

THE REDEEMED CHRISTIAN CHURCH OF GOD INC.



WORKERS' TRAINING MANUAL

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INTRODUCTION

Churches from time to time integrate believers into the church's working group. Likewise, new churches need to raise workers among members. These workers-to-be require certain training that will make them equipped for the task they are going to undertake (2 Tim. 2:15). It is towards this end of producing a well equipped and approved worker that this manual is produced.

It involves a regular training scheme where candidates who are qualified to become workers are trained weekly on the work of discipleship and teaching techniques for the purpose of equipping one to disciple a young convert.

The goals of the training include the following:

- 1) To produce a mature group of believers who will be able to teach others the good news at least sufficiently to lead them to Christ
- 2) To produce believers who are efficiently able to teach the scriptures and produce such disciples who will be strong as themselves
- 3) To prepare workers of the church with the knowledge of the administration of the church that will make them effectively useful in the area chosen for their services such as choristers, ushers, evangelist e.t.c

It is expected that a believer who is undergoing workers' training must have passed through the New Converts class, baptismal class and be baptized by full immersion in water.

Therefore, a worker in training should have achieved the assurance of salvation, solutions to the struggles of his faith, able to defend his new found faith and be prepared with eagerness to advance with Christ in his day to day living and in studying and doing the Word of God.

WHO IS A WORKER?

In the vineyard of the Lord Jesus Christ, every believer is expected to be a worker (John 14 vs 12). Everyone has one thing or the other to do in order to accomplish the goals and mission of the church.

However, in line with the Lord's rule in choosing the twelve, the seventy and the three, there is need to chose certain believers who among other things will be dedicated to the service.

Therefore, a worker is a believer who has experienced salvation and found a rooted faith in Jesus Christ and the vision of heaven and has seen the need to work together with the leader of the church in order to achieve the set goals derived for the mission of the church.

In a simplified way, a worker has seen the need to work together with others to help achieve the goals of the church which basically is to witness, win souls and build souls in faith that will keep them ready for rapture at the second appearance of our Lord Jesus Christ.

THE PRINCIPLES OF A WORKER

Define principle: A fundamental truth or proposition that serves as the foundation for a system of belief or behavior or for a chain of reasoning or A rule or belief governing one's personal behavior.

The principle is the fundamental or general truth that makes up and guides a worker in his service. It is the essence of the worker, a standard or rules of his personal conduct.

The principles are the facts that are and can only be derived from the Bible. They are so many that they cannot be taught in one training period but as the worker advances in his services, he comes to understand them more and more.

However, for the purpose of this training, we shall be discussing seven outstanding ones which are:

- 1) What must I do to do God's work?
- 2) What will you have me do?
- 3) I must work the work of He who sent me
- 4) I must finish the work of He who sent me
- 5) Fight a good fight
- 6) Watch and Pray
- 7) I know thy works

PRINCIPLE ONE: THE QUALIFICATION WHAT MUST I DO TO WORK THE WORKS OF GOD?

This is a question asked the Lord Jesus Christ in John 6: 28-29. The question can be said to be requesting for what qualifies one to do the work of God. The Lord Jesus gave an answer in verse 29 which encompasses a great principle: believe.

What does “Believe” mean to us?

1. To believe is to accept.

- What are we to accept?
- a) Accept his offer of salvation: Titus 2:11; Acts 4:12
- b) Accept his personality:
 - 1) The way, the truth and the life: John 14:6
 - 2) I am the good shepherd: John 10:11, 14
 - 3) I am the resurrection: John 11:25
 - 4) I am the light of the world: John 9:5
 - 5) I am the door: John 10:7
 - 6) I am the true vine: John 15:1
 - 7) I am the son of God John 10:36
 - 8) I am the Lord and Master: John 13:13
 - 9) I and my Father are one: John 10:30; 17:20-26
 - 10) I am the Messiah: John 4:26
 - 11) I am the Alpha and Omega: Rev. 1:8, 17

- Consider in the line of His personality the affirmation of His Father. Matt 17:5

C) Accept His Doctrine: Every church has her patterned doctrine which every member particularly worker is expected to accept and defend (Heb. 6vs 1-3). It is a patterned doctrine because it is and must follow or embrace the doctrine of our Lord Jesus Christ

* The doctrine of our Lord Jesus Christ:

- it is a new doctrine: Mark 1:27
- it is of God: John 7:16-18
- it is scriptural: 2 Tim 3: 14-17
- it is used to exhort and convict: Titus 1: 7-9
- it is for teaching: 2 Tim 4:1-5

* No other doctrine is acceptable: 1 Tim 1:8-10

* Beware of strange and other doctrines: Heb 13:8-9

- doctrine of men: Matt 15: 7-9; Col. 2:8
- doctrine of Balaam: Rev. 2:14; 2 Peter 2vs 1-3
- doctrine of the devil (demons): 1 Tim 4:1-2
- doctrine of the World: Col. 2:8, 20-23

* Abide in the doctrine of Christ: 2 John vs 9,10

D) Accept His statements: Matt. 5:7; John 13:16

- I am with you even to the end: Matt. 28: 20

- I am coming back to take you home: John 14: 1-4
- Ask and you shall receive: John 14:12-13
- Don't worry about tomorrow: Luke 12: 26,29; Phil. 4: 6

His statements comprise His commands, His plans and His promises.

