

ESTHER O. ADEMIJU



**DO I LOVE
GOD?**

*Taking our love for God from just words,
feelings and thoughts into love-filled actions*

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feelings and thoughts into love-filled actions*

ESTHER O. ADEMIJU

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Do I Love God?

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DEDICATION

To God almighty, the creator of heaven and earth. I am so thankful that you have never, even for a split second let go of me and ever since I have found you my life has not being the same.

To Jesus Christ, my savior. I know I will never be able to comprehend the big significance of your sacrifice for me. However, I am grateful for your love for you. Because of you I have life in abundance here on earth and for eternity. My desire to be like you.

To Holy Spirit, my great teacher and comforter. You are so close to me and I hear your voice every time. You bring to my remembrance every word of God and keep me in check. I am so thankful.

To my lovely sisters and brothers in Christ. You all mean a whole lot to me. Having you all in my life has been a huge blessing. Our faiths have encouraged and supported each other. I thank God for the love amongst us and the great purposes and plans he has for our lives.

To all my eternal family in love (God). I love you all so much and I pray that reading this book will help you all to fall deeper in love with God and make your relationship with him stronger.

For nothing can separate us from the Love of God.

THANK YOU

To everyone who has stood by me all this time and helped me in coming out of my comfort zone and finally living in God's purpose for my life. I am forever grateful to you all.

To my sisters and brothers in Christ, my amazing family and awesome friends, all your encouragements have been very helpful and greatly appreciated. May God's abundant blessings continue to follow you all and may his love and grace abide with you all forever in Jesus name. AMEN

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INTRODUCTION

Hello dear friend, I figured I'd start this book by introducing myself and telling you a little about my faith journey and relationship with God.

My name is **Esther Omolola Ademiju**. I am a Nigerian and I live in the United States of America. As much as I hate heights and anything that makes me dizzy, my life has been a long rollercoaster, there have been so many ups and down, sharp turns, loud screams, cry and laughter. Gradually, I am learning to keep my eyes open, get immune to the dizziness, conquer my fears and see the next big turn in front of me.

I was born into a Christian family. However, we all know that being born into a Christian family does not make you a Christian. A personal encounter and relationship with Jesus does. Therefore, I didn't become a Christian until 2016. Even though I went to church every Sunday, sang in the choir, attended Sunday school, memorized scriptures, did morning and evening devotions, attended a Christian oriented high school and college,

I was not a Christian. I was not saved and I did not have a relationship with God.

I had no idea about the basic oracles of God. I thought someone who simply attended Church was a Christian while someone who attends a mosque is a Muslim. I did not know that there was more to the equation.

My dream was to go to medical school, become a doctor, have my own hospital, get married to a rich, handsome man, have kids and just live life. Jesus was not in my life plan. Serving God and winning souls for his family and kingdom was not in my life plan. I always had this idea that preaching the word and working for God was solely the work of a pastor, evangelist, preacher, etc., and since they have chosen that work, they should do the job. I had my own life plan and vision.

Little did I know that God had his own plans for my life and it is either His way or no way at all. God led me to my current local church and I have been tremendously blessed by the body of Christ. I was convicted every Sunday and these were convictions that do not end immediately I step out of the church like my previous experiences. You know that one where you go for altar call after a very powerful sermon and you thought, “Yes, this is the moment, I am finally getting saved. I am so

sorry Jesus for all I have done.” Then you step out of the church and your friends that were apparently not touched by the sermon influence you and immediately you forget about the convictions and the tears you cried at the altar and the sinful life goes on. However, the convictions this time were very persistent. I had just come to the US and I had no friend to talk to after a sermon, the devil could not steal those seeds so they were able to grow. This is why I believe that a period of separation from the world and a personal one on one training with God is important for spiritual growth. Well, that is a story for some other time.

God was really dealing with me and one of my biggest convictions was about sexual immorality. I had lost my virginity at a young age. I was also involved in pornography and masturbation. I have a testimony on my website (<https://growinggodseternalfamily.com/my-testimony/>) where I shared more on this. Yeah, I was a train wreck and a very big mess, but thank God for his grace upon me. I am forever grateful. I was in the bondage of sin and I needed a savior. Thank God I found one - Jesus.

Gradually my interest in God grew and I wanted to know him better. I started reading my Bible (sometimes, “*once in a blue moon*”) and found myself falling in love with this sweet

God. Suddenly, masturbation and pornography did not feel too good anymore. I became repulsive to this besetting sins. So, I prayed to God for His help to stop the besetting sin. I also chipped in intentional efforts such as, not watching movies with sex scenes, not being idle for a long time, jumping off my bed when the temptation sets in and lot of praying. Thank God for grace. We serve a faithful God, He delivered me and I finally overcame that sin. I can confidently tell you that I have not returned to my past sins and vomit. All the glory to Jesus. Does the temptation to masturbate or watch pornography still come? YES. I would be a liar if I tell you no. The temptations still come and the devil will not stop trying to win you back with those past sins but thank God for his grace and the way of escape he always provides. I also know now, that I am not a slave to sin anymore but a slave to righteousness. Therefore, the devil has no power over me. Glory be to God!

“And having been set free from sin, you became enslaved to righteousness.” - Romans 6:18

After my season of separation, God brought back some amazing and godly friends into my life. I love them so much.

They have been a source of strength, support, encouragement and accountability. One of my lovely sister introduced me to a book by Rick Warren entitled, “*Purpose Driven Life.*” We did a collective book study on this and that was the start I needed and I realized that God has a purpose for me.

Me!

A sinner, sexual immoral person, masturbator, pornographer, an introvert, an abortion escapee, a liar, a murderer at heart (I hated many people and kept grudges a lot) and so many other things I cannot even remember because this girl does not live in the past anymore. That was the old me. Many amazing things are happening with this new creation and she has no time to dwell in the past.

