficult task to break through the hold of the firm resolve of the Council with a contrary opinion, particularly when it was coming from just one person among many. Yet, Gamaliel stood as the odd man out and said among other things:

“And now I say to you, keep away from these men and let them alone; for if this plan or this work is of men, it will come to nothing, but if it is of God you cannot overthrow it—lest you be found to fight against God.”

Gamaliel's counsel technically cancelled the unanimous counsel of the others in the Council, of slaying the early Apostles, including Peter and John. Obviously, the Council was arrested by Gamaliel's diplomatic opinion, and became handicapped in executing their plan to kill the apostles. Yet, they never labeled him as an opposition. Generally, the act of diplomacy seeks to maintain peace, decorum and social stability, and that

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without hurting any party. Paul in his first letter to the Corinthians expressed his diplomatic leadership skill in coordinating people of different characters and perspectives:

“For though I am free from all men, I have made myself a servant to all, that I might win the more; and to the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might win those who are under the law. To those that are without law, as without law (not being without law toward God, but under the law toward Christ) that I might win those who are without law; to the weak, I became as weak, that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all men that I might by all means save some” [9:19-22].

Any leader who is skillful to do all these and more, without hypocrisy or compromise, like the examples of Jesus, Gamaliel and Apostle Paul above, is regarded as a diplomatic leader. David Oyedepo is one of such leaders. Being diplomatic is synonymous with tact. It is the skill in managing communication and relationships between people within an organization. David Oyedepo as a dynamic leader has earned the loyalty of

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his large team with his compelling vision and his ability to propel his team to high performance through constant sessions of mental empowerment, maximizing all available resources including human, materials and finance, culminating in competence, efficiency, effectiveness and expertise of his team.

Without doubt, the numerical growth of worshippers experienced in Winners' Chapel International headquarters in Nigeria is triggered by David Oyedepo's diplomatic ability. Armed with the tool of vision (or a mandate), he has mastered how to, without gimmicks or coercion, motivate his entire congregation to get engaged in the drive to evangelize and bring new people to fill a 50,000 seat capacity auditorium to overflow. His congregation never saw any instruction from him as a burden or an inconvenient task, but as an opportunity and a platform for their blessing. For example, between the month of June and July 2013, David Oyedepo declared "Seven Weeks of Ingathering (evangelism)." Like a swarm of bees, members of his congregations all over the world invading their various communities, winning souls for the Lord. With much enthusiasm they continued consistently for seven weeks through various strategic outreach approaches. By the end of

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July, more than 54,000 new people were added to the Winners' Chapel International headquarters, Ota, alone.

However, to bring such to bear, diplomacy must go hand-in-hand with intuitive thinking on the part of a leader. The secret behind David Oyedepo's intuitive thinking is the inner voice of the Spirit. It is his exposure to divine direction. Olajumoke Familoni reflected in her book, *Leadership Styles of Great Men*, the works of Boje and Dennehy (2000) on the subject of intuitive thinking. In it the authors asserted that,

"intuitive thinking will break the traditions of organizations; it focuses on teamwork and recognizes only inputs and talents that contribute to innovation and out-of-theordinary thinking. Organizations that allow the culture of intuitive thinking will definitely excel in the competitive global landscape. They will rely on project teams and talents, as well as recognize and reward those out-of-ordinary thinkers [in the organization]."

David Oyedepo has employed this postmodern organizational practice and it is working for him.

Promotion in his Ministry is based on merit and not on familiarity or otherwise. Everyone is given recognition and adequately rewarded with respect to his or her performance and delivery. Diplomacy, when well harnessed, engenders loyalty from the people. “The loyalty of your team is priceless. It cannot be bought or secured by favours. It is not won overnight. Loyalty is only given by your team as they think their leader is worthy of it” [BILL NEWMAN].

David Oyedepo provided an enabling environment for all who work in his organization. He encourages his team to make maximum use of all facilities and materials provided within the organization for their personal improvement. He personally conducts regular empowerment training for his team members to enhance performance and expertise. He looks for ways to personally help them fix their individual challenges to prove he cares for them. He once took his closest team of officials in his Ministry to the Redemption Camp to meet the man of God, his father, Pastor E.A. Adeboye, the General Overseer of the Redeemed Christian Church of God. On getting there, he told the man of God, “Sir, I brought them to you so you may personally give them your phone number. Perhaps they might like to confide in you on certain things they probably are

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hesitant to tell me because of the [bureaucratic] nature of our [hierarchical] relationship and operations. That is level tact! Whitley David said, “A good supervisor is a catalyst, not a drill sergeant. He creates an atmosphere where intelligent people are willing to follow him. He doesn't command; he convinces.”

Another area where David Oyedepo typifies indisputable sense of diplomacy is his willingness to accept blame for every observable wrong in the organization. This he often says whenever he speaks on the accomplishment of the organization: “If it is good, you did it (referring to his congregation); and if it is otherwise, I am responsible.” He has simply employed the Window/ Mirror principle of leadership. A great leader gives credit to the people when things are going well. But when things are going the other way, he bears the blame and takes responsibility. This is how the principle works: when the organization is doing well, you look through the window and say, “these are the people that made it happen.” When the organization is doing badly, you look in your mirror

and say, “Yes, I take responsibility”.

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In his book, *It's Your Ship*, former US. Navy Captain Michael Abrashoff writes, “Whenever I could not get the results I wanted, I swallowed my temper and turned inward to see if I was part of the problem. I asked myself three questions: Did I clearly articulate the goal? Did I give people enough time and resources to accomplish the task? Did I give them enough training? I discovered that 90 per cent of the time, I was at least as much a part of the problem as my people were”.

Many times David Oyedepo had needed to retrace his steps for a repositioning. Through his books and electronic messages he has used such experiences as analogy to help others to take the right step in the right direction. He is not shy or ashamed of sharing with the world the instances when he made mistakes in decision making. It is general knowledge that Thomas Edison made frantic efforts to achieve the evolution of the electric bulb for domestic use and he “failed” 9,999 times. One of his friends asked him in sheer mockery, “Won't you attempt to fail again this 10,000th time?” Thomas Edison sympathized with his narrow-minded friend with an answer seasoned with burning optimism, “No, I did not

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fail 9,999 times; I've succeeded in detecting 9,999 ways in which an electric bulb will not evolve.” According to the intelligent diagnosis of Igho Otejiri Orirenru in his book, *The Miracle of Purpose*, “[Edison's] answer was a stunning lesson in readjustment and flexibility”. Thomas Edison later became the first scientist in the world to develop a system that facilitated the distribution of electric power for domestic use (homes, offices, and etcetera). His company began producing electricity for homes in New York City in 1882 and eventually, homes all over the world began to use electricity. Among many industrial companies established by Thomas Edison is General Electric Company, which is still thriving till today.

Obviously, there is no arrogant individual that can accomplish the dimension of feat as reflected in the life and ministry of David Oyedepo. It takes diplomacy seasoned with humility. When diplomacy mingles with humility, the product is one spiritual magnetic field that naturally attracts followership. This has

reflected in the way he honours his lieutenants in public. Most times he, like a forerunner, would be the one to prepare the heart of the congregation in readiness for a ministration to be taken by his lieutenant, David Abioye, and he does it with all sense of duty and honour. During Shiloh 2011, while introducing David Abioye, he began by saying, “You will

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like to join me to welcome this precious man of God that has stayed through in this ministry from inception. One of my most successful protégés (*Yelling, clapping in the congregation*) in ministry who is swimming in the same dimension of grace today [as I do], I'm blessed to have him, and I'm proud of him. Would you join me in welcoming this morning, Bishop David Abioye (*Yelling, clapping*)...” Then, there came climbing the platform, David Abioye. The man of God continued, “Can't you see he is adding a lot of weight... (*Yelling, clapping*) if you have spiritual eyes you can see that. We are gaining weight at the same level... (*Yelling, clapping*)”

David Oyedepo is not the type that teases or cajoles people. That will be tantamount to hypocrisy and it will be inimical to the health of his organization. He naturally creates a friendly platform for mutual interaction with his subordinates, thereby promoting a sense of belonging within the team. It is all about putting the people first. Though you will still come first but you must have the humility and ability to put the people first as a true leader. By so doing, your follower will do anything to achieve both the organizational goals and your personal cravings. Just like the three lieutenants of King David in the Bible who risked their lives to meet the personal longing of their master.

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King David had longed for water from nowhere else but the well of Bethlehem. It was practically a difficult task because the barricade of their archenemy, the Philistine at the threshold of Bethlehem was already an obvious bloody huddle to overcome. Yet his three boys still put their lives on the line and defied the barrier. They successfully came back with their master's desire. That's amazing. Not all leaders may enjoy such a degree of loyalty but it is only leaders like David who put the people first that can. The question here is, Was David really thirsty or he just wanted to test the loyalty of his boys? The action David took in response to their heroic feat made one ask the question. David refused to drink the water but poured it on the ground, saying,

“Be it far from me, O LORD, that I should do this: is not this the blood of the men that went in jeopardy of their lives? Therefore he would not drink it...”

Even if he were truly thirsty, David demonstrated he put the people first, and he showed he appreciated their efforts for endangering their lives for his sake.

David Oyedepo will not stop to always show appreciation to all in his team, individual performance notwithstanding. He gives kudos to all in the team, to

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both the exemplary performers and the plodders who drag the efforts by doing things their own way and pace. He is always proud of the accomplishment of the team work and always encourages the team for better performance. He organizes feasts and always gives his team credit for their successes. He does not shy away from taking the personal responsibility of dealing with his team members as individuals, contacting them through the phone and encouraging them to share their heart. He has also passed this attribute down the hierarchy, thereby keeping touch with every member in his organization. This has resulted in people returning with a sense of appreciation, smiles and increased performance.

David Oyedepo indeed is a high performer and encourager. He is not hasty to crucify any erring member, knowing that as growth occurs, mistakes will be made. He accepts honest mistakes as the price for innovation. He gives everyone a large room for personal adjustment and character repositioning in conformity with organizational ethics. David Oyedepo has always enjoyed absolute loyalty from his subordinates and he is still enjoying it because he will always put them first. That is the power of wisdom in the life of a dynamic leader.

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Bill Newman

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HUMILITY

“How truly teachable you are is measured by how much you can learn, not from your superiors, but from your subordinates.”

E.A Adeboye, GO, RCCG

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umility is a vital spiritual virtue required by any leader to truly succeed. The

closest synonyms of humility are: self-effacement,

unpretentiousness, humbleness, modesty, meekness. Pride and arrogance are the closest antonyms of humility. A humble leader does not subscribe to selfaggrandizement. Isaac Newton once said, “if I could see further than others, it was because I stood on the shoulders of giants.” David Oyedepo is a humble man. Humility has little or nothing to do with a pious look or quiet countenance. Humility is purely an attitude and it is a spiritual attribute or virtue.

David Oyedepo is a man with a humble spirit, who is willing to sit and listen to the voice of the “least” person in his team. By his humility, he learnt to confide in people he could trust. He gives everyone around him a sense of importance by his willingness to share relevant information with them. David Oyedepo has never been known to ever claim he was self-made; no. Rather he will not stop telling the world the various personalities from whom he had contacted the grace and wisdom behind his exemplary feats. He declared, “There is no how I will stop mentioning [the name of the late sage] Kenneth E. Hagin [the apostle and father of the faith

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movement] in the yearly Shiloh gathering till forever...” because that was the man of God through whom he received the transference of the unusual grace that has generated the monumental ripples of results his Ministry has recorded. He is an example of giving credit to whom credit is due. He is such a man that will not accept the praises ascribed to him, but he will always rechannel them to God the giver of the strength and grace that had enabled him to achieve whatever people are eulogizing him for. The great scientist and inventor, Albert Einstein once declared, “Many times a day I realize how much my own outer and inner life is built upon the labors of my fellow men, both living and dead, and how earnestly I must exert myself in order to give in return as much as I have received.”

Here is a man who sheds tears on hearing some thought provoking testimonies shared upon the altar of Faith Tabernacle. Sometimes he would rise and lift up his hands in appreciation to the Lord who has made it possible through his Ministry. After such testimonies, he would mount the pulpit to comment and exonerate himself from the glory thereof. He once said, “I have never lost any virtue since I started Ministry, virtue belongs to Jesus, and He is the one whose virtue goes out to heal. If I will have to lose virtue for those healing, I

would have exhausted all.” Here are the words of Bill Newman, a man I suddenly fell in love with through the insight from his book, 10 Laws of Leadership, he said, “one of the surest evidence of greatness is a humble spirit. The first test of a truly great person is his humility. A humble person can neither be put down nor exalted; they can neither be humiliated nor honored; they remain the same person under all circumstances.” Those descriptions best match David Oyedepo. He never paid his detractors or opponents back in their own coins. In my book: *Triumphing in Leadership despite Oppositions*, I wrote: “There is no resistance that can conquer or quell the burning passion of a real revolutionary”.

David Oyedepo has never embraced any praise of men under any circumstances. Living for self is living for doom. Self-centredness is another name for the letter “I”. “I” is in the centre of sin, “I” is in the centre of pride, and “I” is in the centre of anxiety! David Oyedepo is never an “I” person, rather he is a “we” person. The story was told of Toscanini, of how he humbly responded to his orchestra when his orchestra burst into applause at a rehearsal because they realized the height to which he had lifted them, they were so proud of him, but here was what he said in response, “It is not me, it is

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Beethoven”. That is the attitude of a humble leader, and David Oyedepo typifies it. As mentioned earlier on how he once took his closest team of officials in the Ministry to the Redemption Camp to meet the man of God, his father, Pastor E.A. Adeboye, and told the man of God, “Sir, I brought them to you so you may personally give them your phone number, perhaps they might like to confide in you on certain things they probably are hesitant to tell me...”, it certainly will take another realm of thoughtfulness and high level humility to dare such!”

Pastor E.A. Adeboye once said, “How truly teachable you are is measured by how much you can learn, not from your superiors, but from your subordinates”. To be teachable is to first cultivate the right attitude, and that attitude is humility. David Oyedepo is a 360 degree learner, he learns and takes counsel from his subordinates. According to Bill Newman, “Leaders, because of their natures, tend to have blind spots. You may need a trusted friend to tell you how you are coming across to people. We are in a constant state of change. The leader needs constant appraisal. No one has arrived. No one has got it completely together.”

John C. Maxwell, the Leadership expert and author, in his book, *Winning with People*, said: “Each person we meet has the potential to teach us something”. It takes humility for the founder of an institution to remain obediently answerable to the Church Council (which he instituted in the first place). This, he has been doing from the inception of his Ministry, over thirty years ago till date. As vital as humility is, it is difficult to practise except one is spiritually inclined. Without the help of the Holy Spirit, the practice of humility will remain a difficult task. John Seiden, a 16th century English historian and Jurist once asserted: “Humility is a virtue all preach, none practice, and yet everybody is content to hear. The master thinks it good doctrine for his servant, the laity for the clergy, and the clergy for the laity.”

The story was told of Great Britain's greatest Admiral and Naval hero, Viscount Horatio Nelson. After the battle of Copenhagen, he refused an honour given him by the City of London, because he alone was to be honoured. Nelson replied, “Never till the City of London thinks justly of the merits of my brave companions on 2 April can I, their commander, receive any attention from the City of London.” That is humility par excellence! One of Nelson's great

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characteristics as a commander was his willingness to give full credit to his officers and men. David Oyedepo will always intone: “No mortal man has the capacity to build an institution of this magnitude! If anyone boasts that he did, God will kill him. God is the doer!” He will once in a while remind his congregation: “This is the University you built; you need to go there and take a look round. I could not accomplish this; if my generation's assets were all put together, we could not accomplish this feat. This is your University! This is your Canaan Land! We want Covenant University to be the Harvard of Nigeria.”