2. To believe is to entrust, especially your spiritual well being to Him: Luke 10: 1-6,17; Matt. 6: 24-34; John 15: 1-8; Heb. 13: 5-6.
3. To believe is to think that he is able to do what He says He will do: Heb. 11: 1-2,6

Conclusion: In order to do the work of God one is required to believe in God. To believe is to accept, accepting his offer of salvation, His personality, His doctrine and His statement. To believe is also to have faith in God's ability to do what He says He will do and, to believe is entrust our well being particularly spiritual well being to Him.

This is the first principle one must embrace to be an effective worker in the vineyard of God.

PRINCIPLE TWO: CODES OF CONDUCT WHAT WILL YOU HAVE ME DO?

Paul at His submission to be one of the Lord's worker made this statement: "Lord, what will you have me do" - Acts 9:6

This statement reveals certain characteristics that is peculiar to us as workers:

- a) It is an act of submission: 1 Peter 2: 13-25; Eph. 6:5-9; Titus 2:9,10; 3:1
- b) It is an act of willingness to do the work: Acts 9:20; John 10:17-19; 1 Corin. 9:18-19
- c) It is an act of the heart prepared to accept responsibility: Acts 9:16; John 10: 13-18; 14:12; 5:20.
 - The primary responsibility is the great commission. Mark 16:14-18; Matt 28:19-20.
 - Paul also states a responsibility in 2 Tim. 2:15
- d) It is an act of willingness to obey instruction: John 12:49-50; Isaiah 30:21

PRINCIPLE 3: THE REQUIREMENT I MUST WORK THE WORK.

The Lord Jesus Christ our perfect example at the work revealed to us this principle which guided Him in doing the work: "I must work the work of Him who sent me while it is day,"
- John 9:4.

- 1) It is expressing commitment: 1 Corin. 15:58
 - Knowing that you are doing it for the Lord brings more commitment. Col. 3:22-25
 - Commitment is illustrated by the Parable of the talents. Matt. 25:14-30
- 2) It is expressing faithfulness and loyalty: John 8:28-29
 - No selfish ambition. John 6:38; Col. 3:17; Matt. 7:18; John 12:49-50. I know you not - John 5:30
 - No eye service: Matt. 25:45-51, 42-44
 - No deceit: Matt. 21:28-32
- 3) It is expressing recognition of authority: John 8:28,29; 1 Tim. 6:1-2
- 4) It is expressing time in relation to doing the work. Eccl. 3:1-9.
 - Make yourself relevant all the time
 - Promptly doing the work. 2 Tim. 4:1-5

PRINCIPLE 4: INSPIRATION I MUST FINISH THE WORK

A worker who will be committed, endure and finish his mission must have an inspiration; something that influence the mind and keep it going. The lord reveals to us His inspiration in John 4:34

- 1) It is expression of determination
 - He knew he must finish the work. John 5:36
 - He fixed up himself in agreement to it that He must finish the work. To finish is to bring to a desired or complete condition; the final stage or end
 - He knew the importance of time to His finishing the work. So, He would not entertain time wasting or procrastination. John 4:34-35
 - It is such determination which is necessary for all of us that Paul expresses in Phil. 3:12-15
 - Paul saw himself as a runner in a race, exerting all his strength and pressing on with intense concentration in order not to fall short of the goal that Christ has set for his life
 - Paul had received a glimpse of the glory of heaven (2 Corin. 12:4) and had resolved that his whole life by the grace of God would be centered around his

determination to press on and someday get to heaven and see Christ face to face (Phil. 3: 8-10)

2) It is an expression of diligence

- a) An act of one being careful and persevering in carrying out tasks or duties in order to reach the desired end. 1 Corin. 9:19-27
 - Paul, here illustrates the principle that if one fails to exercise self control, self-denial and love with regards to others, he will not be able to accomplish his desired goal.
 - Paul renounces his rights out of sympathetic consideration for the conviction of others in order not to limit his ministry. He understands that if he offends them by his disregarding the conviction of their conscience, his ministry to them for the sake of Christ could be hindered.
- b) Diligence is an act of one who desires and his mind is fixed to overcome and will not entertain failure (Acts 20:22-24)
 - Paul's main concern was not preserving his own life. What counted most was that he might finish the ministry to which God had called him. Wherever it ended, even if in the sacrifice of his life, he would finish his course with joy and the prayer that "Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life or by death" (Phil. 1:20-21)
- c) Diligence, that is, being careful and persevering to the end is what God rewards. Prov. 13:4; 22:29; 21:5
 - The overcomers are those who overcome by determination and diligence (Rev. 12:11) have great reward. Rev. 2:7, 11, 17, 26-28; 3:5, 12, 21
- d) Diligence is loyalty to the Father.