As aforementioned, I shared my testimony on my website and it felt like I crossed over a giant fence of fears, people bondage, insecurities and deception. This acted as a fence that kept me from fully experiencing God’s love and what it means to be a daughter of God. Jesus Christ saved me from the bondage of Satan. Satan did not want to let go of me, but he had no choice because I came to know the truth. I found out that Satan is a toothless lion with vain roars and he was a master over me only because I allowed him to be my master. I was

enjoying the pleasures from these sins and the truth is, I was not looking for freedom or someone to save me. I willingly offered myself to sin and allowed it to rule over me. However, the moment I decided to break out of sin and its bondage. The devil had no hold anymore. I get to choose my master and I choose Jesus.

The devil tried but he failed. He told many lies about how much of a sinner I was and how I will never be forgiven. But, the blood of Jesus avails for me. I am under grace not law (*Romans 6:14*). Thank God for Jesus.

I came to know the truth and the truth has freed me forever. Therefore, your Christian background does not make you a Christian and you don't become a member of God's family merely by birth but by responding personally to God's call (ESV Commentary).

“So if the Son sets you free, you really will be free.” - John

8:36

I went on then to have my baptism, joined a serving ministry at my local church, attended Bible studies and Christian book

studies. Now, all these might not seem like a big deal to you, but trust me, it is to me. I am an introvert (but an extrovert in Christ) and for me to do all these was a great deal of courage and God's power being made strong in my weakness. So, as a Christian, **never ever** keep to yourself. You cannot be a private Christian. You need a fellowship of **God's family** around you to keep you going. These people understand you. They are not there to judge and gossip about you. They also have a past no matter how little, they know what it means to be tempted and they are fighting the good fight of faith with you everyday.

That is a brief story of how my life changed and my perspective changed. Now, I know that I am not here on earth just to finish school, get a job, get married and JUST exist. I have a purpose that is bigger than my imagination and thoughts. I can fathom being a doctor, but what God has created me for, I cannot fathom, no eyes has seen it, no ears have heard it and no heart has conceived it. I was created for more, to serve God, win souls for his kingdom, bring praise, glory and honor to his name and to live a life that truly exemplifies Christ. Praise God!

"I chose you before I formed you in the womb;

I set you apart before you were born.

I appointed you a prophet to the nations."

- Jeremiah 1:5

Now, that is enough about me.

Let us talk about the title of this book and what this book is mainly about. "Do I love God?" You might say, "Why will she ask that? She is a Christian and she sound legit and seems like she does love God from what I have read so far. So, why ask such question and why this book?"

Well, you are right. I am a Christian and I am growing. I also get messages from people telling me how much I inspire them, how much they *love my love for God* and so many encouraging words, which I absolutely appreciate and I return all the glory to God. However, I have gotten to a point in my walk with Christ whereby, I have realized that I must not allow people's praises to blindfold me. The moment it does, I will start pleasing men, pride will set in, I'll start thinking that I have arrived and I might not be able to see some areas of my life that needs pruning and correction because I have deviated from God.

So, I somehow discovered during one of my spiritual checkups that I was sick and it had to do with my love for God and obedience to His Word. I know myself and I am very capable of going off the right path easily without even knowing. So, I do frequent checkups. Similar to physical checkups when we go to the physician and they examine every nook and cranny of our bodies, my spiritual checkups are moments of total honesty with myself and transparency before God. These are moments when I allow God to convict me and shine His light on every darkness and sick parts of my life. This can take a day and could extend into weeks or months. Sometimes, years.

I was very sick spiritually. Something was wrong with me and I could not get a particular question out of my head. “Do I love God?” I could not stop thinking about this and I really wanted to know deep down in my heart if I truly loved God. This way I can know where I stand and quickly cry to God for help. I don't know about you, but I don't ever want to be far way from God or get my mind reprobated before I realize that I longer walk by His spirit and His love in my heart has grew cold or it was not even there in the first place. The Bible already warned us in **Matthew 24:12 (NLT)**, “Sin will be rampant

everywhere, and the love of many will grow cold.” I don’t know about you but I don’t want to be a victim of cold love.

I also don't want to be like the Church in Ephesus. In **Revelation 2:2-7**, Jesus praised them extensively for their hard work, their endurance and their intolerance against evil and wickedness, but they were rebuked for their **lack of love**. They had lost the love they first had when they first believed. What is hard work and endurance without love? **1Corinthians 13:13** tells us that, love is the greatest. We are nothing and bankrupt without love. Many Christians today are like the church in Ephesus, we serve well, we are hardworking, but we have lost the burning love we once had for God and for others around us. We must continue to grow in love because to lose love is to lose God himself, for God is love.

So, I was losing my love for God or should I say I never truly loved God. I thought this spiritual checkup and reflection was going to end after a couple of days but it is still going on. I was sicker spiritually than I thought and had a huge blob of darkness that needed light than I was expecting. I came to realize that many of us do not love God at all or as much as we claim, we do. God does not want a 10%, 30%, 60% or 99.9% of you. He wants all of you, 100%. He wants you to love him and

obey him with every fiber of your being. It is so easy nowadays to say we love God. But we never truly sit down to know what that means and entails.

In this book we are going to discuss *one* of the numerous ways we can show our love for God and that is in our **obedience** to His word. I will share with you how I learned to take my love for God from just words, feelings and thoughts into love-filled actions. And I hope and pray that reading this book will also help you to search your heart, assess it thoroughly and ask yourself, ‘Do I love God? Do I obey him? Whatever your answer is, my prayer for you is that you will come to love and continue to love God with the whole of your heart, soul, mind, and strength and you will willingly obey **all** of His commands and words.

So, sit tight, fasten your seat belt, and roll with me on this journey.

God Bless

Esther Ademiju

CHAPTER 1

The Test

I am naturally a curious person and I love to know why, what, where and how? I also soliloquize a lot, so I really don't need a person there to listen. I am good listener of my own thoughts and when I want to see someone listening, all I do is stand in front of a mirror and I just talk to myself. I am just weird like that. So few months into this year, a lot this act has been going on. I have been asking myself this question and reflecting a lot on it. Esther, “Do you love God?”

The asking of this question started after God told me to talk to someone (Name withheld) and I was extremely enthusiastic about it. OMG, “I got an assignment from God. This is so cool.” In my exhilarated moment, I went ahead and obeyed. I prepped my speech, got all my scriptures to back it all printed out, sat down and wrote a heartfelt message and I was super happy.