Isaac Newton also was a humble man who never wanted his praise sung beyond measure. His humility was deeply rooted in his spirituality, which also was the root of the inspiration behind all his discoveries. It is no wonder, as Bernard Baruch remarked, “Millions saw the apple fall, but Newton was the one who asked why”. One of his contemporaries, Voltaire once pounced on Isaac Newton harshly in criticism for stating that Daniel 12:4 might mean that human beings would eventually develop a system of transportation that would enable a person to travel at a speed of fifty miles per hour. Isaac Newton's humility reflected in

his reluctance to publish the results of his proven discoveries until long after

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development. Isaac Newton once said, “I can take my telescope and look millions of miles into the space, but I can lay it aside and go into my room, shut the door, get down on my knees in earnest prayer, and see more of heaven and get closer to God than I can be assisted by all the telescopes and material agencies on the earth.” Isaac Newton never claimed to be a self-acclaimed originator despite all his monumental inventions.

David Oyedepo's level of humility is notable, considering the height to which God has exalted him. This man of God is not a title-crazy leader; he takes after his father, “Pastor Kenneth E. Hagin, who most times preferred to be addressed as “Brother Kenneth Hagin”. David Oyedepo unequivocally intones often, “There is no entitlement in title; only labourers are entitled to wages”. During the 25th anniversary of David Oyedepo's Ministry in 2006, a well-respected man of God in Nigeria was appreciating and eulogizing him on the altar of Faith Tabernacle, Ota. Then it got to a point the man of God looked in David Oyedepo's direction and pronounced, “You are the Archbishop of our time...” I chuckled where I was seated, and then I shifted my focus in David Oyedepo's direction to capture his facial reaction or response. He, in his characteristics style merely smiled and giggled, knowing

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well that such a title was not in the glossary of his heart. He would not accept it, except it is validated in the Word of God. Doubtless, some contemporary Christian leaders perhaps would have taken advantage of such a public proclamation from the mouth of such a revered figure, and hurriedly arrange for a kangaroo ceremonial ordination to bear the portfolio of an Archbishop, which definitely adds nothing to their spirituality! Ultimately, the office of an Archbishop is suitable for administrative convenience in a large church organization. There is nothing wrong with it. Yet, titles really do not make any man more spiritual than another (brother or sister) who knows his or her redemptive obligations and rights.

Indeed, if any church organization really requires an archbishopric, Living Faith Church Worldwide (Winners' Chapel International) requires it much more. But David Oyedepo will rather remain at par with his lieutenants; title-wise. This, in

a sense, places validity on his act of practical humility.

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*“From now, my sword is
your sword...”*

Kenneth Copeland

MENTORING

*“There are so many orphans in the body of Christ today...every
shadow at one time has been*

*Those who are ashamed to be called nurtured by another shadow. The sons of someone are never
permitted to be father to any.”*

David O. Oyedepo

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ho you follow largely determines what follows you, so goes the saying. It was Mike Murdock who said, 'Show me your

friends and I will tell you your future.' David Oyedepo got exposed to the reality of these principles from his early days. He consciously went in search of those he would love to be identified with. His first encounter with most great men around him began from the pages of the books they authored, particularly all of his foreign mentors and associates. From some of these books, he had definite and life changing encounters he would always talk about, referring to date, and instances. For example, he only encountered the man of God, Oswald J. Smith through his book, *The Man God Uses*. He never set his eyes on him at all.

Who is a mentor, or what does it mean to be a mentor or to be mentored? The Encarta dictionary defines a mentor as someone who serves as an adviser and supporter. Mentors are often older and more experienced personalities who advise and guide a younger and less experienced person. Indeed, one cannot explain what the word mentor signifies without referring to the great work of Homer in his poetic tale, titled *Odyssey*. Mentor, a character in the epic poetic tale, is a trusted friend to *Odyssey*, king of Ithaca. *Odyssey* had entrusted his kingdom and his son, Telemachus to Mentor's care and guidance when he

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(*Odyssey*) had to fight in the Trojan War. *Odyssey* did that purposely for Mentor to teach, monitor and guide the decisions of the little boy. In his expository book:

Pastoring for Maximum Results, John Oyebanji puts it this way; “ A mentor is the one who provides modeling, close supervision... and help in many areas such as discipline, encouragement, correction, confrontation and a calling to accountability”.

It is rare to find a man who celebrates an encounter with a fellow man the way David Oyedepo does. He would always recall, quoting dates with precision, his encounters with men of higher spiritual order and the impartation that resulted. Interestingly, he did not have physical contact with a number of the men of God he often mentions. For instance in 1979, he listened to an audio message of A.A. Allen titled '*God is a killer.*' As he listened to the audio tape with rapt attention, according to him, he heard the man of God quote from 1 Samuel 2:6, 'The Lord killeth and maketh alive: he bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up'. For the first time the reality dawned on David that God also kills. He was stirred up by that exposition and according to him, his chicken heart changed to a lion's heart. From that day, he became overwhelmed with unusual boldness and confidence in the Lord, knowing his safety was heavily guaranteed. But one may say, Did he not only listen to an audio tape just the way anybody would? Yes, but he

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did it with his heart not just with his head. He did that in earnest expectation for an encounter not just to gather knowledge and feel excited. David has continued to tell the world about that encounter.

Just like the case of Oswald J. Smith and A.A. Allen, David never met Smith Wigglesworth in person. They had all died before he knew of them. Yet, he never stops celebrating Smith Wigglesworth, the man referred to as the Apostle of faith. His contact with T.L. Osborn was through his book titled *The Purpose of Pentecost* in 1976. That was where the Holy Spirit got revealed to him as a Personality and not just as mere experience. According to David, he read the book in one sitting, cover to cover as he began to experience a change of orientation about the Personality of the Holy Spirit. That was long before he eventually had physical contact with him and a mentee/mentor relationship was established between them. David Oyedepo also got connected to Oral Roberts via his books. One major inspiration he drew from Oral Roberts was the wisdom behind Oral Roberts University (ORU). One day, David travelled to the United States and walked the length and breadth of the campus, appreciating its beauty and the wisdom behind its establishment. He saw an example of a decent and

serene Christian university. David simply concluded with all sense of modesty and determination: “This can

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happen anywhere!” What David meant was that such a model university can be duplicated anywhere including his country, Nigeria. That was the day the seed of Covenant University was sown in his heart, consciously or unconsciously. David eventually became a family friend, and indeed, family member of the Roberts. Richard Roberts once flew to Nigeria to worship at Faith Tabernacle as well as to behold the magnificent work of God in Canaan Land. Roberts' facial expression when he mounted the altar of Faith Tabernacle showed how greatly he appreciated the splendour and ambience of the great auditorium. That was the same way David felt when he landed in Oral Roberts University (ORU) many years earlier.

One man of great repute that touched David Oyedepo's life beyond any reasonable doubt was the great American Faith proponent, Kenneth E. Hagin. It all began when he got exposed to Kenneth Hagin's books as far back as 1976 as a young curious Christian. Truly, Kenneth Hagin's books are simply irresistible to any Christian who hopes to see a future in his or her Christian journey. His works are packaged in such a descriptive and narrative manner that a sensitive reader will experience a tangible mental picture of the content. David became endeared to Kenneth Hagin and got engrossed in his titles to the extent that he

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became a self-appointed vendor of the man's works. In 1986, David attended Kenneth Hagin's camp meeting in Tulsa, Oklahoma. According to him, as his eyes got transfixed on the man of God, he prayed: 'Lord, whatever made [Kenneth] Hagin Hagin, (the calmness, the noiselessness, the supernatural command...) I need it'. It was a simple and short prayer. Then from the eyes of faith he saw Hagin's face shine and transformed to that of a baby, and suddenly he experienced a transference of the anointing (the spirit of faith shot in his direction) from the man of God. While sobbing uncontrollably from that experience, David heard an audible voice of confirmation from the Lord saying: “My son David, the baton is passed on to you”. From that day, Kenneth Hagin became his foremost spiritual father, and he treated him as such till Kenneth Hagin went to be with the Lord. He became a practical promoter of Kenneth E.

Hagin in Nigeria and indeed, the African sub-region. He pointed many people to Kenneth Hagin's books.

When Hagin was about to die, the Lord spoke to David, “someone as close to you as your cloth is about to go”. Then David enquired, “Lord could it be my biological father?” The Lord said “No”. David became more curious, as he enquired again, “Hagin?” The Lord said “Yes”. Immediately David and his wife took a flight to Tulsa, Oklahoma to visit him. Two weeks later,

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Kenneth Hagin passed on. Even in his death, David still celebrates Hagin as his father, whose spiritual DNA he is glad to share. In 2010, Kenneth Wayne Hagin, Kenneth Hagin's son, was at Faith Tabernacle and preached. That shows how the family tie has become more of a trans-generational one.

Another man of God that has impacted David Oyedepo is Kenneth Copeland, the man from whom David was imparted with the prosperity anointing. Long before David had physical contact with him, he had celebrated him in several forums. One day, he traveled to the United States of America for a programme and he was assigned to the very hotel room where Kenneth Copeland was said to have been lodged the previous time he had visited the hotel. David took the information more spiritual than casual. According to him, he rolled on the bed praying: “Lord, when a dead body was dumped in the sepulchre of Elisha, the body jerked back to life, Copeland is not dead, he is alive, Lord, whatever grace Kenneth Copeland carries, I desire the same [via this contact]”. Then in a night vision he saw a man with an amputated arm which defied healing. Out of deep compassion, David commanded the man to be healed in Jesus' name. Immediately, a brand new arm came forth and the man got restored. From this experience, according to David,

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he heard the voice of the Lord saying: From today, I have taken you into the creative realm of your Ministry. Presently, especially now that Kenneth Hagin has gone to be with the Lord, Kenneth Copeland is another international preacher he refers to as a father in the faith. In 2007, Kenneth and his wife, Gloria Copeland were at Faith Tabernacle and ordained the two sons of David Oyedepo, David Jr. and Isaac into Ministry as pastors. Before his departure, Kenneth Copeland looked David Oyedepo in the eyes and gave his departing

verdict, which signified transference of unction; “from now,” he declared, David's eyes were curiously fixed on him in his usual way of preparedness for fresh fire. “My sword is your sword and my breastplate is your breastplate!”

That was purely another spiritual elevation for a faithful mentee to a mentor. Since that day, the connection between the Oyedepos and the Copelands has continued to wax stronger. The latest encounter David had with Kenneth Copeland will forever remain a memorable one. It will remain indelible not only in the slate of David's heart, but generations to come will know of it, because history has decided to make it so. In November 2012, he had honoured an invitation to visit the Copelands in the United States. The short visit suddenly turned out to be that of another moment of dramatic impartation for David Oyedepo. Kenneth

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Copeland, in a Holy Ghost-initiated solemn meeting, literally cast the mantle of the grace at work in his life on him. He looked him in the eyes and released some heavy utterances: “Every gift of the Spirit,” he began, “every anointing at work in me, every endowment given me is transferred to you!” Then the man of God, Copeland burst into a typical Holy Ghost-motivated laughter to seal the impartation. It was a day David will forever remember and cherish.

As it has always been said, “Charity begins at home”. Doubtless, David Oyedepo's flight to stardom is not untraceable to some home-based coaches and mentors. The most prominent of them is Pastor E.A. Adeboye, the General Overseer of the Redeemed Christian Church of God. Pastor E.A. Adeboye is the only Nigerian preacher that David Oyedepo proudly and fondly referred to as his [spiritual] father, and indeed “Daddy G O”, as he is fondly called by his followers and admirers, has become the institutionalized spiritual grandfather of every Winners Chapel worshipper. David Oyedepo's steps were divinely ordered towards Pastor Adeboye when he was about to go into full time Ministry in September 1983. Before then both of them had neither met nor spoken to each other. The Lord had told him in July 1983, saying: I will not have you go as others, I would have hands laid on you after the order of

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Joshua in Deuteronomy 34:10 ...send for my servant Adeboye and you shall be imparted with the Spirit of wisdom”.

Then the day came, on 17th September 1983, David Oyedepo and his wife Faith Oyedepo were anointed and ordained into Ministry by Pastor E.A. Adeboye. From that moment till date, David's allegiance to Pastor E.A. Adeboye and his Ministry has been seamless. He loves the man of God with passion. Whatever touches Adeboye touches him. Nobody that ever makes derogatory statements about Adeboye can ever be his friend. Both Satan and all the living saints know that Adeboye is the spiritual father of David Oyedepo. The covenant relationship of David Oyedepo and E.A Adeboye has generated constant comments among Oyedepo's contemporaries who are also Adeboye's sons.

It is good to close this chapter with the introduction of the *Lion*, as David Oyedepo fondly calls him, a spiritual giant in Nigerian pentecostal history. His name is Benson Idahosa, the lion that roars in the jungle and puts all the beasts in total disarray. Benson Idahosa was the father of contemporary pentecostalism in Nigeria. David Oyedepo, acting on divine instruction, left his base and took off to Benin City, Nigeria to establish

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spiritual connectivity with Benson Idahosa. The moment Idahosa met David Oyedepo, he knew the spiritual heir, and the proper eligible candidate for his mantle had come. David Oyedepo also knew that the carrier of the raw faith he required to face every gang of opposition in the region of persecution had been found. Benson Idahosa had zero tolerance for witches and wizards. He ruthlessly molested them wherever he found them. From him, David Oyedepo was imparted with spiritual fearlessness. The bond of their relationship became so strong and obvious that the charismatic movement in Nigeria was forced to come to terms with the father-son tie of Benson Idahosa and David Oyedepo.

One day, David just arrived from a trip to the United States and the Lord told him: *All you came with (cash gift), go now and sow it into the life of my servant [Benson Idahosa] in Benin.* Without hesitation, David travelled to Benin City and handed all over to him. The man of God looked at him passionately and responded with a terrific utterance: *"I put it back in your hand, but from today, your hands will not know dryness."* David went back to his base with bundles of prophetic blessings from the man of God. Benson Idahosa was never found to be fond of any other preacher in Nigeria the way he was fond of David Oyedepo. Matter of fact, Benson Idahosa

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consciously nurtured him as the one fit to operate in the apostolic office the way he did. Indeed he prophesied that David would be greater.

In March 1990, the *lion*, Benson Idahosa called him on phone and asked: “What are you doing tomorrow; can you meet me in Makurdi (in the Northern region of Nigeria) tomorrow?” David knew that whatever plan he had for the next day was already cancelled by that invitation from his father. He did not see it as a question to be considered, but an instruction. The next day, he took off on a six-hour journey to Makurdi. On his arrival he visited Benson Idahosa in his hotel room. The man looked at him and told him to get in his bathroom for a shower. David was a little reluctant, because he knew he could do that at his convenience in his own hotel room. Then the Lion *roared* again, “get in there boy!” As he emerged from the bathroom, the man of God looked at him with deep sense of appreciation for his loyalty. Then he asked a rhetorical question: “You mean you came...so you came?” He commanded him: “Go on your knees!” David did so hastily. Then he pronounced a short but potent and indelible blessing on David thus: “From today, I impart to you gifts upon time! Before the need arises, the supply shall be made available.”

