



EMEKA ANSLEM

PRACTICE***MAKES***

PERFECT

--- MAKING THE MOST OF YOUR CHRISTIAN LIFE

PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT

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JUST BEFORE WE BEGIN...

Spirituality requires practice; practice fasting, praying, studying, loving. Practice how to live by faith, how to maintain joy despite the harsh condition of things, how to give even when things are hard.

A lady once shared her concern on how she thinks she may have lost "the gift of speaking in tongues". I didn't hesitate to tell her that she didn't lose the gift; rather, she stopped practicing.

Spiritual gifts are not different from our natural talents. If you don't develop them, they would remain dormant and weak.

I believe God wants me to share my personal experiences with you in this little book. I'd be sharing personal experiences on how to practice praying, fasting, giving, joy, love, peace, and a few others. Do have a good read!

Practice 1

#PRAYER

“Pray without ceasing”. That's what 1 Thess 5:17 says. But apparently, the prayer life of many believers have been seized by activities.

Some believers even ignorantly admit that they don't know how to pray. Many others say they don't have the energy to pray. Some go extra miles to pay a professional to pray for them.

First, if you don't pray, then you're disobedient to the scriptures. Just like many

other gifts, an effective prayer life also needs practice.

Many young believers have complained that *"they don't know what to pray about"*. Well, you're not the first; the disciples of Jesus also asked Him to teach them how to pray. You may start by praying *"The Lord's Prayer"* - which is what He taught them. Then with time, you'd be able to pray an expanded version of The Lord's Prayer. Actually, every prayer we make is embedded inside The Lord's Prayer, we just need to understand the lines and switch or add a few words.

Praying doesn't necessarily have to take a long time; but the more you practice praying, the longer you stay on the altar of prayer. When I gave my life to Christ, praying for 5 minutes was hard work for me. But as I

maintained that 5 minutes, my capacity to pray increased. Today, I can pray for over an hour and still desire to continue.

I've often said that "if you don't want to use medicine, then pray regularly". The bible says *"they go from strength to strength, every one of them in Zion, appearing before the Lord"*. In other words, any time you appear before God in prayer, you naturally increase strength. That also means you reduce strength when you don't.

Praying without the baptism of the Holy Ghost would frustrate your prayer life. It is the Holy Ghost that gives you the feeling that your prayers are heard and answered.

Jude 1:20 admonishes that we should build up ourselves by praying in the Holy Ghost. The reason why we pray is so that we can be built; and that scripture clearly states that we can't be built without the help of the Holy Spirit.

Rom 8:26 further tells us that *The Spirit helps our weaknesses in prayer; for we know not what we should pray for as we ought; but the Spirit Itself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.* There are things we need that our mouth cannot utter; it is the Holy Spirit that helps us to say them to God when we pray in tongues. Many people are still suffering, only because they are not praying about what should be prayed about.

Receiving the baptism of the Holy Spirit is one of the easiest things in Christianity. All you have to do is look up to Jesus, who also is the Baptizer, and sincerely ask Him to baptize you with the Holy Spirit. You don't need to wait for a special moment for it; as long as you're born again, then you're qualified to ask. You may even ask now.

MORE ON PRAYER...

Some demonic forces just won't let you go except you engage the power of fasting. Prayer is an ever potent force, but it has a limit to what it can accomplish without fasting. Prayer is like transmitting a message to God, while fasting is ensuring that the message passes through a good network coverage area to its destination. Daniel understood this principle when he prayed passionately without food nor drink for many

days, just to divert the plague that was to come. The bible also mentions that some demons held back the answers to his prayer, but because he was boosting his prayers with fasting, another angel of God intervened.