3) It is an expression of Patience. Heb. 12:1-2

- To finish the work must be done with Patience (Greek word: hupomone), that is with perseverance and endurance. Heb. 10:36
- The way to victory is the same as that of the saints in Heb. 11:1-40, pressing on to the finish. Heb. 6:11-12

4) You can finish it. Phil. 4:13

- The Lord Jesus Christ endured and finished it. John 17:4; 19:30.
- Paul endured and finished it too. 2 Tim 4: 7-8
- Just like Paul, you too can finish it if you will fight a good fight. Luke 9:62; Heb. 10:38-39

Conclusion: Count the cost, because you will not want to start what you won't want and cannot finish. What is worth doing at all is worth doing well. As a worker you are expected to finish in order to get the reward. So get an inspiration to do, to do it well and to finish it well.

PRINCIPLE 5: ENEMIES IN WARFARE FIGHT A GOOD FIGHT

Victorious Christian: when we are talking about a Christian fighting a good fight we are talking about victorious Christian living. There are three main enemies that a Christian particularly a worker must have victory over:

- a) **THE FLESH:** that is , the corrupt desire within us, also referred to as the “sinful nature” (Romans 7:7-25)
- b) **THE WORLD:** the ungodly pleasures of the world and every sort of temptations associated with it (Matt. 13:22, 1 John 2:15-17)
- c) **SATAN AND HIS FORCES:** that is, powers of darkness who are the spiritual rulers of the world and who energize the ungodly, oppose God’s will and frequently attack the believers of this age (1 Peter 5:8-10; Psalm 22:13; Ez. 22: 25).

We shall discuss each of this in details

1. THE FLESH

Romans 7: 4-25; 8: 5-14; 6: 11-19; Gal. 5: 16-21

Romans 7:4-25: Paul in this passage tries to explain “the flesh”

- That corrupt desire within us which in time past believers obeyed in ignorance but which the knowledge of the commandments of God brings to our understanding that obedience to it is sin. He reminds us that the flesh, the sinful nature is still struggling to gain control whereby holding a believer captive to obedience to sin. (vs 9-13).

- Paul describes a conflict between a person alone against the power of sin, showing that we cannot attain justification, holiness, goodness and sanctification by our own endeavour to resist sin and keep God’s law. All needs the grace of God to overcome

- This conflict for believers is the struggle within us to either yield to the desire of the holy spirit or that of the power of sin. However, it makes it clear that,

1. we cannot overcome the sinful nature by observant and obedience to the law only
2. except one experiences the regenerating grace of Christ (Romans 8:3), a believer attempts to live a life free from the bondage of sin and immorality will be useless.
3. it is through the power of the Holy Spirit that we can put to death the flesh (Romans 8: 4,5,13)

- Romans 8: 5-14: Paul enjoins us not to live after the flesh:

To live after the flesh is living after “the sinful element of human nature”. It is the desire to take pleasure in, be occupied with and gratify the corrupt desires of sinful human nature. Such living includes not only fornication, adultery, hatred, self ambition, outburst of anger etc. (Gal. 5:19-21) but also being offensive or outrageous to accepted standards of decency or modesty, obscenity , pornographic addiction, drug addiction, mental and emotional pleasure from sex scenes in plays, books, TV or movies and the like.

- According to Rom. 8:7-8 and Gal. 5:17, it is impossible to follow after the flesh and the Holy Spirit at the same time. If anyone fails to resist by the Holy Spirit, his sinful desires and instead lives according to the flesh, he becomes an enemy of God and can expect spiritual and eternal death (Rom. 8:13).
- Our spiritual warfare, though often directed against Satan and evil spiritual forces should primarily be against the passions and desires of the “flesh” i.e the sinful human nature.
- Paul in Rom. 6:11-19 exhorts Christians on the necessity for continual warfare against all that would limit the work of God in our lives for sin is always striving to regain control over us.
- We as believers must continually decide whether we will surrender to the inclinations of sinful human nature of which we partake (2 Peter 1:4; Rom. 6:13)
- By receiving and following the Spirit we are delivered from the power of sin and are led onward to final glorification in Christ. This experience is the normal Christian life under the full provision of the gospel and daily adherence to scriptural teachings.