David has not stopped referring to that encounter ever since to show how much he treasured the impartation,

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particularly when he realized that there was no particular task given him by the man of God after over six hours of driving under the scorching sun that characterizes that axis of Nigeria. Benson Idahosa only called him to bless him. Till date, David's absolute loyalty to Benson Idahosa has not declined one bit though the lion has been translated to the great beyond. He is still loyal to his family and remains connected to his Ministry.

David Oyedepo makes it clear that “There is no influence that has not been influenced. Only the sons of men become fathers of men.” This is indeed a truism. There is no self-made man in the universe; it is arrogance that makes one think so. According to David Oyedepo, “Those who are ashamed to be called the sons of someone are never permitted to be fathers to any”. Doubtless, acknowledging every human conveyor of virtues and values in one's life is one's ultimate ticket to unending exploits in human endeavour. According to him, “Our craving for originality is the undoing of many destinies. [The truth is] every shadow was once shadowed” There is no therefore any original leader. Leadership virtue is transmitted from one person to another.

***FACES OF HIS
MENTORS***

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KENNETH E. HAGIN

K

Kenneth Erwin Hagin was born on August 20, 1917 in McKinney, Texas. He was an influential American preacher. He is often referred to as the

'father' (or 'granddaddy') of the "Word of Faith" movement. Many of his followers often refer to him affectionately as

'Papa Hagin' and more commonly 'Brother Hagin'. He was a part of the Voice of Healing Revival in the U.S. in the 1940s

and 50s together with Oral Roberts, Gordon Lindsay T. L. Osborn. In his books, *I Went to Hell* and *What Faith Is*, Kenneth Hagin gave an account of his childhood experience. He wrote on how he was sickly as a child, suffering from a deformed heart, and what was believed to be an incurable blood disease.

He became bedfast at the age of 15, expecting death. In April 1933, he reported dying three times in 10 minutes, and each time seeing the horrors of and then returning to life. But thereafter, he overcame by faith and his Ministry began as a young preacher.

David would always enthuse, "I carry the spiritual DNA of Kenneth Hagin..." meaning he is an authentic spiritual son of Kenneth Hagin. David has ever been passionate about his father, Kenneth E. Hagin, so much that hardly would a message conclude without Hagin's name being mentioned. Hagin has a special place in his heart that no other mentor competes with.



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KENNETH & GLORIA COPELAND

K

enneth Copeland was born on December 6, 1936 in Lubbock, Texas. He is an American author, public speaker, and televangelist. Prior to his

conversion to Christianity in November 1962, Copeland was a recording artist on the Imperial Records label. In the 1960s; he became a pilot and chauffeur for Oral Roberts. In the fall of 1967, he enrolled in Oral Roberts University in Tulsa, Oklahoma.

He is the founder of Kenneth Copeland Ministries, and a proponent of prosperity teachings. He was a member of the Oral Roberts University Board of Regents until 2008. Kenneth Copeland Ministries established a private airport named Kenneth Copeland Airport to serve the area of Fort Worth, Texas. The ministry of Kenneth and Gloria Copeland has impacted David Oyedepo in such an immeasurable dimension.

His first contact with them was in 1977 through Gloria's book, titled 'Prosperity is the Will of God,' where he had his much-celebrated encounter with the

secret of divine unending supply. Kenneth Copeland has an unexplainable affection for David Oyedepo's Ministry and family. In 2007, the two sons of David Oyedepo (David Jr. and Isaac) were ordained as pastors by Kenneth and Gloria Copeland at Faith Tabernacle, Canaan Land, Nigeria.



T. L. OSBORN

T

Thomas Lee Osborn was born December 23, 1923. He was an American Pentecostal evangelist and author based in Tulsa,

Oklahoma. His Ministry has impacted and influenced many of his followers across the world, particularly African sub-regions and peculiarly, Nigeria. Osborn's crusade in Uganda in 1957 is said to have laid the foundation for substantial growth of Pentecostalism in that country.

T.L. Osborn had a strong and trusted relationship tie with the late Archbishop Benson Idahosa of Nigeria. David Oyedepo had been influenced by T.L.

Osborn's book, *Purpose of Pentecost* at an early age of 22.

There exists a father-son tie between the two. In 1999, just before the official dedication of Faith Tabernacle (a Guinness Book of World Records acclaimed the world's largest church auditorium in Canaan Land, Ota, Nigeria), T.L. Osborn had knelt right on the near-completed altar, prayed and prophesied. He went to be with the Lord on February 14, 2012.



Leadership Secrets of

PASTOR E. A. ADEBOYE

E

noch Adejare Adeboye was born in Ifewara, Osun State, Nigeria. His childhood was characterized by abject poverty. He did not have the opportunity of

wearing a pair of shoes till he was 14. He later became a PhD holder in applied mathematics from the University of Lagos. He worked as a lecturer in mathematics at the Universities of Lagos and Ilorin. After joining the Redeemed Christian Church of God, RCCG, he began to translate the sermons of his then Pastor and founder, Rev. Josiah Olufemi Akindayomi, from Yoruba into English.

He was appointed the General Overseer, RCCG in 1981, after the death of Pa Akindayomi, who had died the previous year. For three years he combined his lecturing career at University of Ilorin with his pastoral call until his resignation from the University system in favour of his divine assignment. RCCG was not

well known before Adeboye took charge, but now the branches of the Church have spread to over 100 countries, including more than 14,000 in Nigeria. Adeboye's vision has been to put a church within five minutes of every person trekking distance to every household on earth. He is the most influential pastor in Nigeria. In 2008, Newsweek magazine named Adeboye one of the 50 most



powerful people in the world. Though they are in the same country, Adeboye and David Oyedepo never met or communicated with each other before the commissioning and ordination of David Oyedepo into Ministry. By divine instruction, E. A. Adeboye was the one who poured the oil of priesthood upon David Oyedepo. From that day, till date, there has been an unusual, passionate and enviable father/son bond between them.

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ARCHBISHOP B. A. IDAHOSA

B

enson Andrew Idahosa was a mysterious man. He fought his way to live life! He was frail and sickly as a baby, with momentary fainting. It was so bad

that one day, his mother presumed him to have died and abandoned him in a pile

of garbage. But he lived to become a renowned figure. Papa, as he was fondly called by his followers, became a charismatic pentecostal preacher, and founder of the Church of God Mission International with headquarters in Benin City Nigeria. The tentacle of his Church spread across Africa, Europe and America. He was the first pentecostal Archbishop in Nigeria, and for some years after he died, there was no pentecostal preacher in Nigeria with an Archbishop Title. He was renowned for his fearlessness. He was the founding President of the Pentecostal Fellowship of Nigeria, PFN. Benson Idahosa toured more countries of the world in his lifetime than any president of Nigeria ever did. T. L. Osborn, a renowned American healing evangelist, once described Benson Idahosa as the greatest African ambassador of the Apostolic Christian faith to the world.

He was born on September 11, 1938 and died on March 12, 1998 at the age of 59. He is fondly remembered for his physical confrontation with witches and



wizards in Africa, and, for stopping a meeting of the world witches from taking place in Benin City, Nigeria. At the time of his death in 1998, he was reputed as having preached to more whites than any black man, and to more blacks than any white man. The *Lion*, as David Oyedepo fondly calls him, remains a spiritual hero to him in Ministry for life.

*Get out of my office, devil! Do
you think I am faking it here!*

David O. Oyedepo

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INTEGRITY

*“Any Church or organization that is not financially accountable will
soon disappear into
oblivion... Nothing corrupts impropriety.” ministries like financial*
David O. Oyedepo

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L

eadership is conceived as emphasizing probity and accountability. People like to be led on the premises of certain terms and conditions. On

the subject of integrity, Dwight D. Eisenhower, an astute illustrator has this to say: “In order to be a leader, a man must have followers. And to have followers, a man must have their confidence. Hence the supreme quality for the leader is, unquestionably, integrity. Without it no real success is possible... whether it is on a football field, in the army, or in an office. If a man's associates find him guilty of being phony, if they find he lacks forthright integrity, he will fail. His teachings and action must square with each other. The first great need, therefore, is integrity and high purpose”.

“The integrity of men is to be measured by their conduct, not by their profession” [Junius]. As the saying goes, “character is never erected on a neglected conscience”. D.L. Moody advised “take care of your character, and your reputation will take care of itself”. When you break your word, you break something that cannot be mended. One thing you can give and still keep is your word. David Oyedepo is a man who upholds the law of integrity. His words are his bond. He appreciates the priceless worth in the counsel that a promise should be given with caution and kept with care. He will never veer into the comedy of error of indulging in anything no

matter how tempting that will taint his good name with the tar of scandal. He frowns at any appearance of misconduct or misappropriation. Long before he entered into the ministry, he had developed certain nonnegotiable moral codes

below which he must not fall. The moment he discovered his purpose for living as a young man, he began to build a solid foundation upon which the enviable edifice of his colorful future would stand. One of the pillars of this edifice is integrity. As a youth corps member, he was entrusted with the position of a senior officer.

He told the story of a certain scenario that took place in the organization where he was serving as a youth corps member. A certain officer was fond of making requisition for money that covered a trip he never actually made on behalf of the organization and had always had his way. But one day, David Oyedepo was stirred up with much distaste and vowed to stop the man from continuing such an ignoble act of fraud. David did just that. Truth well told, according to him, such act of stealing was never repeated by anyone as long as he remained in that organization. He has been a covenant practitioner from his teen days, while staying with his grandmother. From childhood, he knew there is a portion of every income that must never be spent but must be set aside for God. Out of curiosity one day he

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asked his grandmother, whom he observed always parted with some coins into a small round safe made of clay: “What is this meant for, mama?” The old woman told him, “This is God's portion that makes the remaining meaningful”. Since that day, the covenant of tithing was etched on the tablet of his heart. There is no pressure that would ever make him withhold or spend his tithe.

A man's integrity is a function of his character. Winston Churchill said, “...you can tell the character of a man by the choices he made under pressure”. Integrity is not a gift, it is a choice. It is a product of personal resolution. It is not a virtue to toy with because credibility is very hard to regain if and when lost. God delights in men and women of integrity. God was so boastful of Job that he told Satan, “Have you considered my servant, Job, for there is no one like him on the earth; a blameless and an upright man, one who fears God and turns away from evil...” Despite his perplexity, Job still maintained his integrity [2:9; 27:5]. Integrity simply means uprightness. When a man's integrity is lost, he has lost his significance without knowing. Integrity is a priceless asset that is more precious than all the riches in the world, and it will always hold you to account, if you promise more than you can perform or turn into an artful dodger on the day of reckoning that demands that you honor your words. It's not a ninety-nine percent

thing. It's absolute one hundred percent commitment to do what is right always, and speak the truth even if this will hurt your position or upstage you from your comfort zone. It's an every moment thing, for it'll be an error-prone judgment to measure men and women by what they do on Sunday or service days, without regarding what they do all the week after and every ticking moment of the day!

Integrity is what will arouse in you the unstoppable impulse to protect your name and the integrity of God that backs it up, with all your might and every ounce of your being. Come what may, rain or shine, you'll remember when tempted, to be careful of your name; a good name and a clean name you'll be bequeathing to the coming generation which will speak volumes through the ages when you're long gone. A good name is better and more precious than all the gold, diamond and silver in the world. It is not just for now. It is forever standing as the eternal sentry as one generation passes the baton to another in a never-ending flow of human renewal. David Oyedepo has a claim that has not been faulted by anyone. He will always unequivocally echo it loud and clear to whom it may concern, saying: "Since the inception of this Ministry, I have never under any condition, knocked on any man's door to ask or beg for any form of assistance or help to get anything done".

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Integrity is the quality of possessing and steadfastly adhering to higher moral principles or professional standards. There is nothing that wins public confidence like integrity. It is written in the book of Psalms concerning David, 'so he fed them according to the integrity of his heart and guided them by the skillfulness of his hands' [78:72]. Integrity thrives and is sustained on the platform of good conscience as powered by the Word of God. Our conscience is most times vulnerable to defilement if not maintained within the framework of God's Word. It's the right roadmap and compass that ensures we drive straight even in this twisting lane of this wicked world where another variant of AIDS, otherwise addressed in full as Acquired Integrity Deficiency Syndrome, has defiled many souls in its rampaging epidemic. Vows these days are desperately made in storms but conveniently forgotten in calm moments, no thanks to the acute deficiency in the area of keeping promises made.

Based on his discovery in the Word of God and through anointed books, he vowed never to borrow under any circumstances. He discovered that borrowing

keeps a man in enslavement and at the mercy of the lender. He discovered that borrowing is not covered by the terms of the covenant. That was October 4th 1981 and till date, he has never given borrowing a second thought. That is

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integrity! Now in his Ministry, it is a legacy and beyond that, it is a signed and sealed covenant never to borrow. David Oyedepo made a categorical statement to further establish the validity of his integrity. He said, 'We can address any set of people in the land because we are not beneficiaries of whatever they carry to offer.' On September 6, 1983, God told him never to look unto man while meditating on a portion of the scripture saying, "Anytime you look unto man, never claim to be looking unto me ... but they looked unto me and they were lightened and their faces were never ashamed".

Financial integrity has been part and parcel of David Oyedepo since the inception of the Ministry. Integrity, just like faithfulness is a virtue of the heart. Hard work is not a substitute for integrity. Hard work does not attract reward as integrity would. David Oyedepo once said: "Open accountability opens up destiny. You don't lose anything with openness." This subject brings to fore again the covenant naming of his second son. All he had to organize it was only ten Naira. However, one of his associates reminded him that as the founder of the Ministry, he could take as much as he wanted from the account. Nobody would probe him. His response to such temptation was a proof of the validity of his integrity. He said, "It is the naming of my baby not the Ministry's baby." Period! He did not extend his expenditure beyond what he had, N10 (Ten Naira).

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By being a man of integrity, you have nothing to lose and you have everything to gain. In the early days of his Ministry, a friend of the Ministry sent a seed cheque of N1 million personally issued in favour of David Oyedepo. He asked the officer that brought the cheque: "by the way, is there any letter attached to it?" The officer affirmed; "Yes sir, a short note". He went and soon returned with the note to the man of God. Then he read from the short note attached to the cheque the following statement: "for the work of the Ministry". David Oyedepo told the young man that brought the cheque, the cheque belongs to the Ministry and it is not mine. Then the officer reminded him: "but sir, your name is on the cheque." David made him realize that the cheque was written in his favour probably because the man that drew it did not

know the correct name of the Ministry. Pronto the money was rechanneled to the appropriate account. That's financial integrity! That was self-discipline!

David Oyedepo warns, 'Be careful about prying into whatever anybody has. The sanctity of your calling is in your accountability and probity.' Adhering to the virtue of integrity requires a good understanding of the secret behind it. One day, in 1997, he was in a car going from Kaduna to Owerri to minister at a Full Gospel Businessmen Fellowship meeting. Then he heard God speak to him saying: *“You are not sent by the people, you are sent to the people. The people are not responsible for your going,*

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your sender is responsible. Therefore, do not raise money, raise men, and you'll have more money you'll ever require for ministry. And now, tell them when you get to that meeting: far be it that the Almighty God will depend on your wretched purses, but your wretched purses depend on him for replenishing.” He got to the meeting and told them exactly the way God told him.