Slam-dunk, assignment completed.

But.

My happy moment could not even last a day. I got a message back and the reply wasn't what I was expecting. My big bright smile slowly depreciated and I felt so defeated and useless. You know the kind of feeling you get when someone hands you a cup with the thought that your favorite drink is in it, but it was water instead? Yes, that one, now multiply it by a 1000. It was that bad. I was so disappointed. I was expecting one of those replies that tells me how much of a blessing the message was and how they were going to change and start living right. But, this person told me never to get involved in her business anymore and to stay off. I was like, "Okay, no problem, I'll stay off." And just when I thought it was over, God said to me again, "Esther, go back and follow up with that person."

"WHAT! No way." I replied.

That was where the real test began.

I became scared and reluctant because I remembered the response I got at first and I just didn't want to offend this person again. So, I ignored God. I disobeyed. I sinned.

This reminds me of King Saul's statement in **1 Samuel 15:24 (NLT)**, "Then Saul admitted to Samuel, "Yes, I have sinned. I

have disobeyed your instructions and the Lord's command, *for I was afraid of the people and did what they demanded.*"

Instead of obeying God's instruction to go back talk to that person and I did what the person demanded which was to never get involved in their business again.

WHAT IS WRONG WITH ME?

In my disobedient moments, my world turned upside down. Spiritually, physically and emotionally, I was unstable. I was suffering in silence. My spirit was deeply troubled. I did not know what it was but I became easily irritated, angry (with myself), overwhelmed and I kept getting this, "I just want to be alone feelings." I was so scared, so scared of going to Hell. Jesus could come at any time and I knew I was not ready. I have been disobedient and my heart was not at peace. I was scared of going where God has sent me and do what he had commanded me to do. I was extremely troubled. What is wrong with me? God what is happening to me?

It didn't take time for me to figure out that disobedience was the issue. I couldn't rest because I felt so guilty. I was going through life knowing fully well I haven't done what I was

supposed to do. I have an assignment that I just laid on the table and walked away from it. To make things worse, I kept seeing and hearing warnings everywhere on social media and sermons. It felt like the whole world was pointing fingers at me and yelling in my face, “Jesus is coming, are you ready? Are you obeying God?” It was so bad.

But God...

I am so thankful for my heavenly father, my one and only God because He never let go of me. He kept knocking, talking and His Spirit kept convicting and reminding of Christ words. And I just couldn't take it anymore. So, I fell on my knees and prayed.

“God, please help me. This is like sending me to Pharaoh or to Nineveh. I don't want to be disobedient but I am scared. I know you have not given me the spirit of fear but of power, love and self discipline. Please help me to put that into action. Help me to take that from my head to my heart. I need courage and boldness. Please, put your words in my mouth and help me through this Lord in Jesus name. AMEN.”

My friend, I finally understood how Moses and Jonah felt. I used to feel like slapping them both when I read those books of the Bible (Exodus 3 & Jonah) that talks about when God called them. I felt like dragging Moses ears and screaming these words into it, “Moses get over yourself already and do the job.” And for Jonah, I was just going to roll my eyes and ask him, “Where exactly are you running to? Where on earth do the eyes of God not reach?” Another eye roll.

However, after being in their shoes for probably less than a second, I can finally relate and not be quick to judge. What they were sent to do and where they were sent to was much bigger and worse than what God asked me to do. Yet, I kept finding different excuses here and there. “Oh, God my week has been really busy, I will do it next time. School has been hectic, just give me one more week.” I kept postponing and postponing.

Then, I thought to myself, “Esther, do you have to be swallowed by a fish before you obey God?” AH!

I prayed more and more.

Thankfully God gave me the courage to finally walk up to this person again. This time I didn’t write a message, I made it a face-to-face conversation. I started the conversation like this, “I

know you told me never to get in your business again but I just have to (I am losing my mind!)” and I went on and on. At the end of the discussion, I was like a wet mop and I had to drag myself out.

I was disappointed, I was angry, I was mad. Again.

I grabbed my journal and I just went off on God. “God why did you send me to this person again only to be disappointed? I couldn't even sense your presence even though I asked you to go with me. This person didn't even act on what I had told them before, they neglected all you told me to tell them and I couldn't even persuade them to do it. Seriously God, if you were not going to go with me, why did you send me? Why? I seriously don't understand and I don't get...”

I was so mad, but as I was writing (Yeah, I was writing all that, told you I was weird), God was talking to me and I just didn't want to listen. I just wanted that time to myself to pour out my anger. However, I decided to calm down and listen.

God said, “Esther, this was mainly for you.”

Say what now, God? “Abba, were you trying to kill two birds with one stone in this situation? You wanted me to sow the

seed in that person and at the same time you were teaching me obedience?”

It's so amazing that when you are talking to God, you don't have to think or talk too much for you to grasp what He is telling you.

Is that it? I asked

God said, “Yes Esther.”

I must tell you at that point dear friend, everything began to make sense. I am a very disobedient child and the Bible tells us that the father prunes us and these pruning are definitely not going to be easy. I finally realized that I was in my season of learning about obedience and love. I am growing.

So, I told God, “If that is the lesson, then I am going to need more test and lesson on this obedience thing because I want to get to the point where I am able to obey you IMMEDIATELY without delay or fear of the person or where you are sending me to. I want to obey with FAITH.”

I closed my conversation with God with this, “God, I have sown the seed into that person, please send someone to water it and please God make it grow into a big tree with beautiful fruits.

I understand now that some things are going to take time to happen just as seeds do not grow into fruits in a day. With time I believe that person is going to obey your word and grow into the person you want them to be and do what you want them to do.”

My assignment was to give the message to this person, it wasn't to cause a change in the person. I do not have the power to do that, only God can cause a change in our life. My assignment was to love that person, to love her enough to obey God and bring the message to her, to love her enough to continue praying for her that the work God has started will be brought to completion.

CHAPTER 2

Rebuked by a Loving Father

Dear friend, there are some prayers that when prayed one must be very careful and ready for the answer. Why did I say this?