There are many in the church today who acknowledge the righteousness, purity and excellence of the gospel of Christ, yet because they have not experienced the regenerating grace of Christ find themselves in bondage and slavery to sin and immorality.

The unregenerated person maintains a losing conflict against sin and is at last taken captive. Sin finally triumphs and the person is sold as a slave to sin. (Rom. 7:15-19; 6:12,16)

Paul also enjoins us to mortify i.e put to death the deeds of the flesh (Rom. 8:13). Failing to put to death the sinful deeds of the body is spiritual death and loss of inheritance in the Kingdom of God (Gal. 5:21)

The words “Ye shall die” (Rom. 8:13) mean that a Christian can pass from spiritual life back into spiritual death. Thus, the life of God that we received at our new birth can be extinguished in the soul of a believer who refuses to put to death the sinful deeds of the body.

The state of a person under the captivity of sin is miserable and no wonder Paul exclaimed in Rom. 7:24: “O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?”

The answer is well provided by Paul. Rom. 7:25. “through Jesus Christ our Lord”. It is He alone who will set us free from the law of sin and death (Rom. 8:2)

Life without the grace of Christ is defeat, misery and bondage to sin. Spiritual life, freedom from condemnation, victory over sin and fellowship with God come through union with Christ by the indwelling Holy Spirit.

2. THE WORLD

1 JOHN 2:15-18

The term “WORLD” refers to the vast system of this age which Satan promotes and which exists independent of God. It consists not only in the obviously evil, immoral and sinful pleasures of the world but also refers to a spirit of rebellion, resistance or indifference to God and His revelation that exists within all human enterprises that are not under the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

The “WORLD” also includes all man made religious systems and all unbiblical, worldly or lukewarm Christian organizations and churches.

The world and the true church are two distinct groups of people. The world is under the dominion of Satan (John 12:31) and the church belongs exclusively to God. (Rev. 21:2; Eph. 5:23-24). In the world believers are strangers and pilgrims (Heb. 11:13; 1 Peter 2:11)

Satan being in control has organized the world into political, cultural, economic and religious systems that are hostile toward God and His people (John 7:7; 15:18; 1 John 2:16-18) and that refuse to submit to His truth which exposes its wrong doing.

From the world: the true Christian experiences tribulation (John 16:2-3), hatred (John 15:9), persecution (Matt. 5:10-12) and suffering (Rom. 8:22-23; 1 Peter 2:19-29). Using the lures of the world, Satan makes an unceasing effort to destroy the life of God in the Christian (2 Corin. 11:3; 1 Pet. 5:8).

Loving the world defiles our fellowship with God and leads to spiritual destruction. It is impossible to love the world and the Father at the same time. (Matt. 6:24)

To love the world means being in intimate fellowship with and devotion to its values, interest, ways and pleasures. It means taking pleasure in or enjoying what is offensive and opposed to God (Luke 23:35).

Therefore as believers we must come out of the world (John 15:19), not be conformed to the world (Rom.12:2), not love the world (1John 2:15), hate the world (Heb. 1:9), die to the world (Gal. 6:14) and be delivered from the world (Col. 1:13-14).

Believers must have no close or intimate fellowship with those who participate in the world’s evil system; must condemn openly their sins; must be the light and salt to them (Matt. 5:13-14); must love them and must attempt to win them to Christ (Mark 16:5; Jude 22-23)

3. SATAN

Eph. 6:10-18; 1 Peter 5:8-10; 2 Corin. 10:3-15

Christians face spiritual conflicts with Satan and a host of evil spirits (Matt. 4:10). These powers of darkness are the spiritual rulers of the world (John 12:31, 2 Corin. 4:4) who

energize the ungodly (Eph 2:2), oppose God's will (Matt. 13:38,39) and frequently attack the believers of this age (1Peter 5:8). They constitute a vast multitude (Rev. 12:4,7) and are organized into a highly systematized empire of evil with rank and order (Eph. 2:2, John 14:30)

As a roaring lion, Satan remains a threat to believers (Psalm 22:13, Ez. 22:25) and seeks to destroy them, especially through experiences of suffering (1 Peter 5:8-9). He will spiritually destroy anyone who abandons the protection of God.

Christians must wage war against all evil not in their own power but with spiritual weapons (2 Corin. 10:3-5; Eph. 6:10-18)

Our victory however has been secured by Christ Jesus himself through His death on the cross (Col. 2:15; Eph. 4:8; 1:7; Col. 1:13-14). We only need to fight the fight of faith.

In our warfare of faith, we must endure hardships as good soldiers of Christ (2 Tim. 2:3) and persevere (Eph. 6:18). We must remain loyal to the end and be willing to undergo difficulties and suffering and to wage spiritual warfare in wholehearted devotion to our Lord.