Once during the annual Shiloh event, an invited special guest minister from another country, a renowned, seasoned and well respected man of God, had delivered a captivating and impactful message, then the unexpected happened. The man of God, after a brief introduction of the next thing he was about doing, raised his voice to raise special sacrificial offering of different categories. It had never happened in David Oyedepo's Ministry. Then, right there where he was seated he became uncomfortable and he needed to do something immediately. Without delay, in his seated position, David made a sign to the guest minister to stop the fund raising attempt. It was abruptly aborted.

According to David Oyedepo, understanding is simply to know a thing to the point of practising it. It is going beyond knowing to the point of seeing. Nobody doubts what he sees. He posits that financial stewardship is a requirement in our quest for financial integrity and freedom. This man has been accountable and

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answerable to the executive committee, which he instituted and commissioned, from inception. He must retire all receipts after every trip. Recently, he brought out from the archives the financial record book of the early days of the Ministry. On April 9, 1984, the total offering was ten Naira (N10) only. Accountability is

a must for anyone to picture a significant future.

Just before Covenant University kicked off, an officer from a visiting verification team ran to David Oyedepo privately to remind him of the Nigerian factor. He told him how expedient it was to set apart a good amount of money as graft for the team (in order to have good recommendation from them). The man was probably sincere, but he was sincerely wrong, especially for going to such a leader! David viewed the counsel like a computer engineer would view a malicious virus coming to destroy his most valued data. He stood and faced him with fury, then he saw war in his eyeballs and he became jittery as he stared at him, then David roared like a lion at him: “Get out of my office, Devil! Do you think I am faking it here?” The man ran out through the nearest exit. That shows his high distaste for bribery and corruption as well as the practitioners of the same. It has never been recorded in the history of the Ministry that a bribe was given or taken, either to achieve anything or to get anything done.

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David Oyedepo often makes statements such as: 'If it comes from man, then it can be blocked; No man has my blessing in his pocket.' Indeed his statements validate the integrity of the scriptures. God cannot be threatened by figures because He is the author of figures and the sole owner of all the monies in the world. God spoke by the mouth of Haggai in the scriptures thus: “And my city through prosperity shall yet be spread abroad” [1:17]. This also was validated by Zechariah, when, by divine illumination, he said: ...The silver is mine and the gold is mine saith the Lord of host” [2:8].

In the words of David Oyedepo, financial probity is one of the keys in the school of leadership. Integrity is an unavoidable tool for any leader that is worth his or her salt. Financial probity is one of the keys for a healthy, sustainable and ever growing organization. Any Church or organization that is not financially accountable will soon disappear into oblivion. Nothing corrupts Ministries like financial impropriety. Any leader that refuses the platform of checks and balances will soon end his adventure in fiasco. Nothing is a substitute for financial probity. Impeccable integrity is in the refusal to follow the norm and the vogue, but the right and dignifying way of business operation. Integrity is the missing link in African leadership today.

Leadership Secrets of
energy...

David O. Oyedepo
DILIGENCE

“Desire without diligence is disaster. There is no future for an idle man, only workers prosper. One of the germs of poverty is

*idleness...spirituality
substitute for hard work.”is never a
David O. Oyedepo.*

30 miles

to your

Destination!

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It has been asserted that the first step into the terrain of leadership is self-assessment; a personal evaluation to know whether one is prepared to give

it all it takes. Leadership is summarized in one word; selflessness. It is self-giving. It is sacrifice. It is to suffer so as to offer. It is self-denial. It is one's willingness to give up things just for the benefit of others. Intellectual fitness is a must for anyone who is on the search for any leadership stool. Being ahead of others in a thing is what leadership is about. These are impossible without a good degree of diligence.

David Oyedepo embodies hard work, a man who will never indulge in pleasure or leisure at the expense of his work. If nothing works quite as hard-work and smartthinking, it's because nothing succeeds quite like success. There is a time when we must firmly choose the course we must follow, and having chosen, stick our neck all out with painstaking diligence to reach the destination, or be prepared for the endless drift of events to make the decision. Real winners are ordinary men and women with extraordinary inspiration, perspiration and drive to achieve daunting goals that will daze even the giants amongst men and women. A man or woman of value and success must be ever-ready to embrace

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challenges with a doughty spirit and unswerving diligence so he or she may live to feel the exhilaration of victory which only yields itself to the brave and the farsighted. Success in the business of life is the child of audacity, the will to win,

and passion to perform. Every individual aspiring to greatness will be inspired by the epic story of persistence of one of the greatest leaders of America, Abraham Lincoln:

Failed in business in 1831

Defeated for Legislature in 1832 Second failure in business in 1833 Suffered nervous breakdown in 1836 Defeated for Speaker in 1838

Defeated for Election in 1840

Defeated for Congress in 1843 Defeated for Senate in 1855

Defeated for Vice - presidency in 1856 Defeated for Senate in 1858

Elected President in 1860

Remember that it takes scores of years to be an overnight success. He who wakes up and finds himself successful, as it has been said, has not been asleep. According to Booker T. Washington, success is to be

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measured not as much as the position that one has reached in life as by the obstacles which he has overcome while trying to succeed.

David Oyedepo is an advocate of diligence. He believes in the dignity of labour. He will always posit, there is no future for an idle man. He has no regard for a lazy and slothful individual. Such people can never survive around him. He posits that 'a lazy man cannot walk in the shoes of a giant because every step is a long jump to him.' In the early days of his Ministry, he was living in a block of flats, where one of his friends, a lawyer also rented a flat. One day, some fellows came looking for the lawyer, and they supposed David Oyedepo was the lawyer, because every morning he was in his suit, ready for work. David Oyedepo treats business hour as business hour and not as anything else.

According to David, the undoing of many people is converting business hour to entertainment or leisure hours. They are engaged in matters that have no relation with the organizational or personal growth or profit. Except for very few unavoidable instances, David Oyedepo has never been known not to be on ground to conduct Sunday morning service at Faith Tabernacle. He is always found at his place of assignment. He is a

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man that demonstrates practical commitment and diligence to business. Everybody who is familiar with David Oyedepo knows when and where to visit him and when and where not to make such an attempt. He is focused; he is busy with his business: Kingdom business. “Seeth thou a man diligent in his business?” According to his school of thought, desire without diligence is a disaster. Only workers prosper. One of the germs of poverty is idleness. He posits that spirituality is never a substitute for hard work.

While challenges make others break down, it only ignites David to break records in everything he does; and in style and substance to the consternation of naySayers, to the respect of fellow labourers in the vineyard of the Lord, and to the admiration of millions of his admirers, who cannot but see the fingers of the Lord in his never-stopping-to-amaze exploits for the Lord and humankind, which keeps popping up every ticking second. With David Oyedepo, you can never have any dull moment; he's a man who believes that the largest room in the world is the room for improvement and that when you're through changing; you're through. For over 30 years David Oyedepo has invested an average of 16 hours daily in his assignment and is still waxing stronger each day. He operates without sweat on the strength of

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the divinity. He would always say, “I have not lost an ounce of energy since I began”. Years back, a medical doctor tested him and told him he had high blood pressure. He vehemently and violently responded, 'Not me, I cannot have high blood pressure!' The innocent and caring doctor was appalled and requested that he should look at the readings. Again he responded vehemently 'Not necessary, I didn't say I don't have it, I say I cannot have high blood pressure!' That was the end of any appearance of such. I therefore agree indeed the assertion is correct, that hard work never kills, idleness does! His capacity to deliver is premised on the supernatural. No human being can work the way he does and not break down. David Oyedepo's wife, Faith, once testified of him with respect to the supernatural strength with which he operates. She said, “I live with this man of God [and I know that] he never takes any drug to enhance his strength. He is simply operating in the strength of the supernatural”.

This man will never indulge any indolence. He posits that every man is in a form of business ranging between Ministry and industry. Spirituality does not erode any man's sense of diligence. Abraham was a Godly business mogul. He was the greatest employer of labour in his days with over 300 staff strength. He was a

hard

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worker and a prosperous saint. The staff strength of David Oyedepo's conglomerate of institutions runs into thousands under effective administrative and management platforms. He once told the story of his encounter in 1982, when he was studying the biography of John Wesley and he read that John Wesley was over 80 years when he was still galloping and cascading on horseback, bearing the good news across Europe. From that exposition he knew that divine strength is a reality and he keyed into the covenant of divine strength.

David Oyedepo never compromises his work hours with any other activities or engagement. Whenever he is very busy, his phone neither rings nor vibrates. It is in perfect silence. A President of a nation once drove into Canaan Land on a personal visit to behold and appreciate what God was doing and probably to seek God. When it was brought to his notice that the president of a Nation was around, David Oyedepo came to meet him and asked: 'Your Excellency, how could you have been around without letting me know?' He replied, 'I know you are a very busy man and I don't want to interrupt your program because I am not on appointment.' Another President of a nation once was trying to reach him on the phone and could not. He contacted a former President of Nigeria to see if he could help get through

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to him. The latter succeeded in assisting his colleague, but he also confessed that it requires a lot of effort to reach David Oyedepo because of his heavy time schedules.

David Oyedepo was one of the first among Church leaders in Nigeria who brought proper business and corporate culture into Ministry and he still remains in the forefront in the sustenance of same. Daily operations in the Ministry require a high level of due diligence and smart workers. According to him, budgetary preparation in his Ministry is like that undertaken by a whole nation considering the degree of due diligence involved. David Oyedepo is an astute time manager; time is his most treasured tool in the administration of the multi-faceted Ministry. His preparation for the annual Shiloh event begins from April each year. Yet, the event is fixed for December. Oyedepo has become a phenomenon in the area of his calling, yet he still burns the midnight candle to

access fresh inspiration and revelation through books for better performance. His priority is quality improvement. His magnificent obsession is high quality achievement.

David Oyedepo is a true leader who sets the example in everything he does. It is simply natural in his Ministry

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for everyone under him to respond to the demand for better results because everyone can see the passion and the drive in him. It was Aristotle who said, “We are what we repeatedly do”. Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit. Lee Tacoca said;

“The kind of people I look for to fill management spots are the eager beavers, the mavericks. These are the guys who try to do more than they're expected to do. They always reach”.

David Oyedepo has always tuned to heaven's frequency for revelation. As soon as a marching order is received, the man of God is ready to go, giving it all it takes: time, energy, finance and manpower to deliver, notwithstanding the opposing forces. He refuses to conform to the general views on any subject. He indeed is an extraordinary leadership icon. He made a categorical statement recently, saying: 'I knew in 1981 that my place tomorrow is not determined by anybody else. I knew when I was on the floor that my access to the topmost top is determined by my investment of today.' Helen Keller also said: 'One never consents to creep when one feels an impulse to soar.' Diligence is it!

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*“Keep sowing the seed...keep
the grass green...”*

FOCUS

“You can tell where a man is heading by what he does with his time and money. Being busy here and there is one of the undoing of many destinies. It makes a man

lose his place in destiny.”

David O. Oyedepo.

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ocus is a conscious attempt to concentrate effort or attention on a particular thing. Focus has a number of synonyms such as attention, effort,

concentration, motivation, application, and singlemindedness. It will be apt to pick single-mindedness as the right synonym that fits well into David Oyedepo's leadership style. Since the day he discovered his place in destiny he has never turned sideways or allowed the seduction and distractions of this world to sway his gaze away from the goal. He has never considered a second thought nor surrendered to the excuses of an afterthought which has been the undoing of many a brilliant soul. He puts so much in the wisdom of preparation to meeting opportunity, even while he waits; he is time conscious, never allowing any moment to go uncultivated in preparation for the planting and harvest to come. And this has always come in bountiful, overflowing, barn-bursting measures.

He always celebrates every discovery made on his path to destiny and he keeps at it until the tangibility of it is delivered in reality. He once said, 'You can tell where a man is heading by what he does with his time and money.' David Oyedepo has channeled all his resources to the pursuit of his discoveries in the face of

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distractions and opposition. Indeed the more violent the opposition from mediocre minds and genuine wellwishers, the merrier it's been for him to rise on the airways of global prominence, that has left him at the top of the class in spite of his proffered self-effacement in announcing himself to the world. As asserted by a renowned poet: a tiger doesn't need to advertise its tigritude, he acts it. David Oyedepo's great works are eloquent enough to proclaim his greatness without him coming to its aid. It is clear that his dedication to his vision is not unconnected with the exposition he got after reading the book authored by Oswald J. Smith titled "*The Man God Uses.*" His mind was liberally opened to the sweet uses of focus in 1981 when the Lord spoke to him from the scripture: 'seeth thou a man whose eye is single.' David Oyedepo is tenaciously focused. Truly, being busy here and there is the undoing of many destinies. It makes a man lose his place in destiny. It is the lack of focus that makes a man miss his enviable destination in life's adventure.

Just any fool can misguide a man without a mission. Lack of focus can easily make a life miserable. Earl Nightingale said, 'If a person will spend one hour a day on the same subject for 5 years, that person will be an expert on that subject.'

David Oyedepo has consistently

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put 16 hours daily into his pursuit since his Ministry began over 30 years ago. He was so optimistic right at the inception that the tangible reality of his discovery was guaranteed. Addressing the power house meeting on April 10, 1982, he declared: 'the destiny of this age has been committed to our hands.' Even when his church Ministry was not yet inaugurated, he was so sure of the reality of what he was declaring. In 1984, when his Ministry was just gaining some footing and the congregation was less than 50, screaming into an old AHUJA megaphone, he said emphatically: 'I will consider it a demotion if I were invited to be President of Nigeria!' These were not just mere fancy words borne out of sheer fantasy. In the words of William Scolavino: "The height of your accomplishments will equal the depth of your convictions. Seek happiness for its own sake, and you will not find it, seek for purpose, and happiness will follow as a shadow comes with the sunshine." David Oyedepo focused on his Godordained purpose and got the world at his feet.

David Oyedepo is a man of focus. In March 1984, barely less than 5 months after his Church took off in Kaduna, Nigeria, he began his curious search with concentrated sensitivity through prayer and fasting on what to do for sustainable and consistent Church growth. He was all

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out, trying not to become a man of success for all its worth but striving to become a man of value. Then the exposition that came via the voice of the Lord saying to him: *keep sowing the seed and the sheep will come. And keep the grass green and the sheep will lie down, for he makes me to lie down in green pasture.* Immediately after that exposition, he began a 16 - week seminar. Then he continued to fortify himself with the spiritual seed of prayer and fasting alongside the word exploration with all sense of focus. According to him, almost the entire 1985 was dedicated to sowing the seed of prayer with fasting.

He shared his experience of January 1986 how he just felt like coughing, and as he did, it was blood that came out from his mouth as a result of long period of fasting. Henry David Thoreau clearly makes sense in the light of the truth about dedication: 'I have learned this at least by my experiments, that if one advances confidently in the direction of his dreams, and endeavors to live the life which he

has imagined, he will meet with a success unexpected in common hours.' Then came 1987, like a volcanic eruption that cannot be hindered, the explosive Church growth began in David Oyedepo's Ministry. The greatest achievement of the human spirit is to live up to one's opportunities and make the most of one's

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resources. David Oyedepo once enthused, “you get nothing doing nothing.” A good sense of focus has produced the irresistible growth explosion David Oyedepo's Ministry experiences. He has over the years held tenaciously to the platform of the word of faith in his entire Ministry's operation. Word of faith is the rallying point of all of his messages which includes Prosperity, The Supernatural and The Word of Faith itself. He has never shifted his focus. The 50,000 seat capacity Church Auditorium is a product of focus. The growing educational arm of the Ministry is a product of focus.