I remember praying for some things that must happen before a certain year ended; God answered all but one of the prayers. And when I prayed ceaselessly for days about it, i suddenly heard the voice of the Lord saying "this one will not go except by prayer and fasting". I have come to discover that there are many things that God freely intervenes for us, but there are some others that He would not intervene until we are adequately empowered for it. Fasting will show how serious we are about the issues confronting us; and ultimately, it will increase our power. God does not have issues giving us things, He only has issues giving us things we do not

have capacity to maintain. Therefore, do not tell me that God has not answered your prayers, check yourself to see if you are adequately empowered for what you are praying for. If prayer has not resolved those issues you're praying for till now, engage the power of fasting.

Practice 2

#FAITH

Faith is simply believing and doing what God's word says. But unfortunately, many believers are believing and doing what they think God's word says.

Faith is "*acting on God's word*"; if your action doesn't have a root in God's word, then it's not faith. Heb 11:1 says "*Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God*". So before you claim to be acting on faith, check the word you're really acting on. Behind every

act of faith should be an assurance of God's word.

For instance, the bible says "*thou shall not steal*". If you refuse to steal because of what that scripture says, then you're acting your faith in that scripture. Faith is the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen. In other words, your actions give substance and evidence to the existence of God's word.

Faith is a demonstration of God's word. If you don't know the word, there'd be nothing to demonstrate. At the wedding at Cana, Jesus told them to fill the water pots; and as they did, a miracle was birth. Jesus gave them the word, they believed and acted on it, then they received their miracle.

The aim of faith is to display an image of God's word to the world. Heb 11:3 says that *"through faith, the worlds were framed by the word of God"*. In other words, people will not see the word in you until they see the faith on you. Faith is the image of the written word of God. Faith explains the word of God in clear terms.

I remember how I visited a brother some years back. And while we were discussing, he noticed something I did which explained a scripture he had been trying to understand. Immediately, he screamed *"I now understand it!!!!"*. Faith is a better explanation of God's word.

Amazingly, the application of faith always rewards the carrier. Heb 10:35 says *"cast not away your confidence in God, which has great*

recompense of reward". It's more like saying God gives a reward to those who truly apply faith or show a picture of His word to the world.

Consequently, showing a picture of The Word to the world is God's ultimate goal. That's why He said *"the just shall live by faith"*. Living by faith will certainly promote His kingdom; and just as Matt 6:33 says, those who seek the advancement of His kingdom will enjoy addition of all things.

God is all you need to have all your needs met; but faith is what you need to get God to work for you. Those who truly walk in faith never fail. They may be challenged for a while, but the reward will erase the pain of the challenges they may have faced.

MORE ON FAITH...

When it comes to faith, what God gives you first is often a test to see if you still need the rest. God rarely gives you a harvest; He gives you a seed and watches how you'd manage it. Remember the parable of the talents; the master gave them talents according to their abilities, not according to what they needed. The ones that traded with their talents got more, while the one that hid his own lost it. You'd always get more when you trade with what you get first. Don't tell God that you need a shoe, then you go ahead to buy biscuits with the N500 He gave you. N500 may not buy a shoe, but it can buy a regular slipper for someone who needs it.

Yes, you probably need N200,000 to clear a debt, but what did you do with the N2,000

that came to you first. We need to be like that one leper; the moment he saw a change he came back to acknowledge the doer. And as he did, he received a second touch. Many believers live with the first touch of God's blessing, and that's because they don't understand the operation of faith. I remember many years ago when I needed N20,000; after my heavy prayers, someone gifted me with N200. Instead of questioning God, I thanked Him for it and looked for someone who really needed N200 and sowed it into his life. It wasn't long before the N20,000 I needed arrived. If you want the harvest, don't eat up your seed.

Always remember, in God's pattern, He'd often give you seed to sow before He gives you bread to eat. Don't mistake the seed for bread.

God is neither slow nor fast; you can't measure His speed. Actually, He controls the forces behind time and speed. Just when you think that it's too late to get certain things done, God says "I'm ageless and timeless, it's never too late with Me". Lazarus was dead and buried for 4 days, Martha even remarked that he'd already be stinking at that time; but here was Jesus, He told her about a key that time and speed respects. "If you believe, you shall see the glory of God". She believed, and Lazarus that was dead came back to life. Hallelujah!