On a fateful and beautiful Sunday, I was in church, my pastor was preaching and he said something that stuck with me. He said, “The real question is not does God loves you but **do you love God?**”

Hmmmm. True. Word. Ride on Pastor. Preach.

These are the common responses we give today when true and deep statements like these are made. How I wish I could tell my pastor to ride on but I couldn't. I wanted to stop him and ask, “Pastor what do you mean by “Do I love God?” I am Christian. Duh, I love God!” In my entire life, that was the first time someone was asking me if I love God. I always say I love God but I realized I never thought about what it means to love God.

For the first time ever, I knew the answer to that question was more than just saying, “I just love God or I just feel it.”

The question would not leave my mind hence I went ahead and made this my phone screen saver so I can see it every time and think about it. I wrote it on a paper in my closet so I could see it every time I went in there. I kept reflecting on this and I just wasn't confident of the answer.

Suddenly, I realized something.

I asked for this. I prayed for this. In the previous chapter, I prayed,

“If that is the lesson, then I am going to need more test on this obedience thing because I want to get to the point where I am able to obey you IMMEDIATELY without delay or fear of the person you are sending me to. I want to obey with FAITH.”

Now, back to my first statement in this chapter. Again, my friend, when you pray to God be very careful what you ask for, because He hears every thing and He will answer. These are prayers that will turn your world upside down and change you forever. Of course, the change is good. God loves this type of

prayers and He does not hesitate to answer them. “Oh my child, I thought you’d never ask.”

When you pray to God for patience, do not expect God to just sprinkle the spirit of patience on you from heaven. Nah. He is going to give you a test, a trial, a very annoying person and He will prune you until you learn to be patient with people and with any bad situations.

Here I am asking God to teach me obedience and He dropped that question on my heart which bothered me for weeks before He slowly helped me find the answer, from which I am still learning.

REBUKED IN STILLNESS

Abba asked, “Esther, do you love me? Because if you love me then I won’t need to teach you more about obedience. You will willingly obey. My children who truly love me, obey me immediately with faith.”

As I allowed those words to sink in, my mouth went open and words wouldn't come out. I was speechless and dumbfounded.

God said, “Esther, do you need me to point that to you in my word because I will gladly do that.” Suddenly, the Holy Spirit brought these Bible verses to my remembrance:

John 14: 15(TLB) “If you love me, obey me...”

John 14: 23(NLT) “ Jesus replied, “All who love me will do what I say....”

John 14: 21(NLT) “Those who accept my commandments and obey them are the ones who love me...”

1 John 2: 3 - 4 (NLT) “And we can be sure that we know him if we obey his commandments. If someone claims, “I know God,” but doesn’t obey God’s commandments, that person is a liar and is not living in the truth.”

1 John 5: 3(CSB)“For this is what love for God is: to keep his commands. And his commands are not a burden.”

Luke 6: 46 (NLT) “So why do you keep calling me 'Lord, Lord!' when you don't do what I say?”

I literally just stared and remained speechless as I was reminded me of these Bible verses.

God: Why are you not talking, Esther?

Me: Because I have nothing to say right now. I am so sorry.

God: Esther, you are sorry? What does that change? I hear millions of people say that every second and day and they continue in sin anyway. Do you think just because you say “sorry” everything is okay? Do you think I told you all I just did, just to hear the words, “I am sorry?” Esther, I need you to understand that sorry is not enough. It might be a start, but it’s not enough and should never be the end. I want to see some actions, Esther. Show me you are truly sorry and repentant through some actions and in your heart. Words are not enough. I just don't want the talk, I want the right walk and a contrite heart.

Esther, as my word says in **Ephesians 3:19**, my love surpasses all knowledge and you will never fully understand my love for you. However, I ask that you do not take my love for granted. Esther, I have done so much for you.

Me: I know that, God.

God: I don't think so, Esther. You don't know. Maybe I should let you know.

Esther, you almost got aborted, but in my infinite mercy and grace, I saved you because while you were still in your mother's womb I already set you apart for my use and appointed you a prophet to the nations. No human was going to stop that. You were birthed. I provided for you, sheltered you, protected you. During those years you were growing up, you did not have a relationship with me. You didn't know me, you didn't come to me. I longed for a relationship with my daughter but you strayed away from me into the world. You were so preoccupied with yourself, school and you were so concerned about your future, like I am not the one who holds your future in my hands. Nonetheless, I still did not let go of you. I took care of you every step of the way.

Esther, my Word says that death is the penalty of sin and you sure have sinned a lot. Don't you even dare start comparing yourself to someone else. If you want something to compare or examine your life with, use my word. Judge yourself with my word, not someone else's life. As aforementioned, the penalty of sin is death, but because I love you so much, because I wanted my relationship with you to be restored and I don't want you to

die and go to hell. I sent my one and only begotten son to the world. He laid aside all of His divine nature and immortality and took upon himself the confinement and mortality of humanity, all for you. Esther, He died, so that you may live. He that was without sin, took upon your sin, became sin, became cursed, He was crucified and He died for you and everyone in the world.

Esther, you wake up every morning, not because you are perfect and great. Esther, did you know that many did not wake up this morning? But, you did. Yet, you always forget to say good morning to me and thank me for waking you up and for the gift of life. Instead you get on your phone, check social media, then you take your bath and you are out. Regardless of that, I protect your going and coming in. Esther, do you know the amount of people who get into an accident the moment they step out of their house and every second of each day? Yet, you go on that road and you get to your destination safely and you return home safely. Esther, that is all me, it's all because of my grace.

Because I love you so much, I guide you and watch you carefully like a mother chicken watches his chicks and protect them from the eagle. The enemy hates you and the spiritual battles you do not even see, I fight them all for you.

Esther, I do all these and I will continue to do more because I love you. I love you regardless of what you do or do not do. Love is who I am. I am love.