Those who persevere and remain steadfast in the faith to the end shall live and reign with Christ (2 Tim. 2:11,12; Rev. 20:4). Christ will deny those who refuse to endure to the end but deny Him either by words or deeds (Matt. 10:33; 25:1-12)

CONCLUSION

In 2 Tim. 4:6-7, Paul in reviewing his life for God describes his Christian life in the following terms:

- 1) He considers the Christian life as "a good fight" the only fight worth fighting. He fought against Satan (Eph. 6:12), Jews and Pagan races (2 Tim. 3:1-5; Rom. 1:21-32, Gal. 5: 19-21), Judaism (Acts 14:19; 20:19; Gal. 5:1-6) Antinomianism and immorality in the Church (2 Tim. 3:5; 4:3; 1 Corin. 5:1); false teachers (2 Tim. 4:3-5; Acts 20:28-31), the distortion of the Gospel (Gal. 1:6-12), worldliness (Rom. 12:2) and Sin (Rom. 6: 8-13; 1 Corin. 9:24-27)
- 2) He has finished his course amidst trials, difficulties and temptations and has remained faithful to his Lord and Saviour throughout his life (Heb. 10:13, 2 Tim. 2:12; Heb 12:1-2)
- 3) He has kept the faith in times of severe testing, great discouragement and much affliction, both when forsaken by friends and opposed by false teachers. He never compromised the original truth of the gospel. (2 Tim. 1:13-14; 2:2; 3:14-16; 1 Tim 6:12)

- 4) Because Paul remained faithful to his Lord and the gospel entrusted to him, the spirit witnessed to him that the loving approval of God and the “crown of righteousness” was awaiting him in Heaven.
- 5) God has reserved in heaven rewards for all those who will keep the faith in righteousness (Matt. 19:27-29; 2 Corin. 5:10; 2:17,26; Rev. 3:5,12,21)

You must win this war!!!

PRINCIPLE SIX: THE VICTORY LINE WATCH AND PRAY

PART I: WATCH

- Matt. 26: 36-46
- Having understood that believers, particularly workers in the Lord's vineyard are engaging in spiritual conflicts with three main enemies, the flesh and its desires; the world and its lusts and Satan and his forces, it becomes pertinent that as we live daily, we be watchful of these enemies with their different strategies, appeals and forces. We need to be prayerful not to fall into their temptations and traps.

Therefore, it is necessary for us to know how and what to watch and pray for as we go on this Christian race.

- 1) The word "watch" means to observe closely or attentively
 - To guard carefully or closely
 - To maintain an interest in
 - To keep vigil or be vigilant

Here are some things that we must watch for:

- a. The devil: Applying the last meaning of the word with reference to 1 Peter 5:8, we can find out one thing that we must be watchful for: **THE DEVIL, OUR ADVERSARY**. Definitely, no believer will want to eat with the Devil. But the problem is that not many believers are watchful of Satan's schemes, referred to as "the wiles of the devil" in Eph. 6:11. These include the ungodly pleasures of the world and temptations of every sort that Satan use to lure into sin and thereby makes one forfeit the protection of God. The devil will spiritually destroy anyone who abandons the protection of God (John 15: 1-5); Matt. 26:41. The Lord delivers the godly out of temptations (2 Pet. 2:9).
- b. The false teachers and prophets: Believers need to guard themselves carefully against heretics (Titus 3:9-11).
 - Heretics are false teachers who teach opinions and doctrines that have no Biblical basis and that creates division
 - The Lord Jesus Christ warned His disciples thirteen times in the gospels to be aware of leaders who would mislead (Matt. 7:15; 16:6,11; 24:4,24; Mark 4:24; 8:15; 12:38-40; 13:5; Luke 12:1; 17:23; 20:46; 21:8; 2 Peter 2:1-3)
 - Examine the teachers/leaders lest you fall with them. (1 Thess. 5:21; 1 John 4:1; 2 Pet. 2:12-22; 2 Tim. 4:1-5). Paul warned of it too (2 Corin. 11:1-15)
- c. Self: Believers must observe themselves closely or attentively lest they fall off faith. (1 Corin. 10:12; 16:13; 2 Corin. 13:5)
 - No knowledge is so important to believers as the certainty that they have eternal life (1 John 5:13)
 - All professing Christians should examine themselves to ascertain that their salvation is a present reality. 2 Corin. 13:5