In Luke 1:45, the bible says, "Blessed is she that believes, for there shall be a performance of those things which were told her from the Lord". Martha believed, God

performed, and the dead came back to life. Moses believed, God performed, and the sea divided. Joshua believed, God performed, and the wall of Jericho fell down flat. Abraham believed, God performed, and Sarah gave birth to Isaac at age 90. When God speaks to you, don't worry about the time it will be fulfilled; rather, develop your faith to enforce the manifestation of what He has said to you. Even in the grave, faith can still bring to pass whatever God has said to you.

Don't claim a faith you don't have. Faith comes by hearing and understanding the word of God, not praying, praising, or fasting. The reason why many believers often require intensive medical attention is because they were claiming faith when their ailment first began. They pray against the ailment, but without any revelational word content. Praying without the word is playing, not faith;

that's why many believers unknowingly play with their challenges until they aggravate.

People mistake boldness for faith. A boldness that has no root in God's word is not faith, and is bound to fail. Goliath was bold enough to challenge the people of Israel, but because his boldness lacked the word, he failed. On the other hand, David's boldness had a root in the word, and that's why he succeeded.

Boldness may drive challenges away temporarily, but faith is what quenches challenges completely. From experience, the challenges we confront with boldness often return very fierce. But the ones we attack with faith, though may return, but with your fear in their heart. Remember how those demons asked Jesus if He had come to torment them before their time? Meanwhile,

we were earlier told that the devil left Jesus for a season because He resisted the devil's temptation by faith.

Any challenge that keeps you in fear has not been addressed by faith. Jesus had a long discussion with the devil the first time the devil came to tempt Him, but the subsequent times, He simply cast them out. He literally used two words "Come Out".

If you don't want to see shame, then study God's word. The bible says we should "study to show ourselves approved". Even if you scream at the top of your voice, if your faith is not approved, it won't work.

Shame is a product of failed faith. And a faith that fails is a "wordless" faith. Faith is like a

mobile phone that is used to receive calls from God, and the word is the charger. And like we know, if you keep using your phone without charging it, it will soon go off. And when it goes off, you can no longer receive calls from God. And people who can no longer receive calls from God will definitely face shame.

When Kenneth Hagin was bedridden, many things were tried to keep him alive, but medically, it was confirmed that he was going to die. Miraculously, as he began to study the word of God, his faith came alive and healed him. When there is enough word in you, your faith comes alive. And when your faith comes alive, you're free to receive your miracles from God.

A faith that lacks the word will soon fade. We are called "Believers" because we believe the word of God. Imagine for moment, what would you become without the word of God in you? How would you be a believer of what you don't have in you? Isn't this why many believers have suddenly turned deceivers? Personally, I don't take counsel from believers who don't study the word, because they'd end up deceiving me.

The Just shall live by faith. So if it feels like you're not living, then check your faith. The Just life is a stress-free and progressive life, but you can't live that life without faith.

The bible says "the path of the just is as a shining light that shines brighter and brighter unto the perfect day", and "the just shall live by faith". Though the path of the Just is

ordained to shine brighter by the day, but only faith can make it so. Anytime you see an abnormality in your life, it simply means your faith has a problem. The normal life of the Just is progressive, so anything outside progress is abnormal for the Just. Living with struggles, sickness and diseases is not a just life; whatever does not connote progress is not a just life.

A person who lives by faith is one who believes and lives by the word of God. If you've noticed, anytime you engage your faith without applying the word, you'd feel faint. For those of you who are following our Bible study plan, you'd observe that the more you study, the closer you feel God. That's because God is only far when the word is not found in your faith.

There's more to a Christian life if only we'd dare to live by faith. A lifestyle of faith is not a guess work but a word work. In other words, faith requires that you find a word and work out the word you found. That's probably why the bible says "When thou hast found it, there shall be a reward, and your expectation shall not be cut off".