His unrepentant focus on his vision has created the curiosity to tap from every anointed human vessel that carries the kind of spirit of faith that he desired. It was this curiosity that took him in 1986 to a camp meeting in Tulsa, Oklahoma in the United States. At the camp meeting, he prayed fervently and passionately desiring every spirit at work in Kenneth E. Hagin. Then at the overflow where he was seated, he heard God speak, “My son David, the baton is now passed on to you.” He once enthused, 'Authentic Faith must move you in the direction of what you believe.' On arrival from Tulsa, Oklahoma after the impartation he confessed how an obvious change had taken place in his life. He said, “the

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stress was gone, the struggle disappeared, I was impacted with an unusual capacity to dare the un-dareable, believe the unbelievable and deliver the impossible”. It was an impartation of the spirit of faith.

When David Oyedepo was preparing to enter into Ministry, he consulted some established ministers of the gospel for counseling. Of course he knew that it's wise to take good heed to good counsel, for haste rarely connotes speed. He, however, knew that the time is always right to do what is right. He was sincerely counseled never to be so much in a hurry to go into full time ministry. But he should start on a part-time level, so he could work and earn some money before going into full time. Indeed, it was logical counsel, but in all the counseling he chosen not to succumb to that

eternal thief of time and destiny, otherwise called procrastination. Often, the precious present is wasted in the vision of the future.

Truth well told, the phrase “one of these days,” is not in existence. It is safer to do what one has to do as soon as one could. William Congreve once advised: “Defer not till tomorrow to be wise. Tomorrow's sun to thee may never rise.” David declined all logical counsels and told God, 'Lord, if I pretend not to have heard you, let anything else I do end in frustration' and that was it.

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David Oyedepo entered full blast into the Ministry, and he has lived happily ever after. The blessings of work and laser-sharp focus are painted in picturesque words in this masterpiece counsel:

If you wake up in the morning
With your hardest job to do,
Don't start the day with grumbling
That won't help see it through.
Be glad for work that's difficult,
For tasks that challenge you!
Workers find a thousand blessings
The idle never knew - Anonymous

According to David Oyedepo, there was nothing to attract anyone to the work of Ministry during the time he entered into Ministry. One could quickly see the point his counselors were making. In those days it didn't make sense for a graduate to go into full-time Ministry. The first question was how would he feed or get support without a secular job? He once said during one of his sermons at Faith Tabernacle that in such period, the concerned people in the community would visit any man whose son decided to enter into Ministry, consoling: 'We learnt your son said he's becoming a

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preacher,' then with mournful countenance, they would sympathize with such a man by saying, 'Sorry, we pray God will let him reverse the decision.'

Indeed the work of Ministry was synonymous with poverty in those days. That's where the maxim, “as poor as a church rat” evolved from, to show how

unattractive it was. David Oyedepo said, 'I decided to go full time so I can go full length in the things God has for me in the assignment He has given me.' Then, according to him, he vowed a vow, saying 'Lord, I will see to it that no one doing it on a part-time basis will beat me to it!' That vow is the secret behind his aggressive approach in his pursuance of his calling. To buttress his lifestyle of focus, David said it from the inception of his Ministry that he will consider it an insult if invited to leave what he is doing and be the President of the Nation. He considers it as sheer demotion, in comparison to the high calling of the Ministry. That is another expression of absolute focus! Here is the candid counsel of Thomas Edison:

“Always be interested in whatever you are doing at the time and think only of that thing in all its bearing and mastery. The world pays big prices for those who know the values and satisfactions of persistent hard work”.

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*When I found you a faithful
vendor...*

SERVICE

*“There is no entitlement in titles,
only in service. Be service
motivated; that is where your
entitlement lies... masters are
not paid but the servants...only laborers are entitled to wages.”*

David O. Oyedepo.

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ervice to humanity in the light of God's precepts is service unto God. William Cowper, a renowned song writer once said: 'The only true

happiness comes from squandering ourselves for a purpose.' While goals are chosen, purpose is something we have been doing all along, and will continue to do, regardless of circumstances, until the day we die' [Peter McWilliams].

David Oyedepo has been a service addict from boyhood. His sense of service is rooted in his exposition into Matt. 6:33 where the voice of God echoed in his hearing, like a man hearing from a friend side by side: Seek ye first my Kingdom and all those things others are dying to get shall be added unto you. That scriptural illumination set the solid platform for his service to God and humanity. He possesses a burning zeal to serve the Lord. He always said, 'There is no

entitlement in titles, only in service.' He said this to us in one of the pastors meeting at Faith Tabernacle. He also charged, 'Be service motivated; that is where your entitlement lies.' Just like he would always say, masters are not paid but the servants. Only laborers are entitled to wages. In 2008, according to him, a man came to him and said God had instructed him (the man) to start to give David

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Oyedepo One Million Naira every month as feeding allowance. His humble response was that of amazement at God's kind of reward system for stewardship. God never forgets. The man sought his consent to pay for two months in advance. There is always the pay day and only God decides it. God is the one who rewards those who diligently serve him. His reward system is amazingly accurate.

Indeed the world system is based on buying and selling, but the kingdom system is based on sowing and reaping. David Oyedepo once said: 'I had not entered into ministry when God had started paying me.' As kingdom princes, we are not on this earth to earn a living, but our living has already been provided for by God. It is written in the book of Job: 'If they obey and serve him, they shall spend their days in prosperity, and their years in pleasures, but if they obey not, they shall perish by the sword, and they shall die without knowing' [36:11, 12]. Conscientious service is the escape route from perishing in penury. Great sense of service attracts great laurels.

David Oyedepo posits that: 'Ordination in itself guarantees nothing; it is dedication that gives value to ordination. Where you find yourself in future is rooted in your faithfulness in stewardship today. It is faithful

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stewardship that defines leadership.' David Oyedepo held his first office as a Christian in 1970 as Prayer Secretary of his Fellowship. In 1971, he became the Bible Secretary. He once said, 'There are major title holders that God did not call,' while celebrating what God has done in his life and ministry. He has ever been zealous in his dealings with God, just like Jehu in 2Kings: '...and he said, come with me, and see my zeal for the Lord...' [10:16]. Once, David as a youngster was running to catch up with a fellowship program, and he ran past his father's house. His younger folks saw him and they reported to his father: :

'We saw our brother run past the house.' His father's response was: “se o ya were ni? (Is he mad?)”. David recalled the event recently and humorously commented, 'I thank God for that madness.' It truly pays one to be *MaD* (Making a Difference) for Jesus.

In the early days of his Christian adventure, as a Christian leader, there was no available service opportunity he would not joyfully accept. At times he would be the bus driver to drive his group from one location to another. On getting there, he would be the drummer boy during praise and worship session and afterwards the preacher when it was time to preach. One day at home as a young zealous Christian, David arrived

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and his father, then a devoted Muslim (but he got converted to Christianity much later) asked him, 'Where are you coming from?' David answered, 'From fellowship sir.' His father threatened, 'Well, that's what you will eat.' David's inaudible answer was 'Amen.' Indeed he is eating it and many are feeding from it today.

David Oyedepo enthused, 'Stewardship is your greatest opportunity to fulfill destiny... and you cannot serve God too much.' Your making is in your faithfulness in kingdom service not in your religious activism. Years back, in Baltimore, Maryland in the United States, he had just ended his teaching and was relaxing when he suddenly saw the way the audience was rushing to pick copies of his books. He was nearly moved to tears at the sight of the scene. Then God told him, *When I found you a faithful vendor, I made you an author.* The man has ever been excited about anything that will promote the kingdom of God. In those days he used to market anointed books, especially those that had influenced his life; for example, books of Kenneth Hagin. Not really for financial gain but primarily to spread the truth he had found in those materials. He once warned in one of the meetings he had with his pastors, 'There is nothing you do for gain in the kingdom that adds value to you.'

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Do it as an investment unto God and watch God do all (you desire) for you.' God never blesses activities, He blesses productivity. Service in the kingdom is the greatest opportunity that guarantees unstoppable posterity. In 1973, in a village called Dumagi, Shonga Local Government in Kwara State, Nigeria. David at 19,

had relieved a woman who went on her maternity leave as a young school teacher. Then on Sunday morning after his arrival, he asked his friend and colleague how and where to locate the nearest Church in the village. To his surprise, his friend told him there was none. Then out of curiosity he asked again, 'Not even a Catholic Church?' The young man answered, 'None.' Immediately an unusual passion grew within him and he told God, 'Lord, may I never leave this village the same way I met it.'

David swung into action in a village dominated by Muslims. He formulated a strategy for evangelism, using the pupils as his interface; 'Tell your parents,' he instructed the pupils, 'the teacher is coming tomorrow morning for a visit.' The parents would wait for the teacher with much eagerness and sense of honour and privilege to have the teacher in their homes. Then David would speak to them about God and then pray with

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them. Then he would add, 'On Sunday, join me at so and so place, there we will continue our prayer.' David did this in many homes until he gathered people together for a prayer meeting. Then one day, he called his colleague and some pupils to join him cut trees and palm leaves to build the first Church tent in that village. The church was built within 41 days. At the end of his 71 days was built within 41 days. At the end of his 71 days member congregation.

David Oyedepo advises, 'See every kingdom task as opportunity and never as a burden.' He also warned: 'Don't wait for opportunity in the kingdom, create opportunity.' David Oyedepo left that village with no dime. He gave all he had to promote the kingdom of God. His departure from the village was not without a ceremony of appreciation. The village chief presented him with a lantern, saying: "The same way you have brought light into our village, let your light shine all over the world". Where David Oyedepo is today is not by sudden flight, it is traceable to his conscious sense of service in the kingdom. As a school boy who was also preparing for his examination like any other student, he went on a kingdom assignment about 10 kilometres away to oversee the fellowships around. This boy,

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David, began to trek back home on the dusty path with excitement. Then a soldier riding in his truck saw him and halted. 'Small boy,' he called David,

'where are you going to?' David looked at him with much audacity, 'Anywhere I like,' he answered as he trekked on, 'come on, hop in and let's go boy,' the soldier invited him with an expression of humour on his face as they drove off. But for that intervention, David was willing and ready to trek the dusty path back home with joy in his heart; all in genuine service unto God. Little wonder he is cruising in high altitude today. Indeed, it is better to be made than to be paid.

In 1979, at 25, David was part of the team that brought Bro. Kumuyi (now the General Overseer of Deeper Life Ministries) to his village for a crusade. He was always available to serve God wherever he found himself. He once said, 'By being faithful, you don't lose anything. You gain everything, when it is a genuine investment with a godly motive, there is nothing to lose.' His sense of service is borne out of his unmatched love for God. He once said: 'You cannot know my secret until you know my heart-beat for my God.' On 28th May 2010, David Oyedepo championed the National Prayer Programme

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organized to fight for the soul of Nigeria at Tafawa Balewa Square in Lagos. David Oyedepo knew from the onset that he would be a high flier, a trail blazer in life. He once said 'foolish men believe in luck, but the wise believes in cause and effect.' He also posits that: 'Kingdom stewardship is the greatest opportunity a man can have. It makes you work in the highest office.' According to his school of thought, you don't serve God because you have the time; you serve God because you have the heart. Genuine sense of service is a guaranteed platform for everyone that desires to soar in high attitude.

At a meeting of the Ministry's executive leaders on October 4th, 1984, a sum of N3000 was urgently needed for rent renewal. No one in the meeting could raise the fund. Then David Oyedepo said emphatically with every sense of assurance, "God knows that I don't need to be encouraged to release this fund if I have it. But listen, now that we are all at the same level, understand this; a time will come when some of us will be flying in the air and some will be saying: 'we don't know what they are using.' Let me tell you what I am using, I am sold out to God!" David had, before then, cultivated the art of service

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unto God and humanity through the school of his grandmother and had

demonstrated it with practical proofs. In 1974, when the Naira was worth much more than the American Dollar, David Oyedepo's first official salary of twenty four naira (N24) as a young man was sowed into the life of his grandmother. David purchased a set of chairs and a centre table with it and presented them as a gift to her. The woman looked at David from one side of her eyes and said, "Laniyi, you bought these for me?" David answered with a noticeable smile of satisfaction and honour, "Yes, grandma." Then the old woman blessed him, saying, "You shall be great!" That prayer worked! It is indeed true that the path to the palace is through the servants' quarters.

David and his wife once built a church auditorium worth N70 Million and handed it over to the beneficiaries. The 100 acres of land where Landmark University sits on is a gift from the Oyedepo family. To the Oyedepos, service through giving is a lifestyle. He once challenged those who find it difficult to give, saying:: 'Even in poverty, you can be a stupendous giver!' Giving can only be a difficult task if one lacks a giving heart. Kingdom stewardship is an investment

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into a man's tomorrow. He will always say: 'I am not wasting my time serving the Lord. I am only investing into my future.' You too can say this repeatedly to yourself until it enters into your sub-conscious:

"I am not wasting my time serving the Lord; ***I am*** only investing into my future."

Leadership Secrets of

*Gentlemen, we are returning
to Lagos*

SWIFT ACTION!

*"Timely and relevant action is
what translates any vision into
is as unpardonable ^{action} David O. Oyedepo. ^{as inaction!}"*
David O. Oyedepo.

P

rompt obedience to divine directives puts a man on the line for honour and dignity. David Oyedepo is a man who does not take any divine

signal with levity. He never delays action on any marching order he receives

from God. It has been his practice since the inception of the Ministry. For example, he received the mandate of his Ministry in an 18 hour vision on 2nd May 1981, and a week after, on 8th May 1981, he shared his vision with the few Christian friends around him. That same day, the prayer platform called Power House kicked off. On the 24th of May 1981, implementation began alongside with the weekly Faith Clinic called Faith Liberation Hour, and it continued until David's Official Commissioning and Ordination into Ministry on the 17th of September, 1983; there was no down time. According to David Oyedepo, there is no value in a vision that is not pursued. The future of every vision begins with its implementation. A vision not programmed is a vision shattered, a programme not pursued is a purpose lost.

This brings us to the mystery called time. Time is a living phenomenon which passes signals to every living creature to take advantage of every opportunity as it presents itself. Every sensitive and time conscious person stands to command his or her environment.

Leadership Secrets: #12

Time speaks directly into the human mind with peculiar notes otherwise known as signals and those who give regard to time signals are crowned kings of every situation and circumstance. The time consciousness attitude of the children of Issachar was described in the book of first Chronicles: "...men that had understanding of times, to know what Israel ought to do; and all their brethren were at their commandment" [12:32].

Time does not just show by way of simply appearing, time also tells everyone what to do with every aspect of its changing phase: time to sleep, when to wake up, when to play, when to pray, when to rest, when to work, when to appear, when to disappear, when to act, when to refrain, and none of these should be swapped for the other. It is the wisdom of the divinity to enhance human operations. The psalmist demanded; "so teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom" [90:12].

In July 1983, God had told David Oyedepo: "I will not have you go as others; I will have hands laid on you after the order of Joshua in Deuteronomy 34:10. Send now for my servant Enoch Adeboye and you shall be impacted with the spirit of wisdom." Though he had neither met nor spoken to the man of God before, yet

without delay, he sent a letter to Pastor E. A. Adeboye. Even when it did not look feasible that the man of God was coming because of his schedules, David never considered a second option because God reassured him the man of God was coming and all he needed to do was to keep his fingers crossed. Indeed the man of God came and performed the commissioning and ordination. They met for the first time at the ordination venue. There was no prior verbal discussion, especially as telephones were farfetched as at the time. All correspondence was delivered by human messengers.