Then, I ask just one thing of you Esther. Just one: That you love me in return with all your heart, soul, mind and strength. All I ask is that you obey and keep my commands. All I ask is that you do what I tell you to do. However, Esther, you find it so hard to do just that. You began to find my commandment burdensome and grievous. Yet, you say you love me? Esther, what kind of love is that? What kind of daughter are you, Esther? What kind of daughter wakes up and does not greet her father? What kind of daughter go a day without reading her father's love letters to her? What kind of daughter enjoy and idolize sleep rather than spending time with her father? What kind of daughter watches movies instead of sitting with the father and spending time with him? What kind of daughter finds it a burden to talk to her father? What kind of daughter is so selfish? What kind of daughter doesn't love her father who gave her everything? What kind of daughter looks forward to a date with a guy but never plans one with her father? What kind of daughter are you that I tell you to go somewhere and you take years, months, days and hours to think about it because you are

scared of humans. You scared of what they will say or think. You are scared of people that can only kill the body but can do nothing to the soul. You should fear and reverence me who has the power to destroy both the body and soul and throw them into hell.

Esther, I have enlisted you, you are a soldier in my army and I don't want you to be concerned about what the world has to say about you. All you have to do, my daughter, is to please me.

Esther, why do I do all these? Why am I so concerned about your love and obedience to me? Because I want to see you living life abundantly. I want to see you step into my purpose and calling for you. Above all, I want to spend eternity with you. Never again do I want to be separated and away from you. Esther I do all these now, so on that day, I won't have to tell you to depart from me. I want to welcome you home and say well done my good and faithful servant. Esther, I am being loving and patient right now, so you won't face my wrath.

You said, "Abba, Teach me to obey you." Oh, how happy I was to hear that prayer.

And I say to you, “Obedience in one word is simply love.” If you love me, you will obey me. They work hand in hand. You can’t obey me unless you love me and you can’t love me without obeying me. That is why I had to take you back to the root of the problem. The problem is not in obeying me, the issue and problem was that you do not love me with the whole of your heart and being. Because if you do love me, then I won’t have to teach you about obedience, because it will occur spontaneously and willingly.

If you love me, Esther when I say, “go there,” you will go regardless of whom or where I send you. If you love me, Esther when you see your sister or brother going down the wrong path, you will run to bring them back. If you love me Esther, you won’t be shy to talk about me and preach the gospel because you know many out there still need to hear it. If you love me Esther, you will understand that nations are waiting and depending on your obedience.

God: So, I ask again Esther, Do you love me?

Me: God, I am sorry

God: Esther, I told you sorry is not enough, put it in actions. Let me see a truly repentant, changed mind and contrite heart.

Obey me! Follow me! Prove to me that you love me, like I prove to you everyday that I love you.

Think about it Esther. Is it okay for me to say, “Esther I love you,” but I watch you go out in the morning, get in a car accident, suffer, starve, no protection, you fail at school and so much more. Esther, won't you pause to question me? “God, do you truly love me? Are you right there watching me go through all these?” It is the same thing my daughter. Faith without work is dead. *Everyone can say, “I love God” not everyone can LIVE IT.*

The ironic thing is, whatever I tell you to do is actually for your own good. Esther, I won't tell you to go into fire. Even if I do tell you to go into fire, I expect you to obey and have faith that I am already in that fire waiting to protect you. I will NEVER tell you to go somewhere alone, without following you: *“Haven't I commanded you: be strong and courageous? Do not be afraid or discouraged, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.” - Joshua 1:9*

Do not think that your obedience does me a favor or increases my love for you. No. It doesn't. Whether you obey me or not, my love for you remains. Rather, your obedience to me is for your good and for so many other people out there. Do you

have any idea how many people are waiting for your obedience? Do you know maybe if you had obeyed me immediately, that sister or that brother might have lived and not committed suicide? He or she might have accepted Jesus as her Savior and Lord? However, because you were disobedient, you delayed, you were scared, you didn't think you were enough or qualified, you were worried about what the world will say Esther, she or he died and went to Hell and never accepted Christ.

Esther, while you are being disobedient, souls are getting lost. I did not put you on earth just to fill space. You think I took my precious time in creating a masterpiece, so you can just occupy space and look pretty? No! I created you because I have a purpose for your life and the only way you are going to fulfill that is by obeying me and doing what I ask you to do.

Love. Me. Esther.

Me: I will Lord. But, God I can't do this alone. I need you.

God: Esther, I know. Have I ever left you alone?

Me: No Abba. You've always been there, every step of the way.

God: So, don't worry. Because I won't start now. I won't leave or let go of you now. NEVER! All I need you to do is TRUST and LOVE ME. Esther, never wander away from me. Don't go even a second without me. I am passionate about you and I am a jealous God. I need you to be intimate with me, stay glued to me.

Esther: Okay Abba.

God: One more thing, Esther. You know I love you right? You know that he that I love, I discipline, chasten, correct, rebuke and I punish every daughter and son that I receive and welcome into my heart (**Hebrews 12: 6 - 11**). I might have sounded angry, but I needed to tell you the truth even if it hurts you. I must continue to prune you to bear good fruits so you won't be throw into the fire. You understand that right?

Me: I absolutely understand Abba. I do.

God: Good. I love you. Never forget that!

Me: I love you too, Abba.

Ahhh! This is one rebuke and discipline I will **never** forget and I look forward to more. Why? Because I want to be thoroughly pruned. I will rather be chastened and corrected now than lose the crown on the day of Jesus Christ and spend eternity away from God. What about you?

“I will be his father, and he will be my son. If he sins, I will correct and discipline him with the rod, like any father would do.” - 2 SAMUEL 7: 14

CHAPTER 3

What is Love?

“Esther, do you love me?”

The answer to that question scares me because I know there is nothing like partial love. I can't say, “Yes God, I kinda love you or I love you partially.” It's either I love him or I hate him. Same thing goes for obedience. It's either obedience or disobedience because partial obedience or delayed obedience are all forms of disobedience. With God there's no middle ground. You are either for him or against him. However, I couldn't bring myself to truly answer that question by saying, “No, I don't love you.” I just couldn't open my mouth to say that even though I might have said that a lot in my mind.

What makes me even more sad and sorry is the fact that I know that God is omniscience. He knows and sees all things. Without saying it with my mouth, He sees my heart and He already knew the answer even before He asked me.