- Any professed believer living in sin who believes that Christ will delay His coming for a few years can be compared to the unjust steward. He will feel no impending threat that the return of the Lord will overtake him. Matt. 24:42-51. In the passage, we see the significance of Christ associating unfaithfulness and hypocrisy with the belief and desire that Christ will delay His return.
- d. Second coming: Believers need to maintain more interest in the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ than any other thing. (Matt. 25:13; Mark 13: 32-37).
- The Lord Jesus Christ warned us to be watchful because no one knows the day or the hour of His second coming. (2 Pet. 3:8-13; 1 Thess. 5:6; 1 Pet. 4:7). “End of all things is at hand”. We believers should view our present lives in light of Christ’s imminent coming and the end of the world.
- e. PRAY: To Peter, that the “end of all things is at hand” calls for certain commitments- Prayerful Watching.
- The same thing Paul exhorts “continue in prayer and watch in the same with thanksgiving” (Col. 4:2). This implies continuous, fervent and effective prayer. In other words, be spiritually awake and alert.
 - We need to devote ourselves intensely to prayer and remain alert to the many things that would detour us from this purpose.
 - Satan and the weakness of our human nature will attempt to cause us to neglect prayer itself or to distract our minds and thoughts while praying. Hence, we must discipline ourselves to achieve the prayer required for Christian victory (Matt. 26:41)
 - 1 Thess. 5:17-18. This means to abide in the presence of the Father, having a continual cry from the heart of His grace and blessing. While doing this, we must remember to give thanks to the Lord for what He has done – for He has overcome the world and Satan for us.

BRETHREN, LET US WATCH AND PRAY.

- f. Grieving the holy Spirit: Believers particularly the Christian workers have to be extra watchful over the use of their tongues lest they grieve the Holy Spirit. Eph. 4:29-30; Col. 3:8
- The Holy Spirit who dwells within us is a person (2 Corin. 3:17-18) who can experience intense grief or sorrow as Jesus Christ Himself did when He wept over Jerusalem or grieved on other occasions (Matt. 23:37; Luke 19:41; John 11:35)
 - The believer causes the Holy Spirit grief or pain when he ignores His presence, voice or leading- all of which is SIN (disobedience to God). Acts 5:1-5
 - Refusal or rejection of the Holy Spirit is a rejection of future redemption (Rapture). Eph. 4:30
 - Acts 7:51: Stephen was talking of the resistance that the Israelites of Old put against the Holy Spirit. The new Israelites should be watchful of this tendency to refuse to heed the voice of the Holy Spirit. When this happens, nothing

remains than to incur judgment from God and to forfeit the kingdom. Rom. 8:14-17

- The Lord Jesus Christ warns us to be watchful lest we blaspheme against the Holy Spirit, because this is an unforgivable sin- a sin unto death. Matt. 12:31; 2 Peter 2:4-17; 1 Tim 1:20
- Believers have to be extra careful lest they lose grace and God withdraws the Holy Spirit from them. The Psalmist- Psalm 51:11, Saul: 1 Sam 16:14, Samson: Judges 16:20
- Paul enjoined believers not to quench the Holy Spirit and not despise His supernatural manifestations (1 Thess. 5:19-20)
- Do not look down or treat with contempt the manifestations of the gift of the Holy Spirit. God does not take it kindly. It is the same as blasphemy. Be watchful even to the every end time prophecy. 2 Tim. 3:1-2; 1 Tim 4:1-2

PART II: PRAY

“A prayerless Christian is a powerless Christian” is the saying. The Lord Jesus Christ in Matt. 26:41 draws our attention to the fact that there is a war we must overcome. He said the Holy Spirit is willing to do the desire of God but the flesh, that old sinful nature is as well struggling in us, pressurizing us not to be in agreement with the spirit. He therefore warns us to watch and pray lest we yield to the dictate of the flesh.

- For some time, we have been looking into what it means to watch and what we as believers must watch out for particularly watching lest we grieve the Holy Spirit.
- However, just as the Lord Jesus Christ said, that watching must go along with prayer. So also the apostles exhort us to be watchful with prayer particularly in this end time (1 Peter 4:7; Col. 4:2-3)
- Then what does it mean to pray and how can we be watchful in prayer?
 - 1) Prayer is only way of communication by which a believer talks to God and maintains his fellowship with Him (John 15:5)
- It is the way of committing our heart desires to God. Prov. 16:3; 3:5-6; 1 Pet. 5:7; Phil. 4:6
- It is the only way of calling God’s attention into our situation, troubles and difficulties. Ps. 50:14-15; 55:16-19
- Prayer is a believer’s supply and response line.
 - 2) Prayer is so paramount to our Lord Jesus Christ that He did not only talk and warn us to pray but also taught us how to pray effectively. Matt. 6:9-13
- However, the Lord did not say we should be reciting it but giving us some of the ingredients of effective prayer. These ingredients are described by the letters of the word A.C.T.S

A - ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

“Our Father in Heaven”

The acknowledgement is to recognize or admit the existence, truth or reality of God.

- This is where our faith plays a major role. Faith in God is the linking route of communication. Heb 11:6; Luke 17:13; James 1:17; 2 Peter 1:3
- To acknowledge also is to express thanks or appreciation for whom God and His deeds. Otherwise known as Adoration or Praise.