Practice 3

#PRAISE

If you really desire to know God, then you must develop a praiseful life. You may wonder why David knew so much about God; well, you just found the secret, it's praise!

Praise is God's habitation. That may sound mysterious; but any time you begin to praise God, you're simply paying Him a visit. No wonder the later part of Psalms 100:4 says "... *Enter into His court with praise*". People who praise God as a lifestyle naturally live with God on their side.

If you check through scriptures, you'd discover that the book that carried more detail about God is the book of Psalms, particularly the Psalms of David. In Ps 34, we saw how David displayed madness in the presence of Abimelech, all because he was praising God.

If you're wondering why certain people know so much about God, check what they do in their praise time. Personally, I don't joke with my time of praise to God. I once enrolled for a voice coaching just to make sure my voice never betrays me when I'm praising Him.

Let me also mention that *"praising God is not only about singing and dancing to Him"*, it's also about acknowledging His greatness in every area of your life, whether publicly or privately. It's about giving Him the glory. It's

about having your boast in the greatness of God.

God praisers enjoy easy access to revelation; God tell them things even when they don't ask. You may be very conversant with the scriptures, but if you're not a praiser, getting revelation would not be so easy. I developed a habit of praising God for about 30 minutes daily; and to be honest, I love the after-effect.

I admonish you to develop a habit of praise. If you don't know how to sing for now, buy recorded praises by known singers, and dance as they sing. With time, you'd master the songs. You may start with 10 minutes, depending on your schedule. But give God some praise!

MORE ON PRAISE...

Praise takes you deeper! Many believers are enjoying the surface of God's blessing, just as many people who do not know how to swim would only enjoy the surface of the waters. Praise is like swimming, the more praiseful you are, the deeper you go into God's presence. The deeper you swim, the farther you go from the surface of the earth. The reason why challenges are so close to certain people is probably because they are too far from God.

The Bible says "draw near to me and I will draw near to you". The nearer you are to God, the firmer you become in solving challenges. Praise takes you closer to God. If you want to enjoy rich sea foods, then get to the bottom of the waters. Likewise, if you want to enjoy the best of God, then let

praising God become a lifestyle for you. Prayer may send a few fishes to the surface of the waters, but praise takes you to the base of all the fishes. No wonder the Bible says there is fullness of joy in His presence, and in His right hand are pleasures forevermore. If prayer hasn't given you the idea you asked for, then get into the deep to collect the idea. God praisers never lack ideas on what to do. Praise is God's habitation. He may sometimes come out to help you, but He will go back if you do not give Him praise.

Practice 4

#GIVING & #RECEIVING

Givers never lack; and if it looks like you're lacking, then you're probably not giving.

Giving is not a function of what you let go from your hand, but what you let go from your heart. Many people give from their hand, but what they give remains locked up in their heart.

A giving that does not leave your heart will never guarantee returns. And when your heart is locked, your hands would also be closed from receiving. A closed heart is also a closed hand.

If you want to receive from God, then open your hand. And the best way to open your hand is to give out to someone. Those who open their hands to give to someone simply open their hands to receive from God.

Before you think of what to do with what you have, think of who to help with what you have. The prophet told the widow of Zarephat to make for him first. She was supposed to eat her last meal and die with her child, but because she considered helping someone first, what she had left was sufficient for her all through the famine.

Personally, I've made it a habit to give something to someone every day. If you want to enjoy kingdom prosperity, then reduce your prayer and fasting for money, and increase your giving.

Some people claim they don't have what to give; well, just like that widow, if you still have what to eat, then you have what to give. She gave her last meal, and God blessed her for it.

When impacting lives becomes a priority for your money, then financial prosperity would become your identity.

Practice 5

#JOY & #HAPPINESS

Joy is a feeling of contentment, while happiness is a feeling of excitement.