Even though He knew my answer, He went ahead and asked.
Why?

I realized that God needed to ask me that question so I could answer it **for myself** not for him. I needed to be asked that question, to know where my heart lies. Until I was asked that question, I thought there was no problem, I thought I was cool with God and I loved him. Until one realizes that there's a problem, a solution or change won't be sought. Until our sins are right before us, we won't see a need for forgiveness and repentance.

Something similar occurred in **2 Samuel chapter 11 - 12**. This is a familiar story that you have probably heard about. David had committed adultery with Bathsheba. He also meticulously planned her husband, Uriah the Hittite's death. Yet, he didn't see anything wrong. He didn't realize his sins after sleeping with Bathsheba despite fully knowing that she was married. He still didn't realize his sins when Bathsheba came back and said, "I am pregnant." Instead, he called her husband back from war and tried to give him a beautiful farewell night with his wife. Till, he planned Uriah's death and married his wife, he still didn't know that he was doing something evil in

God's sight and he had sinned. He also probably thought he was still cool with God.

God had to send prophet Nathan to him in **chapter 12**. Even after a parable that illustrated his sin was told by this prophet, David didn't know he was the bad man in the story. Prophet Nathan had to make it simple for him. He said, "You are the man!..." (**vs. 7**). He didn't stop there, he went ahead and gave him a full flashback on all God had done for him. Yet, David killed Uriah and took his wife.

Boom!

At that point, it hit David and he said, "I have sinned against the Lord." (**vs. 13**)

David had to recognize his sins, so he could repent. God had to intervene. The Holy Spirit convicts us of our sins not to condemn us but to provoke a godly sorrow in us which will eventually leads to repentance (**2 Corinthians 7:10**).

So, I am super thankful that despite the hurt I might have caused God. He helped me to recognize my sins and led me to repentance.

Recognizing our sins is a step to repentance. Repentance is complete when there's a change in our thinking which leads to a

change in our actions. You must allow your mind to be renewed by the Word of God. **Romans 12: 2** says, “Do not be conformed to this age, but *be transformed by the renewing of your mind*, so that you may *discern what is the good, pleasing, and perfect will of God.*” Allow your mind to be transformed by God’s Word, let it change how you view and think, so you may act in a way that is pleasing unto God. What is a better way to know that someone has truly repented? We can know by looking at their fruits, their actions. **Matthew 3:8** say, “Therefore produce fruit consistent with repentance.” However, before good and pleasing fruits (actions) can be produced, the seed and tree (thinking) must be changed. A new fruit cannot be produced from the same old seed, a new and right seed must be planted. So, to truly repent and love God we must first look at the Word of God and see what it says about love and what kind of love has God commanded us to have for him and one another.

AGAPE LOVE

There are four kinds of love the Bible talks about: agape love, phileo love and eros love, storge love. We are going to focus on agape love. However, to understand agape love better, we need to take a brief look at the other kinds of love.

Storge love is an affectionate love that is found among a family or among couples. It is a love that occurs naturally. *Eros love* is simply an erotic kind of love, a passionate or sexual love. This kind of love also occurs naturally and it's important among married couple. *Phileo love* is a brotherly and affection love among close friends. This type of love occurs naturally too. Phileo love is best illustrated by the love between David and Jonathan: “When David had finished speaking with Saul, Jonathan was bound to David in close friendship, and loved him as much as he loved himself... Jonathan made a covenant with David because he loved him as much as himself - **1 Samuel 18: 1 - 3.**”

Now, *Agape love* is a God type of love. It is the most powerful, ultimate, noblest, sacrificial and unconditional love. This is the love, God has for us and this love was displayed on the cross for our sins. **John 3: 16**, “For God loved (agape) the world in this way: He gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life.” The is also the same love that Jesus was referring to in **Luke 10:27**, “He answered, “Love (agape) the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and

with all your mind, and “your neighbor as yourself.” We are commanded to love God and our neighbors with the same kind of love (agape), anything less won’t do.

In **1 Corinthians 13**, Paul described agape love for us.

“If I give away all my possessions, and if I give over my body in order to boast but do not have love (agape), I gain nothing.

*Love (agape) is patient, love (agape) is kind. Love (agape) does not envy, is not boastful, is not arrogant, is not rude, is not **self-seeking**, is not irritable, and does not keep a record of wrongs.*

*Love (agape) finds no joy in unrighteousness but rejoices in the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things - **1 Corinthians 13: 3 - 7***

Wow, talk about true love!

Agape love is not a fickle sentimental feeling that changes depending on our relationship with one another. Agape love is an unconditional love for the lovable and unlovable people. It is more than mere words. It is a willful act. It shows itself in what it does. God’s greatest love for us was portrayed at the cross and he continues to love us everyday. God’s agape love is unmerited, gracious and unconditional. The Bible tells us that while we

were still sinners, He proved his own love for us, Christ died for us (**Romans 5:8**).

Now, you and I have been commanded to love God and others with the same kind of love. We must love everyone, believer or not, friends or not, family or not.

Ephesians 5:1-2, “Therefore, be imitators of God, as dearly loved children, and walk in love, as Christ also loved us and gave himself for us, a sacrificial and fragrant offering to God.

John 13:34, “I give you a new command: Love one another. Just as I have loved you, you are also to love one another.

Matthew 5:44, “But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you”

However, there is a problem.

Agape love *does not occur naturally* like the other kinds of love. As humans, this type of love is impossible to have. We are not capable of producing this love by ourselves. So, to love unconditionally like God, we must get this love for its source which is God himself.

To have agape love, we must draw close to God and get to know him. You must recognize that on your own you cannot love God and others with agape love. We need to exchange our weaknesses for Jesus strength, for in him we can do all things. Through the power and working of the Holy Spirit, the love of God is deposited in our heart: *“This hope will not disappoint us, because God’s love has been poured out in our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us - Romans 5:5.”* Love is also one of the fruit of the Holy Spirit: *“But the fruit of the Spirit is love (agape), joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control... Galatians 5:22-23.”*

So, by ourselves, we are incapable of agape love but by the presence of God’s spirit in us, who is the source of love, we can express agape love for God and one another. We can grow in this love.