“Hallowed be thy name” Ps. 145:1-13

- To acknowledge is to recognize God’s authority or right.

“Thy will be done” Matt. 26:42 reveals that this is the Lord’s prayer in Gethsemane.

- Our prayers must and should be in conformity to the perfect will of God. 1 John 5:14; James 4:3
- This makes it essential for us to study the scriptures because there we find what are the Will of God, His revealed promises Luke 12:32
- There is no prayer as effective as when we pray the scripture, the word of God (Prayer of Faith)
- Not only must we pray according to His will, we must as well be in His will (1 John 3:22; James 5:16). Therefore, obeying God’s commandment, loving Him and pleasing Him are indispensable conditions for receiving answers to prayer.

C - CONFESSIONS

Prayer is the only way by which we can sincerely tell God our remorsefulness and tell Him we are sorry for our sins, the temptations we fell to, sin committed and His truth compromised.

“Forgive us our debts....” 1 John 1:8-9; Ps. 5:11

- However, before we ask for God’s forgiveness, we must be sure that we hold nothing against anybody. It should be noted that this is a great opportunity that God has given believers in that when we sin, we can pray immediately for forgiveness. Failure to do this is very dangerous on Christian race. Prov. 28:13; Psalm 32:1-6; Psalm 66:18
- Also, note that every sin not forgiven, it is a sin that is not blotted out. It is a debt that must be paid back. It will be accounted for in your record on the judgment day.

T - THANKSGIVING

Give thanks for what God has done, for all the benefits you have received and even for those you will receive. Ps. 107:1-9; 30:11; 2 Corin 9:15; Phil. 4:6

S - SUPPLICATION

Supplication is the act of making a humble request, to plead or to ask for something particularly when one is on his knees. Phil. 4:6; Matt. 6:11-13.

Supplication covers our specificities:

- Needs i.e prayer for provision, healing
- Protection, deliverance; divine knowledge, wisdom; grace and intercession on behalf of others; church, nation, friends, relations and so on. Matt. 18:18-20.

REQUIREMENTS FOR EFFECTIVE PRAYER

- 1) **The name of Jesus Christ:** for a prayer to be effective it must be made in the name of Jesus Christ. John 14: 12-14; 16: 22-24.
- 2) **Righteousness:** Righteousness makes God to have delight in us and be attentive when we pray to Him (Ps. 34:15) but sin turns Him off from us. (Isaiah 59:1-2) so also iniquities hidden in our hearts (Ps. 66:18-20) and unforgiveness (Mark 11:25). Therefore, when we are calling to God, we must approach Him in righteousness. However, self righteousness will not do (Is. 64:6). We need the imputed righteousness of Jesus Christ.
- 3) **Holy Spirit:** every prayer we pray is either energized or it is not. Holy Spirit is the power source that energizes the prayer. If the prayer is not plugged into the power source, if it is not energized, nothing will happen. When it is, we are letting lose an earth shaking power. Rom. 8:26-27. Jesus Christ as well interceded for us in Heaven. Heb. 7:25; 1 John 2:1, 1 Tim. 2:5
- 4) **God's Will:** we can be sure that any prayer request we make towards fulfilling God's plan and purpose in our lives and on earth will be answered. Such prayers will be effective. But a prayer based on selfishness or personal lusts cannot be energized by the Holy Spirit and thus will not be effective (James 4:1-3, 4-6). A heart filled with selfish desire cannot offer acceptable prayers (Ps. 66:18) Amiss means an incorrect or defective prayer. Is. 1:10-17; 2 Chron. 7:14
- 5) **Believe/Faith:** Prayers will not be answered unless it is backed up with sincere true faith. This is working faith that removes every doubt that will want to render the prayer ineffective. James 1:5-8; Mark 11:23-24.
 - it is this working faith that enables you apply the other two principles of prayer. That is the principle of ASK, SEEK and KNOCK. After you have asked, believing that it has been answered accordingly you go on seeking for the answer which comes sometimes by studying the word of God through prophecy or through dreams or by inner mind conviction.
 - Armed with conviction, you go forward to knock, that is labour to see the fulfillment. Isaac's servant prayer (Genesis 24:1-21) and Nehemiah (Neh. 1:1-11; 2:1-20)
 - However, there are occasions we apply faith. This happens in cases of things we have nothing to do with to bring fulfillment, we pray about it and live it so as done just waiting for the manifestation or fulfillment.
- 6) **Persistence:** for prayer to be effective, we must be persistent. The Lord gives us a parable towards this. Luke 18:1-7. And Apostle Paul admonishes us to be steadfast in prayer. (Col. 4:2) and pray without ceasing (1 Thess. 5:17). It is not over until it is over.