Your joy would remain as long as you're still contented. Your happiness would also remain as long as the excitement continues.

Show me a man whose joy is lost, and you'd find a man who is filled with discontentment. Show me a man who struggles to live a happy

life, and I'd show you how much excitement he has lost.

People say happiness is drawn from an external force. That may be true; but it has an internal effect. As a matter of fact, you'd rarely tell the difference between a happy man and a joyful man. Happiness and joy plays a major role in the heart.

However, joy is more potent, because it's bourn from contentment. Everything may be down, but joy will still remain. Happiness disappears the moment supplies ceases, but joy would remain even when there is no supply.

A joyful man would still be happy in his mold house, even though he sees beautiful sky

scrapers on a daily basis. A joyful man never loses his joy to what he doesn't have. He is always contented with what he has.

Heb 13:5 tells us to be contented with whatever we have. And that's because true joy comes from contentment. I read the story of a man who was wealthy only because he was contented. But after some time, a man introduced him to gold, and compared all his possessions to one little piece of gold. That night, for the first time, that man slept as a poor man. He became poor, not because his possessions were reduced, but because he became discontented.

Finally, the fruit of the Spirit is joy. Which means we must consciously practice a life of joy. Many believers lose their joy over what they don't have, and this ought not to be so.

Be contented with what you have; sad faces won't bring any increase.

MORE ON JOY...

I admit that sometimes having faith in God can be a very painful process. Yeah, you probably put your faith on the line to get married, and now things are really tough. You were hoping that it would be a good experience - considering the fact that the bible says "he that finds a wife finds a good thing", but on the contrary, it feels like you made a wrong move. The truth is, expecting divine manifestations without joy is like going to the farm to harvest crops without the necessary tools. You'd probably end up frustrated. Sometimes, it's not that God didn't respond to our prayers, we just didn't engage the right sickle of harvest. In Ps 126:5, the

bible says "they that sow in tears shall reap in joy".

You may have sown in pain, but the only way to reap the fruit of all your labour is through joy. Joy is the only acceptable tool for harvest in this kingdom. The bible even says "with joy shall you draw water out of the wells of salvation". Now that you've gone through the pain of completing your education, you need joy to get a job, you need joy to start a life and to do everything else. Before you find your spouse find your joy. Anything you find before finding joy may not last long. Complains and regrets have never prospered anyone in this kingdom. If you won't be joyful, then no matter how long you endure in faith, you won't see returns.

I trust you've been blessed by this little piece.
It is my prayer that your Christian life will take
a turn from here, in Jesus name!
Congratulations!

God bless you, I love you, and I await your
testimony!

- PUTTING GRACE UNDER PRESSURE
- HOW TO RECEIVE YOUR DESIRED
MIRACLE
 - COLOR IN WILDERNESS
 - THE BAIL OUT PLAN
 - WHERE ARE THE YOUTHS?
- HE BLESSES OUR BREAD AND WATER
 - WHERE THERE IS NO VISION
 - FOCUS
 - ACADEMIC DRIVE
- LEARN HOW TO FIND YOUR PURPOSE
 - MOTIVATING RIGHT EDUCATION
 - THE TIME IS NOT ENOUGH
 - A NEW CONFIDENCE
 - INTO THE DEEP
 - OVERCOMING DEPRESSION
 - TIMELY NOTES 30-DAY DEVOTIONAL
 - I COULDN'T FIND A SILVER SPOON
 - ANSLEM'S FAITH BOOK
 - NOW THAT YOU'VE BEEN
ENTHRONED
 - THE GREAT ADVANTAGE



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Books By
EMEKA ANSLEM



I am Emeka Anslem, the privileged writer of Timely Notes Daily Devotional, Founder of In-spirited Writers Training School, and President of The Solutionists. I received a divine call to be a teacher in April 2013, with an assignment to "Add value to lives by bringing knowledge to the people". By His grace, I've committed my life to this assignment, and I'm always willing to add value to lives.

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