Now that we know where or who we must go to get our minds renewed and truly repent. We must go to God and ask for his help.

“God, you have helped me to realize that I do not love you enough and I am not obedient to your word. Lord, I repent of my sins, I want to love you with the whole of my being. I have also

realized that by myself, I cannot love you, please help me to love you in Jesus name. Amen.”

Agape love is one that **grows** continually. Out of agape love, we can begin to extend phileo love (brotherly love) to our enemies too. In agape love, all other kinds of love are found.

CALLED TO OBEY OUT OF LOVE

We are not called to obey out of fear but out of love. Laying on my bed, I thought to myself, "I better go do those chores real quick before my stepmom gets angry." (By the way my stepmom is not wicked she just hates mess. I love her.) At that moment the Holy Spirit said to me, "Esther, you are eager to do your chores and obey your step mom **out of fear** of being scolded, yet you find it hard to obey God even though He calls you to obey **out of love**."

Hmmm...

We are so used to obedience that is prompted by fear that until we see the danger hanging on the edge of the cliff, we won't obey and take action. Yet God has called and asked us to obey him out of the abundance of love that we ought to have for him. At our workplaces, many obey out to fear of being fired or

reprimanded by the boss. At home, teenagers obey out to fear of being scolded or their gadgets taken away or being grounded. Why can't we obey because we love mom or realize that doing our best at our jobs is our duty and we ought to work diligently because we love our job and we are working as unto the Lord.

We are so used to the rough life; when someone offers us a smooth one we take it for granted. We begin to do things that we won't dare try when we were living a rough life. God has offered us a life of love, yet we prefer a life of fear.

Does discipline and obedience need to be so guarded by laws? Why can't we be disciplined in grace and love too? Why do we love laws so much when we have grace? We must stop taking the grace and love of God for granted. God's grace and love is much more expensive and priceless than laws. It took a huge sacrifice that we can never repay even with our lives. And when you understand how big the love and grace God has for you, you will obey willingly *out of love* for our amazing and merciful father.

We love because he first loved us - 1 John

4:19.

CHAPTER 4

Tap into the Spirit of Love

I hope you are still on this ride with me and your seat belt is still fastened? In the previous chapter we learned about agape love and that this love comes from God. We also learned that we already have this love in us by the power of the Holy Spirit (**Romans 5:5**).

But then, why is it still hard for us to love God in obedience to His word?

Looking back, I have always been disobedient. It took me 40 days to finally get the courage grace to share my testimony (You can read this on my blog @ (<https://growinggodseternalfamily.com/my-testimony/>)). I had to fast from social media for 40 days and prayed to God for courage and boldness to get my testimony out there. God told me to share my testimony and I just couldn't. I have done some

shameful and embarrassing things in the past and I just couldn't share that.

Was my 40 days fast and prayer effective and necessary?

Yes, it was. Because during those 40 days, my eyes were open, I spent time in the word of God and I came to know who I am I in Christ.

I also came to know what I should have known and could have prevented the fast. I say that because the courage, boldness and all I needed to share my testimony was already in me. God has not given me the spirit of fear, but one of power, **love**, and sound judgment (**2 Timothy 1:7**). I was already equipped with all I needed to share my testimony. However, I had refused to believe and live in it. It's one thing to have all the armor and weapons one needs for war and it's a different thing to put on that armor and grab those weapons and use them at war. I have the Holy Spirit in me and one of His fruit is love - agape love. I am a child of God and my father is love, thereby, I have His kind of love in me. I have it but I had refused to live in it. I realized that the issue was not because of what people will say or think or how people were going to react, the main issue was my inability to tap into the abundance of love in my heart. If I had tapped into the love of God in me, my 40 days fast wouldn't

have been necessary, my fear of what people were going to say wouldn't have affected me. Because perfect love cast out all fear. Perfect love cast out all people-pleasing attitude and bondage chains. Perfect love is not selfish, but think about the people that would be blessed and inspired by my testimony. Perfect love allows us to live in obedience to God's word.

So during my 40 days fast, I did not suddenly tap into the boldness God has given me. He didn't suddenly input the spirit of love in me. No, all He did was open my eyes to see who I was already, to see and believe in the power, courage, boldness and most importantly the love that He already put in me.

Back to the question I asked in the beginning of this chapter,

“Why is it still hard for us to love God in obedience His word?” The answer is simple: Because we have refused to tap into the spirit of love in us.

You've gotta tap into the spirit of love in you and that will help you to obey without delay. Without love, obedience is impossible. I was able to share my testimony, when I allowed my love for God and others to overcome my selfishness and

love for self. Out of my love for God and others, courage and boldness to obey God was birthed.

1 Thessalonians 1:3 says, *“We recall, in the presence of our God and Father, your work produced by faith, **your labor motivated by love**, and your endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ.”*

We must allow our labor and obedience to be motivated by love for God and others. Take self out of the equation. Be selfless.

EXAMPLES OF OBEDIENCE PROMPTED BY LOVE

Let's look at the stories of three people in the Bible whose obedience to God was prompted by their immense love for God.

Abraham - Father of Faith

In **Genesis 12:1 - 3**, *“The Lord had said to Abram, “Leave your native country, your relatives, and your father’s family, and go to the land that I will show you. I will make you into a great nation. I will bless you and make you famous, and you will be a blessing to others. I will bless those who bless you and curse those who treat you with contempt. All the families on earth will be blessed through you.”*

The above promise does sound good and tempting. Who does not want to be blessed and be a blessing to others? However, not many of us are ready to leave our family and the people we have lived with all our lives to go to a place we do not know. But **vs. 4** tells us that Abram went as God instructed him. He obeyed immediately. Wow! He is not called the father of faith for no reason.

This promise to make Abram into a great nation was made to him when he was seventy-five (75) years old and he did not begin to see the fulfillment of that promise until he was one-hundred (100) years old (35 years later) when God finally gave him Isaac.