Daniel did not give up until he received (Dan. 10:10-14). Elijah will not quit until the cloud gathered for reign (1 Kings 18:42-45). You have to Pray Until Something Happen (P.U.S.H). Note that “WINNERS NEVER QUIT AND QUITTERS NEVER WIN”. Anything in life that comes without persistence is not worth much.

- 7) **Fasting:** earnest prayers to the Lord will at times need to be accompanied with fasting; which as well sometimes becomes necessary (Neh. 1:4; Dan. 9:3-4; Mark 9:29; Luke 2:37; Acts 14:23; Matt. 6:16). Fasting is to humble us, seclude us from evil and selfish thoughts and make us more focused on things of heaven and thereby bring us more close to God and His attention. Fasting honours God and God honours those who honour Him. The Lord Jesus Christ himself practiced fasting and taught that it was to be a part of Christian devotion and an act of preparation for His return (Matt. 9:15)

CONCLUSION

Watch and pray. Watch lest you fall. A Christian and/or a worker who is conscious of himself and his faith and who wrestles in prayer without ceasing will never be inactive in life. Such will the Master meet with faith. Watch as if everything depended on you and pray as if everything depended on God.

PRINCIPLE 7: THE WORKER'S ASSESSMENT I KNOW YOUR WORKS

- Rev. 1:17-20; 2:1-29; 3:1-22

“I know your works” What does this mean to us? What does it imply in the context of all we have been learning during this training. Two main things it can imply are:

- 1) Someone is keeping watch over you and your activities. (Matt. 16:27)
- 2) The person watching over you is also keeping records of your activities, good and bad.

- However, what should strike us most when we read Rev. 2&3 are the messages sent to the seven different churches by the record keeper. Who is our savior and Lord Jesus Christ and secondly, the relevance of the messages for churches today.

- The message reveals the record of seven different churches as follows:

- a) The backsliding church- Rev. 2:1-7 (Ephesus)
- b) The persecuted church- Rev. 2:8-11 (Symrna)
- c) The compromising church- Rev. 2:12-17 (Pergamus)
- d) The corrupt church- Rev. 2:18-19 (Thyattira)
- e) The dead church- Rev. 3:1-6 (Sardis)
- f) The faithful church- Rev. 3:7-13 (Philadelphia)
- g) The lukewarm church- Rev. 3:14-22 (Laodicea)

- The relevance of the messages for churches today include:

- 1) A revelation of what Jesus Christ Himself loves and values in His churches as well as what He hates and condemns
- 2) A clear statement from Christ regarding the consequences of disobedience and spiritual neglect and the rewards for spiritual vigilance and faithfulness to Christ.
- 3) A standard by which any church or individual may judge his or her true spiritual state before God
- 4) An example of the methods that Satan uses to attack the church or the individual Christian
- 5) An emphasis on the fact that the Lord Jesus Christ is coming back and His desire to meet with overcomers

- Each of these relevancies can be discussed in details with references to the seven churches earlier mentioned as follows:

- 1) What does Christ love, value or praise?

He loves, values and praises a church:

- For not bearing with evil persons. Rev. 2:2
- For testing the life, doctrine and claims of Christian leaders Rev. 2:2

- For persevering in faith, love witness, service and suffering for Christ. Rev. 2:3,10,13,19,26
 - For hating what God hates, Rev. 2:6
 - For overcoming sin, Satan, and the ungodly world (Rev. 2:7,11,17,26; 3:5, 12,21)
 - For refusing to conform to immorality in the world and worldliness in the church. Rev. 2:24; 3:4
 - For keeping the Word of God. Rev. 3:8,10)
4. What does Christ condemn? Christ condemns a church
- For failing to maintain a close personal relationship to Himself and God. Rev. 2:4
 - For departing from biblical faith. Rev. 2:24-25
 - For becoming spiritually dead Rev. 3:1
 - For becoming spiritually lukewarm Rev. 3:15-16
 - For substituting outward success and affluence for real spirituality i.e purity, righteousness and spiritual wisdom. Rev. 3:17-18
5. How does Christ punish churches that decline spiritually and tolerate immorality within their midst? He punishes such churches:
- By removing them from their place of grace in the Kingdom of God (Rev. 2:5;3:16)
 - By causing them to lose the presence of God (fullness of joy), the genuine power of the Holy Spirit, the true biblical message of salvation, and the protection of their members from Satan's destruction (Rev. 2:5,16,22-23, 3:16)
 - By placing their leaders under the judgment of God (Rev. 2:20-23)
6. How does Christ reward churches that persevere and remain loyal to Him and His word? He rewards such churches:
- By delivering them from temptation (or trial) that will come upon the whole world. Rev.3:10
 - By giving them His love, presence and close fellowship. Rev. 3:20
 - By blessing them with eternal life with God. Rev. 2:11, 17, 26; 3:5,12; 21:7

REVIEW QUESTIONS