Every action in life is time bound. Time is the most transparent and most consistent phenomenon that has ever happened to mankind. The sun has never changed its daily scheduling; neither has the rain refused to drop according to its periodic scheduling. In the book of Genesis it is written: “While the earth remains seedtime and harvest; and cold and heat; and summer and winter and day and night shall not cease” [8:22]. Time shows, time tells, time tests, time passes, time comes, time goes. Advancement in any man's life is at the mercy of the level of regard he has for the phenomenon called time. Man's failure or success, therefore, is traceable to the understanding he has with respect to time.

Leadership Secrets: #12

David Oyedepo has always been a man of prompt action in response to every divine directive. “Strike the iron when it is hottest” has been his guiding principle. Henry Ford once declared, “I am looking for a lot of men who have an infinite capacity to not know what can't be done.” The man David Oyedepo is one of such. He once charged his congregation regarding the pursuit of any vision when he said, “If you cannot kick-start it, jump-start it, if you cannot jump-start it, push-start it.” It is expected that by all means and at all times, you keep granting your vision motion, because only the violent is permitted to hit a home run!

God told David Oyedepo on 19th July, 1989 in clear terms: Arise, get down to Lagos and raise me a people. Pronto, the 'Lagos Invasion Project' kicked off, and all arrangements to move to Lagos began with all sense of urgency. By September 24 1989, the Lagos Church had started, and the results of prompt action began to generate strange dimension of church growth in his Ministry. As far as David is concerned, any contrary opinion, no matter how sincere, is considered a mere distraction. He is an ardent follower of divine signals. K.

Chesterton, on the secret behind his accomplishment, has this to say: “I owe my success to having listened respectfully to the very best advice, and then going away and doing the exact opposite.” Truth well told, most

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logical and fantastic counsels from other people may cancel one's relevance in life if stupidly followed. Yet the seemingly illogical personal conviction could turn one into a global phenomenon. On the 4th of May 1994, the Lord told him: “The harvest of Africa is now well over ripe; rush in to prevent it from decadence.” By May 8th 1994, sprinkling of blood was performed upon a large map of Africa during a breakthrough night. It was the spiritual opening of the gates of the African continent for gospel invasion.

According to David Oyedepo, every divine agenda is delivered by divine strategy. It is God's own way of delivering His plans. By June 14 1994, African Gospel Invasion Project (AGIP) office was opened in Lagos. By 15th of January 1995, the first set of missionaries was deployed to selected African countries. David Oyedepo will always say that belated action is as unpardonable as inaction. Sir Cecil Beaton once counseled: “Be daring, be different, be impractical, be anything that will assert integrity of purpose and imaginative vision against the play-it-safers, the creatures of the commonplace, the slaves of the ordinary”. David Oyedepo is not among the 'play-it-safe commoners', he dabbles into extraordinary things. Hugh Walpole has this to say for those in play-it-safe school of thought: “Don't play for safety- it's the most dangerous thing in the world”.

Leadership Secrets: #12

David has never been known for rationalizing any divine marching order with an analytical mind. On Saturday, the 22nd of March 1996, during a breakthrough seminar, as he was preparing to minister, he heard the Lord: “it is time to get our aircraft”. Without a second thought or committee endorsement, he declared it as raw as he heard it: “Now the Lord just told me it is time to get our aircraft.” That same day, without prior preparation for it, an offering was raised in that meeting towards the fulfillment of the declaration. And that was it. The aircraft was delivered that same year. Swift action it was!

John F. Kennedy, the 35th president of the United States of America (1961-1963) once taught out of his wealth of experience: “There are risks and costs to a

program of action but they are far less than the long range risks and costs of comfortable inaction.” That explains why in August 1987, at a Conference in Tulsa, Oklahoma, the Lord told David in the course of the conference: “Arise, get down home and make my people rich”. David Oyedepo could not wait till the last day of that conference. He came down home immediately. That same year, he started a regular programme in Maiduguri (Nigeria), tagged: “Breakthrough in Business Seminar”. A timely and relevant action is what translates any vision into tangible fruition.

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While still in the celebration mood for the dedication of Faith tabernacle, a great monument that attracted global attention, David Oyedepo was moved again by the propelling force of Faith to set the ball rolling for the take-off of Covenant University. That was in October of 1999, one month after the dedication of Faith Tabernacle. By November 27, 1999, an in-house Consortium on the take-off of the University was inaugurated and by December 1999 the application form for a private university operating license was issued by the National Universities Commission (NUC).

As the activities of the Consortium wound up early in 2001, an Advisory Council was inaugurated on February 17, 2001 to develop appropriate structures for the take-off of the University. By July 15, 2001, the verification team of the NUC came for final inspection of facilities and programmes. Driven by Faith, David Oyedepo laid the foundation stone of the permanent site on Sunday, January 27, 2002 and what followed was the approval by the Federal Government of Nigeria with the presentation of the operating license on February 12, 2002, by which Covenant University, Ota, Ogun State, was authorized to operate as a private university in Nigeria. The first phase of development was completed in eight months; while the first batch of about 1500 students

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was ushered into an ultra-modern university campus after an early morning inauguration on October 2002. It is all a result of conscious commitment to planning, programming, pursuit and management skill development, to borrow words from David Oyedepo. As at 2010, the running cost of Covenant University was put at N200 Million per month.

According to him, divine insight is what enhances the delivery of divine agenda.

Indeed, it is your willingness to
take action that naturally generates the ability for you to act.

Those who lack the courage to take pragmatic action [called risk] die a little more each passing day. Benjamin Franklin puts it this way: “some people die at twentyfive and aren't buried until they are seventy-five.” An old saying goes: “My mind is made up, don't try and confuse me with the facts.” James Thurber cautioned, “All men should try to learn before they die what they are running from, and to, and why.”

On February 14 1983, while reading a magazine called *The New Wine*, David Oyedepo heard God say: “the words I put into your mouth, commit it into writing, and the same unction upon the spoken word I will also put on the written word.” That same year, the publishing arm of the Ministry commenced operation. The first

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book was published in 1985. He will always challenge anyone that claims he heard God by saying “If you believe it, prove it by doing it and if you don't do it, then you don't believe it.”

There is a way time speaks and you become so uncomfortable until you have taken the step that matches the challenges or opportunities that are presented to you. That is why you hear the popular sayings as: “This is your time;” “Your time is gone;” “Your time is coming;” “take your time;” “Maximize your time;” etcetera. To every opportunity there is a time slot, and once lost, check it out; it may affect the storyline of your life. Be watchful and equally be ready with an open mind to tackle life's challenges and opportunities.

Prompt action borne out of spiritual sensitivity was what rescued David Oyedepo and other key leaders of the Ministry from a plane crash. They were already 30 minutes airborne from Lagos to Kano in Nigeria. It was the 4th of May, 1998. The pilot confided in him, informing him about the challenge encountered mid-air. One of the two engines of the aircraft had just stopped functioning. Without any sign of concern or panic, sipping his drink, he asked the pilot: “can you navigate back to Lagos?” The pilot answered in affirmative. Then pronto, and without creating any form of suspense,

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David announced: “gentlemen, we are returning to Lagos.” Nobody could ask him why, though the curious expression on each one's face was carrying question marks. “Delay,” according to Northcote Parkinson, “is the deadliest form of denial.” Thank goodness, because, just as the plane touched the runway safely in Lagos and halted, the second engine packed up. It was a day of divine rescue in the book of records of David Oyedepo's Ministry. Thanks to prompt action inspired by the Holy Ghost. He once said, 'it is not great might that make men and women in the kingdom, it is great response to great insight that makes great men.'

In May 1987, when the church by divine prompting was set to spread out, and the first five set of churches were already mapped strategically across Nigeria, David was thanking God for what God had done and was about to do; then God spoke to him: “My son David, what did you bring for me?” In response, he said, “Lord, everything I have is yours.” Then the Lord asked him again, “Give me your car (a Mercedes Benz).” And straight away David submitted the key and document to the appropriate officer as a sign of submission to God in total obedience. Obviously it wasn't what he planned to do, but what God had just said. Then the baritone voice of the Lord re-echoed in his hearing: “My son David, even if you don't want to be rich, it is too late.”

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Peter McWilliams in his thought-provoking book, titled “DO IT! Let's Get Off Our Buts”, revealed in a short phrase, what he discovered as the biggest lie in action: “I'll do it later”. The mystical depot called “Later-land is the last home where the hope of many dreams are shattered and dumped.” They'll never see the light of the day. Push nothing to a later day; there is no such day. Always dare to be specific. It is expedient you do what you can do now. If you can't get it done now due to obvious constraints, then decide if it is worth doing at all. If yes, then fix when you will get it done and pursue it to a conclusive end.

In December 1987, the Lord told David Oyedepo to give-up his salary and that was the last day his name appeared on the pay-roll of the Ministry. When his wife asked him for the upkeep allowance for the home, he told her, “I have laid it at the altar.” His wife responded, “Praise God.” According to David Oyedepo, discovering the reason for doing a thing is the secret of getting maximum results doing it. David Oyedepo indeed had gotten the secret of prompt action in obedience to divine directive long time ago. He once declared emphatically, “Obedience may sound ridiculous most times but the end is always miraculous.

It may be costly but the end of it is priceless.” William

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Blake (1791) advised in a poetic piece thus:

If you trap the moment before it's ripe The tears of repentance
You'll certainly wipe
But if you let the ripe moment go You can never wipe off the tears Of woe

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It's the ministry's cheque...

not mine

SELF-DISCIPLINE

*“Subjecting the flesh to the
demand of the spirit in fasting
and prayer can hardly be
discipline.” accomplished without self*

David O. Oyedepo

A

According to the Encarta Dictionary 2009 edition, discipline is simply conscious control over one's lifestyle. It is mental self-control

used in directing or changing behaviour, learning something, or training for something. In short, according to Bill Newman, 'nothing worthwhile or significant is possible without discipline.' Self-discipline has its spiritual root in the scripture, as found in the book of Second Timothy: 'For God has not given us the spirit of timidity but he has given us the spirit of love and of power and of self-discipline' [1:7NIV] .

Self-discipline is the ability to motivate self. It is the ability to do what is necessary or sensible without needing to be urged by somebody else. David Oyedepo has consciously cultivated the culture of self-discipline from the early days of his life. He once said, 'I gave my life to Jesus at the age of 15 and I never had the reason to backslide or rededicate my life.' Self-discipline is the bedrock of sustainable life time decisions. It is all about discipline. Discipline is the mother of all moral attributes in any one's life. David Oyedepo has been celebrating his oath of dedication after reading the book *The Man God Uses* by Oswald J. Smith on September 12, 1976. He was sold out to God, and still

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remains sold out. Subjecting the flesh to the demand of the spirit in fasting and prayer can hardly be accomplished without self-discipline. “Discipline is the basic set of tools we require to solve life's problems. Without discipline you can solve nothing. With only some discipline we can solve only some problems. With total discipline we can solve all problems.” [Escott Peck -*The Road Less Travelled*]. Everything in a man's life answers to the subject of self-discipline; including obedience to directives from higher authority.

According to David Oyedepo, his grandmother had nurtured him with the culture of discipline from childhood through to his teenage years. Teenagers generally are known to be prone to having false feelings of independence from parents, a sort of I-can-fix-it syndrome. In those days, most grandmothers were known to pamper their grandchildren, unknowingly indulging them into doing things that were inimical to their glorious future. For example, on one of those days, David had put on his best wears and as a young star ready to join his peers for an outing, but his grandmother stopped him because David could not convince her beyond reasonable doubt the importance

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of such an outing. Then she went philosophical, and told David in her local dialect: 'eniti o joko, ko le j'oga' ('whosoever refuses to sit tight and get serious is not a candidate for mastery'). David obeyed his granny and sat back. He is the better for it today. To play down the place of discipline as leaders is to tread the path of failure. “Influenced by a superficial psychology, we have abhorred restraint, indulged our natural impulses and crucified inhibitions. We forget too easily that no worthwhile or significant life or work is possible without discipline” [Bill Newman].

It takes a high standard of discipline to place a line of demarcation between personal possession and organizational assets, despite the fact that one is the Founder and General Overseer of an establishment. David Oyedepo is reputed for that. The story of the 1 Million Naira cheque comes to mind again. It takes self-discipline to uphold the content of a small note rather than the details on a cheque. Though it's written in his favour, yet he declined accepting the cheque as his; rather he ordered it must be re-channelled to the appropriate Ministry's account. Vince Lombardi said: “I've never known a man worth his salt who, in the long run, deep down in his heart, did not appreciate the grind

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and the discipline. There is something in good men that truly yearns for and needs discipline.”

As I stated earlier, in 1985, David Oyedepo was to name his second son and all he could afford for the naming was N10.00 only. Nevertheless, one of his subordinates reminded him that the Ministry differs not from the founder and for the fact that nobody would query or crucify him for taking money from the treasury of a Ministry he founded. His reply was thought provoking. He told the young man, it is the naming of my son not Ministry's son. That does not sound like just being principled, it is much more of being disciplined. Indeed, one can be principled and yet not be totally disciplined. His grandmother taught him the dynamics of tithing. She told him that the tenth part of every income is God's portion that renders the remainder meaningful. Since then, David has keyed in to the spiritual obligation of tithing.

The urge or tendency to borrow or beg for funds died in him long before his ordination into the ministry. In 1981, through the illumination he caught from the pages of the scriptures, he resolved never to borrow but to depend absolutely on God for supply. Ever

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since, he has never fallen into the temptation of borrowing. It is discipline that will restrain a man from taking advantage of his close relationship with presidents of nations, to ask for financial or material favour. Since his ministry began,' he said, 'I have never knocked at any man's door, dead or alive for any sort of support for the ministry.' He has said it repeatedly that: 'We can address any set of people in the land because we are not beneficiaries of whatever they carry to offer.' He once told a sitting president of Nigeria, 'Any time I seek any favour from you, stop taking my counsel.' That is contentment borne out of self-discipline! During the construction of Covenant University, a first generation bank came to him to offer him a loan of N1Billion as part of her goodwill towards the construction. He turned it down and told them, 'if I begin to take loan at this level of the project, what would I be doing when it gets bigger?' That is high tension contentment, that's high level discipline.

During his courtship days the devil told him: now that you have agreed to marry each other, you can go ahead and sleep with her. David Oyedepo responded and told God, Lord if I do such thing, strike me with

leprosy. That statement is borne out of the grace of God in operation in his life and consciously cultivated self-discipline. Without self-discipline, ability or courage or good feasibility study will naturally end a man's vision in a fiasco.

'For every disciplined effort, there is a multiple reward.'

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Jim Rohn

Leadership Secrets of

"Any organization that has no respect for order has no future."

David Oyedepo

ORDER

"This church is not a denomination, it is a commission. A denomination is a human set up through religion bureaucracy [but] a commission is backed up by a mandate."

David O. Oyedepo

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Order is viewed as the bedrock of the stability and sustainability of any organization both in pursuit and accomplishment. David

Oyedepo posits that the reason for failure in life, more often than not, is not because of lack of ability or capacity. It is largely due to lack of order. What is order? It is the arrangement or disposition of people or things in relation to each other according to a particular sequence, pattern or method. David Oyedepo

once made the following proclamation concerning his church organization: “This church is not a denomination, it is a commission. A denomination is a human set up through religion bureaucracy [but] commission is backed up by a mandate.” Indeed a commission is viewed as a specially organized group of people who are empowered by the law [human or divine] to perform a given task. The terms of reference of a commission are relatively specific, though it may be very broad and long term, or concise depending on the nature of the given task. David defines “The commission” as “a divinely commanded mission.” Mandate in this context therefore can be said to be a divine order to get a specific task performed. In a general scope, mandate is a written command by a person or organization [the “mandator”] to another

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[“the mandatory”] to take a certain course of action. A mandate is automatically terminated on the bankruptcy, incapacitation or removal from office or death of the mandator. In David Oyedepo's case the mandator is God, who can never be bankrupt and is always capable to back up what he has commissioned. He can never be removed from His office neither can He die. The mandatory is David O. Oyedepo, and the mandate states that:

“Now the hour has come to liberate the world from all oppressions of the devil, through the preaching of the word of faith, and I am sending you to undertake this task.”

In his moments of concentrated pondering and critical analysis on the details of the mandate (order), he discovered that four cardinal factors were distinctly defined in the mandate:

1. The Task: To liberate the world from all oppression of the devil.
2. The Target: The world.
3. The Tool: The preaching of the world of Faith.
4. The Time: Now

The foundation of his monumental impact on human race, from the beginning has been orderly laid. There

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was no guess work, ambiguity or grey area from the origin of his ministry. David

had subscribed to the subject of order since his youthful days. He once recalled when as a young man, after he had dressed up for an outing would ask, “would Jesus appear like this?” David embodies decency and orderliness. Creation was brought to bear based on the phenomenon called order. Fishes were never created before the waters, neither was man created until his habitat was well put in place. What foundation is to a building is what order is to any human or organizational system. The corporate anthem of the American business world is the wonderful phrase that goes thus: “Build to last”. Lack of respect for the phenomenon of order is the bane of most human entities. Indeed, it is structure that determines the future of any system. But the future of any structure is at the mercy of the fundamental factor called order.

If the mutual and hitch-free working relationship and inter- dependency between the horse and the cart must be sustained, order (or sequence of instructions guiding their mutual operation) must be consciously maintained. It would be an expensive or risky experiment to put the cart before the horse. The result could lead to the fatal failure of the structure and the

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system. That is the power of order. Isaiah the son of Amos gave a pictorial explanation of the value of order. He puts it this way:

“Do those who plow for sowing plow continuously? Do they continually open and harrow the ground. When they have leveled its surface, do they not scatter dill, sow cumin and plant wheat in rows and barley in its proper place and spelt as the barrier? For they are well instructed, their God teaches them. Dill is not threshed with a threshing sledge, nor is a cart wheel rolled over cumin, but dill is beaten with a stick and cumin with a rod. Grain is crushed for bread, but one does not thresh it forever, one drives the cart wheel and horses over it, but does not pulverize it. This also comes from the Lord of hosts: he is wonderful in counsel and excellence in wisdom” [28:23-29 NRSV].

Indeed, order is one of the major subset of wisdom. It is what keeps a system running. One major factor in the school of order is regular review of every organization's developmental procedure. According to David

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Oyedepo, “if you are afraid to review your approach, you cannot improve on

your results.” He has always believed in the need for a functional structure in his organization. His reason is not farfetched, every human organization, spiritual or secular, requires a viable structure to run, grow and be sustained. He knew the relevance of order in any set up from the onset like a man knows his name. Few years into his ministry, he penned down certain significant and revealing truth that cannot be ignored in any organization. Among such are the following:

Any organization that has no respect for order has no future.

Any system without an efficient structure is bound to rupture.

Without a viable structure, there can be no future for any organization.

The organizational structure of David Oyedepo's Ministry is a product of order. A multi-faceted organization housing various facilities and institutions including the 50,000 capacity church auditorium, educational arm (network of Primary schools, High Schools and Universities), Word of Faith Bible Institute (WOFBI), the Aviation arm, the World Mission Agency, Real Estate, Financial Institution, Table and

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Sachet water Production Factory, Covenant Bread Production sector, Restaurant Operations, Guest Houses etcetera. Yet every arm of the organization is maximally functional, properly managed and adequately monitored. David Oyedepo in one of the meetings he had with his pastors once intoned, “Any policy that is not well policed will soon become ineffective [and eventually abandoned]. Olajumoke Familoni in her book, *Leadership Styles of Great Men*, writes,

“We are in an era where spirituality is becoming an integral part of business organizations... Oyedepo diagnoses the need for change stage by stage and carries his associates along in the change process.”

Olajumoke Familoni continued in her meticulous analysis by saying. “The organization that will survive the test of time today will be those willing to respond to the tenets of corporate governance and thus allow integrity to preserve them.” David Oyedepo has said for umpteen times, that “whatever is void of strategy will soon become a victim of tragedy.” The church arm of his organization focuses on a 3-fold message including:

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Word of Faith, Prosperity and the Supernatural (that is manifestation of gifts of the Spirit). The tradition of his Ministry has been passed from the leadership down the hierarchy to the membership. Every genuine “Winner,” as each church member is fondly called must reflect the tradition of the commission, including:

WORD ADDICTION: The leadership has over the years nurtured every Winner in the culture of the Word of Faith. Coming to church service (whether Sunday service, mid-week service or any other specialized services) without writing materials alongside with a complete Bible is incomplete for an average winner. A typical Sunday service at Faith Tabernacle is like receiving a professorial lecture at Cambridge University. Every Winner has over the years been nurtured in the culture of reading at least one book in a month. Every Winner is ushered into a new month with a running theme for the month, as well as the recommended books for the month. An average member of Winners' Chapel International is a word addict.

DECENCY IN DRESSING: Every living faith leader at every level in the hierarchy represents decency, and the same reflects in every genuine follower. David Oyedepo has been into it since the inception of the

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Ministry even when the only facility of the ministry was a room and a parlor apartment, occupying six staff, which also doubled as the residential apartment for his family. He would wake up early, dressed up in suit, arrange his desk and chair, ready to work. Decency in dressing culture has become the identity of every genuine Winner all over the world where the ministry is represented. And it suits every member of the now multi-cultural and multinational staff and the entire congregation of the Ministry worldwide, who know pretty well that you are unmistakably addressed by the way you dress.

PULPIT ETHICS/INTEGRITY: David Oyedepo has always preached what he practices and that has been transferred to every leader in the hierarchy. Telling lies on the pulpit is a forbidden practice and a violation of the tradition of the commission. The ranking system of the hierarchical set-up in the church arm of the commission is simply noteworthy. Any curious observer can easily be tempted to want to join the team. Talk of the carriage of the array of Pastors as they handle assignments in their fitted suits which characterize every Pastor in the Winners' family. Their sitting arrangement at any of the church programmes speaks volume about the superiors, co-ordinates and subordinates in the

hierarchy. For example, depending on who handles what assignment at the altar in a typical prayer session, one can almost tell who may not likely come up at all. It is such a neatly regimented system that has zero tolerance for rank breaking!

The altar mannerism of Winners' pastors is highly notable. Every assignment at the altar is taken with all sense of duty and due diligence; such an enviable privilege anyone may like to look forward to. Every altar task is carried out according to a meticulously timed and outlined assignment. In Winners chapel, time consciousness is of essence. It is safer for one to spend 4.59 minutes for a 5-minute assignment, than spend 5.01 minutes, because any extra minute spent is taken as eating into the next assignment. Apostle Paul cautioned in his first epistle to the saints in the City of Corinth, "Let all things be done decently and in order" [14:40]. Therefore, going out of order in Winners' Chapel is tantamount to edging oneself out of future privileges. It is one church organization where, like a footballer who committed more than necessary fouls, a pastor could for a season be benched by reason of his violation of the laid down pulpit ethics.

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It takes divine order to sustain an organization of the magnitude that is found under the leadership of David Oyedepo. Leadership is interpreted as someone who sets achievable goals, charts the direction and influences people to follow. It is "the behavior of an individual when he is directing the activities of a group towards a shared goal" (Hemphill and Corns, 1957, p7). It is being at the forefront, showing examples to the followers to follow suit. David Oyedepo typifies all these. But it takes order to bring all such to bear. Talking about church management method in his church, he has this to say, "The management structure of our church system will continue to serve as a research platform on church organization for many years to come because by divine skill we built unbelievable reserves year in year out for the last 30 years."

While many hate any change that doesn't jingle in their pockets, David sees change from the all-good perspective of the Lord, who is the God of new, fresh and rewarding beginnings and that of our Lord Jesus, who goes about doing good in a variety of never-to-be-forgotten ways. Indeed variety in the expression and execution of God's will has become not only the spice of life in the Ministries under his charge and the noble causes he champions, but has

continued to add flavour

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to the business of the life of peoples of different faiths, nationalities and creed which he has continued to touch in so many unforgettable ways. Every team member in his organization has imbibed the philosophy of (unavoidable) change and is adapted to the same with good conscience and faith, believing it is for the good of the organization and for the growth of the team. Every robust and vibrant organization is built on well-defined order. No business is allowed to outlive the founder outside of a consciously constructed and orderly established structure. One major milestone in the history of David Oyedepo Ministries International was recorded on 7th September 2012. It was the release of the operational manual that will, like the constitution of a nation, forever serve as guide in all operations within the commission globally.

This is one ministry where leadership tussle has never been recorded and much more may never be, with the advent of the operational manual, The Mandate. The bulky red book titled “The Mandate Operational Manual” addresses matters from the minutest to the most complex in relation to the daily operations within the church arm of the global ministry. This manual explicitly addresses the leadership succession plan: the eligibility requirements and the

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procedure. It is a comprehensive documentation devoid of any form of ambiguity. This affordable and easily accessible operational manual, the Mandate is so detailed that it has become the handbook for an average Winners' Chapel International worshipper across the world. This goes to explain the level of premium David Oyedepo places on the subject of order. It is why the extent of expansion of David Oyedepo's organization will remain boundless because of the formidable and enduring structure on ground.

Leadership Secrets of

“A healthy marital life remains a fundamental requirement in spiritual leadership.”

David Oyedepo

CHOICE OF SPOUSE

*A good woman is worth, if she were sold, the fairest
gold crown that's made of purest*

John Wodroephe

O

ne major factor, notwithstanding how great a vision is, that determines the fruition or failure of any dream is marital choice. Marital

choice can either make or mar anyone's vision. Lots of great destinies have ended their lofty dreams in the abyss of marital woes. Certainly, a broken home is the world's greatest wreck. While charging his teaming pastoral team in one of those special leadership sessions, David Oyedepo warned that a healthy marital life remains a fundamental requirement in spiritual leadership.

We live in a world where many are in sheer confusion in relation to marital matters. The unmarried, the married, the widows and widowers are all under perpetual pressure and fear of uncertainties. They are entangled in the confinement of varied degrees of peculiar predicaments; with most wondering if marriage is worth the entire rigor. To fuel the fears and confusion, Katherine Hepburn pulled the trigger of her sentiment: “if you want to sacrifice the admiration of many men for the criticism of one, go ahead, get married.” Many people are confused, bearing the invisible inscription that seem to ask; “is God still involved in the process of marriage?” Marriage in the contemporary world is characterized with gambling, permutation and

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combination. Human mechanized approach called “match-making” has overtaken the original divine due order. Some young and single Ministers of the gospel (male and female alike) are also not left behind in the darkness of ignorance and confusion with respect to marital choice; and therefore they have ignorantly succumbed to canal demands of mental and scientific approach to marital search system. It is little wonder many have relapsed to the comfort zone of social media, posting their profiles “to whom it may concern,” God's will notwithstanding. Cher, an American singer and actor once observed: “The trouble with some women is that they get all excited about nothing – and then marry him.” That's ridiculous enough.

David Oyedepo posits: “Every man and woman must take responsibility to maintain a super healthy marital life.” Diagnosing the root of marital woes in the Western world, David lamented, saying: “quest for equality is the reason behind marital crisis in the west, which is why they [same sex] now marry each other.”

To confirm David Oyedepo's sentiment on the institution of marriage, Barak Obama, the president of America, while bidding for his second term election, suddenly realized that the gay world was a factor for his winning ticket. Then he began to press for the passing into law in

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Washington DC, same sex marriage: an aberration, a manipulation of an institution that the creator perfectly established: a conscious promotion of the oddity called lesbianism and gay practices.

Let's get it right from here; Marriage is not any human idea. It is absolutely God's idea. Therefore any form of deviation from its originality will always culminate in mockery. Marriage institution is not cultural based, it is God-based. There are fundamental rules that govern marital institution, and once violated may end any marital union in ridicule. Most Christians cannot categorically tell how and when God speaks with regards to marital decision making. Don Marquis said it all: "Ours is a world where people don't know what they want and they are willing to go through hell to get it." David without prejudice vehemently warned that no explanation is tenable enough for family failure, saying the man is to be held responsible. Regrettably, he concluded that the greatest victim in family crisis is the woman. Ministry or career success is a function of marital stability. Therefore caution is of essence when making marital decision because leadership begins from the home-front. Read the evergreen words of the charity legend, Mother Theresa:

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Spread love everywhere you go;
First of all in your own house.
Give love to your children,
To your wife or husband,
To a next door neighbor...
Let no one ever come to you
Without leaving better and happier. Be the living expression of God's kindness;
Kindness in your eyes,
Kindness in your face,
Kindness in your smile,
Kindness in your warm greeting.

While still a bachelor, David Oyedepo asked God: 'what is your purpose for instituting marriage?' He asked out of curiosity against the backdrop of his observations of many marital woes and failures around him. He needed to know ahead of time what awaited him before committing himself. He knew that marriage is too sacred an institution to venture into without adequate preparation. Then, in response to his curiosity, through the pages of the bible, according to him, God gave him 7 covenant platforms for lasting marital bliss. From that day, he knew he was heading for a hitch-free marriage.

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According to the statistics based on a survey conducted on marriages in the United States in early 90s, more than half the marriages ended in divorce within five years. Yet, even now, it isn't getting any better. This is despite all the oaths and vows at the altar before God Almighty and well-wishers that graced the grandeur and elaborate wedding party. For some, the friction that triggered their marital crisis began from a breakfast table at the honey moon venue. "I know a lot of people didn't expect our relationship to last," Britt Ekland, Swedish film actor enthused, "but we just celebrated our two months anniversary." Ridiculous, isn't it? On this side of the globe, series of unheard-of events of domestic violence are witnessed as regular occurrence, ranging from simple quarrel to physical assault, sometimes degenerating to the use of deadly weapons.

According to David Oyedepo, he never prayed about his marital life neither did he place petition before God for a future partner. One day one of his friends told him and said, 'Brother David, it's time we begin to pray for our future partner'. Hear what David answered, 'Yes, we may pray for you, but such prayer point is not in my list.' How audacious. Interestingly, David was first to be answered and settled martially ahead of his friend. His response to his friend's request was founded on the light

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that was shed abroad in his heart from the scripture as written in Matt 6:33. 'Seek ye first the kingdom of God in and His righteousness and all other things shall be added unto you.' David believed that marital settlement was one of those things that would naturally be added to him as he remained connected and addicted to his covenant obligations.

The magnetic field of his faith was strong enough to command such a meek and

submissive lady like Faith Oyedepo. He made it known to her from the beginning what she was about to sign-on to. David has always been an unusually restless fellow from his youthful days. The point at which his peers were tired in kingdom assignment was the point it would be like he was just starting. He once posited: “You can't be a fool being a full time follower with God.” While in higher institution, his teacher who was so uncomfortable with his Christian activities on campus once threatened him: “David, if you want to be a student, be a student; and if you want to be a Christian, be a Christian!” David responded to his teacher: “I am a part time student and a full time Christian.” How audacious! That is just David. Therefore, it would require abundant meekness and patience with wisdom for a woman to get along with such a die-hard kingdom addict.

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His courtship with Faith was not less than six years. As earlier stated, it will serve as a reminder here that before his marriage, the devil told him: 'Now that it is obvious and everybody is aware that you will get married to this lady, I will make sure you fall by fornication!' David responded to the thought with a vow, 'Lord if I ever do such, strike me with leprosy!' Through determination and self-discipline, David and Faith conquered the temptation of fornication before their wedding night. Truly, it is not how short or how long a courtship lasts that restrains immorality, it is how determined the two individuals involved, to put flesh in subjection to the spirit by the word of God. Three decades have come and gone, his marriage still stands strong with catalogues of success stories to show.

During the process of his wedding, his marriage counselor asked him: “Brother David, what do you think of marriage? What do you really expect from it?” Then he answered, “Hitch-free marriage.” His counselor quickly corrected him by reminding him that from experience, marriage is not all the bed of roses and he concluded by saying “you see David, you cannot avoid stepping on each other's toes.” David quickly cut in and he asked his counselor with due respect but unapologetic: 'sir, as I sit by you now, do I step on your

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toes?' The man grinned and said: 'no,' but curious to know what David was really up to. Then David concluded by saying: “sir I can give you two reasons. One, I am not blind and two I am not mad.”

According to Peter McWilliams, marriage is like a dinner with desert first. The falling-in-love portion shows us the beauty within us. Everything else shows us everything else - the good, the bad, the beautiful and the ugly. Faith Oyedepo, after crossing the Rubicon of spinsterhood to womanhood, demolished the bridge and vowed never to look backward, but to put into practice all the good lessons she had learnt to build and keep a tranquil home, full of sweet flavors of love, garnished with nectars of fun and coated with endless favor.

She knew her husband's temperament so much, having studied him keenly during their years of courtship, and she was willing to bend and to blend. David, a restless hard working extraordinaire go-getter, is always battle ready to deal ruthlessly with any resistance on his way to accomplish his set goals. Faith Oyedepo had built up her faith to withstand whatever comes her way in the home God has ordained her to keep and care for.

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It did not take so long a time before Faith's first major test came. Her husband arrived from a trip one fateful day. With a broken heart she greeted her husband with a written medical report. The doctor had told her she had a miscarriage. To her disappointment, David was unmoved. He wasn't, because he knew the trickster behind the report was the devil, and he was not willing to accept it as the final say. But without any expression of empathy he reacted to the report with a strong spiritual counter-verdict: "It cannot happen," and to trivialize the situation, he immediately demanded, "Can I have my food please?" Definitely his violent reaction was against the situation, not against his darling wife. Ordinarily such situation should engender much emotional display of piety, pity and abstinence from food or pleasure. But David knew better, he would not subscribe to a pity party, as it may mean accepting a defeat. The phrase "it cannot happen" was the faith- seasoned spiritual counter-verdict to reverse the medical verdict.

True to his word, it never happened. The pregnancy was sustained, and at the due time, a bouncing baby boy joined the Oyedepo family. He's a kingdom soldier today. It takes Faith to marry David. Truth well told, God found David and equally found for him Faith to

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match. Faith Oyedepo is a great home-maker extraordinaire. Her hands are

forever in the production chain in the making of her own biological children who are amazing success stories and firebrand ministers of the good news, and the raising of the next generation of ministers of God that will help keep the flame of the gospel burning in the hearts of men, transforming lives. So flawless has she been able to discharge her responsibilities that her brief in the global ministry keeps getting lengthier by the day, as more challenging roles have been added to her bulging portfolios.

It takes a hard working woman to survive around a hard worker such as David Oyedepo. There is no room for idleness around him. He has zero tolerance for laziness. Faith knew this from the outset. So, she had been a diligent worker since she joined her husband. Faith Oyedepo, as a university graduate was the first typist secretary in the ministry on a salary of N140 per month. She has not ceased to be a worker in her husband's multi-faceted organization. This is in addition to her unflinching responsibility as a home manager, attending to the needs of the swarm of guests that visit her home from time to time. Yet she's never found wanting in her primary assignment: child upbringing. All her children are excelling in their

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various endeavors with good reports about them from far and near. All said and done, a success without a successor is termed a colossal failure. Giving one's children proper training is the greatest success any parent can boast of, especially when the children exemplify such parental trainings and instructions in their daily living. In years to come, children are the ones to perpetuate the monumental works parents have built over the years. The Secret of a person, it has been said, is in his story. David and Faith Oyedepo have a testimony of exemplary parenting. In her thought provoking book, titled: "Raising godly Children," Faith Oyedepo eagerly agreed that "a child is like plasticine - soft, pliable and moldable." Therefore, just like an experienced potter, skill is required to effectively mold a child. It requires some degree of discipline, tender care, and tact.

Early in her marriage, Faith Oyedepo vowed never to be found wanting in her responsibility towards her children. After every Sunday service, she would return home, sit her children down and break into smaller pieces the message preached to their level of understanding, Faith made it part of her daily scheduling to teach her children the valuable principles of God's word. It is little wonder therefore to see all their biological children turning out as success stories

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their various careers and ministries. Their two sons, David and Isaac were ordained into Ministry in 2007 at the Winners' Chapel International Headquarters, Ota, Nigeria, by the American televangelist, Kenneth Copeland and his wife Gloria. It will suffice to say the two boys broke their father's record by reason of their age. David, the eldest son was 24 while Isaac was 22 when they were ordained. Their father, David Oyedepo on the other hand received a divine call into Ministry at 27 and was ordained into pastoral Ministry by Pastor E. A. Adeboye at the age of 29.

The greatest responsibility of a parent truly is child upbringing. David is indeed a successful father. He gave his children proper and strong spiritual foundation on which they built their enviable edifices of unshakable spirituality, as well as acceptable moral values. All the children of David and Faith Oyedepo were well taught and nurtured from childhood with the well nourishing word of God. They were trained to know, to acknowledge and to subscribe to the beauty of fellowshiping. Daily, they gathered together, praised, prayed and shared from the bible. It was made mandatory for each of their four children to practically participate. This they did diligently under the supervision of one or both of the parents.

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David Oyedepo with the partnership of his wife, Faith, has performed and delivered effectively the priesthood responsibility of fatherhood. They did not only teach their children, but they did it with personal examples for the children to see and emulate. He believes that a principle alone is meaningless until it is adequately matched with appropriate personal examples. "In practicing the art of parenthood, an ounce of example is worth a ton of preaching," so says a wise man.

Faith Oyedepo, a well-trained diligent home maker and child training technocrat believes that it is better to train a child than to repair an adult. Faith recalled in her book, "Raising Godly Children", how she would lead her children to their father's study door, leave them to go in so they could ask their numerous questions and get satisfying answers. Faith facilitated daily an intimate interaction between her children and their father, despite his heavy schedules.

She painted the picture of love and fun shared in her family which has ultimately established great intimacy and emotional stability between children and parents. She said “Those who visit our home are so blessed when they see my husband playing or discussing with our children in spite of his busy schedule. Sometimes, he puts our youngest daughter on his back and runs round the living room

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with her. I believe he does so because he understands that despite his own busy schedule, he has a great role to play in their welfare and upbringing. He also understands that the success of the family will also affect his success in life and Ministry “ [Raising Godly Children, Page 29].

David Oyedepo, a disciplinarian and firm father confessed that “fatherhood is not a [mere] title, it is a responsibility.” Truth well told, the heart connectivity of father and his children is answer to a societal sanctity, and antidote to communal chaos. Indeed there are fathers, but not many fathers are truly fatherly in discharging their core duties in the home. Dr. Myles Munroe, a trainer in human and leadership development unequivocally noted: “the emotional, psychological, spiritual, and moral needs met by the loving, caring balanced environment of a strong [healthy] marriage and family unit cannot be substituted” A man who ignorantly or callously fails to discharge his fatherly duty has gallantly failed his maker and humanity. It is the duty of a father to provide platform for a sane and sustainable society. This he must do by first of all providing incorruptible, amiable and responsible leadership for a healthy and tranquil home front. David and Faith Oyedepo have cleanly and

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gallantly emerged as examples of responsible parents. All of their children have given them great joy and absolute peace, generating maximum impacts upon humanity. David and Faith Oyedepo had sown precious seed early in their children. Now, they are deemed due to savour and relish their harvest of sweet nectars.

In her book, Marilyn Hickey narrated the story of Max Jukes and Jonathan Edwards. This story should send any sane person on an expedition of sober reflection: “Max Jukes was an atheist who married a godless woman. Some 560 descendants were traced:.

310 died as paupers
150 became criminals
7 of them were murderers
100 were known to be drunkards
More than half of the women were prostitutes

The descendants of Max Jukes cost the United States Government more than \$1.25million in 19th century dollars.

Jonathan Edwards was a contemporary of Max Jukes. He was a committed Christian who gave God first place in his life. He married a godly young lady, and some

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1,394 descendants were traced:

295 graduated from college, of whom:
13 became college presidents
65 became professors
3 were elected as United States Senators
3 as state governors, and others were sent as ministers to foreign countries.
30 were Judges
100 were lawyers (one the dean of an outstanding law school)
56 practiced as physicians (one was the dean of a medical school)
75 became officers in the military
100 were Mayors of large cities
One was the comptroller of the U. S. Treasury
And one was vice president of the United States.

Not one of the descendants of Edwards Family was a liability to the government.” This without doubt is food for thought for every father and mother.

David Oyedepo got it right when he made the most important decision [second only to salvation] of his life: marrying a well cultured, and God fearing young lady over three decades ago. She's Florence (who changed her name to Faith), a lady nurtured in the nourishing words of God by her godly parents. Little wonder she

could pass the same on to her children gracefully and diligently. She believes that child training is a personal non-transferable responsibility of any wise parent.

The marriage of Faith and David Oyedepo is what one may refer to as a purpose – driven marriage. They did their search and were able to fish out their role models with respect to marital responsibility and stability. They were fascinated and inspired by the Marriage of Papa Kenneth Hagins and his wife. Faith Oyedepo confessed: “One family among many others that has given me great joy is the Hagins family. As I see generation after generation of the Hagins serving God. I applaud the investments of Papa and Mama Hagins in the lives of their children. Their children are not only a blessing to their parents, but also to the body of Christ.”

David Oyedepo and Faith his wife trained up their children with the proper blend of life principles and personal examples. When they were children under the close supervision of their loving, caring and disciplinarian parents, David Oyedepo's children were not permitted to do what they liked, except what's right. David and Faith had the understanding that allowing a child to do what he likes and not right is moving him to a future he will not like. They jointly instructed their four

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children knowing it is tragedy not to train one's child in the way of the Lord. David Oyedepo warned, “If you don't train your children you will likely lose them and they may lose their future. Evelyn Roberts, the wife of the great American televangelist and founder of Oral Roberts University, Oral Roberts, wrote in her book, *Raising Children*:

“If I had to do one thing over again, I would saturate my children even more with the word of God. For a child can only think what he has in his mind. The world will desperately bid for your child's mind, and you can't stop them. But while they are in your care and under your control, you can build an arsenal of scriptures and Christian thinking in them, that the very gates of hell cannot prevail against. We learned early that Satan was out to get our children, but we were determined that he would not. I am so grateful for Oral's part in instilling the scriptural. From the time the children could talk, Oral took them on his knees and told them Bible stories. And he had them learn and recite scriptures.”

Those were the role models David and Faith Oyedepo studied and followed, and they got the same result – an exemplary marriage. While many ladies dread the challenges and responsibilities of marrying a minister of the gospel of Jesus Christ, Faith Oyedepo faithfully faced it headlong. She has always stood by her husband in adversity and prosperity. She never doubted the futuristic reality of her husband's vision. Before they got married, in October 1981, David wrote a letter to her, and it reads in part: “I speak in my office as a Prophet. We matter to this generation by divine election. We are the era of saviors the world is waiting for...”

Faith was not in the dark, neither in doubt regarding the man she was to marry. Truth well told, outside of David Oyedepo, Faith could have perhaps gotten married to her second best (if such exists). She seemed to have been configured for such an addicted kingdom promoter like David. She saw it coming, and she was well equipped to meet up with the demand. At 22 while still in courtship with Faith, David made a discovery from the pages of the Bible, and from that discovery he wrote a note of committal in form of an Oath unto God, to serve Him forever, come rain, come shine. Then he told his fiancée (Faith) to co-sign the oath as a sign of her commitment to a life sold out to God - She did. She did it because she

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knew that the man or woman who has common sense and good sense of judgment to know right from wrong is happier than the man who is immensely rich but lacks good sense of direction!

Faith Oyedepo is never a noise maker neither a heart breaker, but a dedicated wife, full of wisdom and understanding. Hers typifies a diligent and submissive woman. She epitomizes total submission. Hers is a reemergence version of biblical Sarah's sense of submission. One day, David arrived from a journey to the United States of America. The wife asked him: 'What did you bring for us.' He replied; 'sure, come and see.' Then he opened his box and it was filled with volumes of books he had bought, worth over \$9,000. The wife asked again, 'what else?' he replied again, 'Why? There's nothing else.' Then she pressed him further: 'Not even something for the children?' David placed a seal on the dialogue by saying: “The content of these books, if well explored can turn me to a manufacturer of those things.”

David truly had been building his library, reading and researching since the age of 20. Faith, who has always believed in the integrity of whatever her darling husband said, quickly viewed her husband as investing

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into the great future to come. The reality of that future is what she's swimming in today. In the words of Joseph Fort Newton:

“We cannot tell what happens to us in the strange medley of life. But we can decide what happens in us, how we can take it, what we do with it-and that's what really counts in the end. How to take the raw stuff of life and make it a thing of worth and beauty, that is the supreme treat of living.”

Faith Oyedepo is a woman of virtue and of a rare breed. She is a sweet mother to her biological children and hundreds of thousands spiritual children across the world. She is a true help mate and loyal co-laborer to her husband. The gem cannot be polished into 24-carat wonder without friction nor the child of God cleansed without adversity. David Oyedepo has been able to ride the storms of life, together with his wife of covenant, Faith Oyedepo, and both have been able to come out of it all victoriously. In all challenges the awesome twosome, David and Faith, never betrayed any shadow of fear nor pressed the panic-buttons because they knew the God whom they served inside out, and were persuaded that He would arise, and scatter every spot where the enemies were gathered. When you blend

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David with Faith, you've got a winning combination! Indeed Faith is the perfect match that spices the life and Ministry of David Oyedepo.

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“A wife is a gift bestowed upon man to reconcile him to the loss of paradise”

Johann Von Goethe

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"THE AUTHOR

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Mr. Morack Akin-David is a biographer, an inspirational writer and a speaker. His descriptive works have inspired audience in conferences and seminars.

As a poet, his works have graced the pages of "The Guardian", the flagship of the Nigerian press. He is the author of "Triumphing in Leadership despite Oppositions."

He is the Principal, *Mobile Leadership*

Academy, a platform for personal development and youth leadership empowerment. He is also the CEO of *Bookaddict Publications*.

He is a lecturer at the Word of Faith Bible Institute, Lagos, and a Pastor at the Living Faith Church (Winners' Chapel International), Faith Tabernacle, Canaan Land, Ota, Nigeria.

Mr. Morack Akin-David lives happily in Lagos, Nigeria with his wife, Folakemi, and sons, Ireymi and



Obayemisi .