Now, the real test of God's love in Abraham's heart came in **Genesis 22:1 - 2 (NLT)** - *"Some time later, God tested Abraham's faith. "Abraham!" God called. Yes," he replied. "Here I am."*

*"Take your son, your only son—yes, Isaac, **whom you love so much**—and go to the land of Moriah. Go and sacrifice him as a burnt offering on one of the mountains, which I will show you."*

Wow! What a test! God knew how much Abraham loved Isaac, He even emphasized on it, **"Yes, Isaac, whom you love**

so much,” yet God asked him to sacrificed him. This is a son he had waited 100 years for.

Why?

You must know that God had no intention of letting Abraham to sacrifice his son. For in **Genesis 9: 6**, God said, “If anyone takes a human life, that person’s life will also be taken by human hands. For God made human beings in his own image.” And we know that God never goes against His Word. So this was just a test of Abraham’s faith and love for God which must be shown in obedience to His word. Our God is a jealous God and He knows Abraham’s heart and his love for his son. But God does not want you loving anyone more than you love him. His place as the first love of your life must not be taken by anyone not even your children, spouse or parents.

So what did Abraham do? Did he obey?

Yes. He sure did.

Genesis 22:3 says, *“The next morning Abraham got up early. He saddled his donkey and took two of his servants with him, along with his son, Isaac. Then he chopped wood for a fire for a burnt offering and set out for the place God had told him about.”*

The very next morning, Abraham got up early and set out. He obeyed **immediately**. He didn't question God, he didn't grumble, he didn't feel sad. He obeyed! Abraham continued on his journey, he tied his child to the altar and raised a knife to sacrifice him and at that moment the angel of the Lord called out to him and said in **Genesis 22:12 (NLT)**, *“Don't lay a hand on the boy!” the angel said. “Do not hurt him in any way, for now I know that you truly fear God. You have not withheld from me even your son, your only son”*

Actions, they say speak louder than words. Abraham proved his love for God through his actions of immediate obedience and faith in God. Words are never going to be enough, actions are needed to back it up.

Mary - The mother of Jesus Christ

The story of Mary is one that I love so much. Her obedience and love for God was phenomenal. Mary was a lowly girl who lived in the small town of Nazareth. She was betrothed to a man named Joseph. Most importantly, she loved God so much. Now, you must know that the Bible did not explicitly say that, “Mary loved God so much.” It was not mentioned anywhere.

So, how do I know this? I knew that by reading her story, looking at her life and her acts of obedience.

On that blessed day, the angel Gabriel appeared to Mary and said to her, *“Now listen: You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give him the throne of his father David. He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and his kingdom will have no end” - Luke 1: 31 - 33.*

Okay, slow down angel. I am confused.

Mary asked, *“How can this be, since I have not had sexual relations with a man? (vs. 34)”*

The angel replied her, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. Therefore, the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God (vs. 35).”

Here comes my favorite part.

Mary replied, *“I am the Lord’s servant, **May it be done to me according to your word (vs. 38).**”*

Why is that my favorite part? Mary’s response to the angel showed me not only her obedience to God’s word but her love

for God. She is about to be married, and she got pregnant by the Holy Spirit. This is a big deal. This act could have led to the dissolution of her engagement to Joseph because he would have thought she fornicated. And her response to the angel could have been, “May it *not* be done to me according to your word because I am scared of jeopardizing my relationship with Joseph and ruining my reputation. So, God you need to look for someone else to birth your son.”

But, out of her great love for God, she accepted this commission and purpose that she has been given by God not caring how it was going to potentially affect her engagement and her reputation (if her husband publicizes her supposed shameful act). Her love (agape) was not selfish, it was selfless and showed itself in willful action. She placed the command of God above her life. I don't know about you, but I bet only love (agape) could have prompted such immediate obedience.

Well, Joseph did find out about her pregnancy and the Bible says in **Matthew 1: 19**, “*So her husband Joseph, being a righteous man, and not wanting to disgrace her publicly, decided to divorce her secretly.*” Oh, but our God is a faithful God and takes care of his own. *All things work together for the*

*good of those **who love him**, who are called according to his purpose (Roman 8: 28).* So, an angel also appeared to Joseph in a dream and said to him, “*Joseph, son of David, don’t be afraid to take Mary as your wife, because what has been conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son, and you are to name him Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins - (Matthew 1: 20 -21).*”

Now, I know we are focusing on Mary’s obedience but as I write this, the Holy Spirit made me realize that Joseph was also obedient. You see, despite the angel coming to him in the dream, he could have decided to disobey and divorce Mary anyway. But God knew the kind of man Joseph was. He knew that Joseph also loved him. Most especially, there’s a reason and purpose why Mary was engaged to Joseph, a man from the *family line of David, from Bethlehem.*

Micah 5: 2,

“Bethlehem Ephrathah,

you are small among the clans of Judah;

one will come from you to be ruler over Israel for me.

His origin is from antiquity, from ancient times.”

This was to fulfill prophecy. So, not only was Mary's obedience and love for God important in the birth of our savior, Joseph obedience and love for God was also important. Even when we don't see or understand it, all things are working together for the good of those who love God. Selah.
Thank you Holy Spirit.

Finally,

Jesus Christ - Our Savior and Lord

Honestly, do we even need to talk about this? Because Jesus love and obedience to God is so evident, we are here today because of that love and obedience.

But, let's talk.

Satan, the enemy understood that death is the penalty of sin. Thus, he intentionally led man to sin against God and he thought he had successfully broken the relationship between man and God forever. He knew that for our sins to be washed away, a life must be sacrificed. He knew that the blood of animals was not enough to wash our sins and make us right forever. But, he forgot about the abundance and depth of God's love (agape).

He never expected that Jesus Christ, who is fully God will lay aside all of His divine nature and take upon himself the

confinement of humanity. Jesus came to save us forever, for nothing, can separate us from Jesus' love. Jesus was obedient to the point of death (**Philippians 2:8**) on the cross for you and I. **Romans 4: 25**, "He was delivered (crucified) up for our trespasses and raised for our justification."

What manner of love is this?

In **Matthew 22: 37 - 40 (TLB)**, Jesus talked about love as the greatest commandment, "*Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, and mind.*" This is the first and greatest commandment. The second most important is similar: *Love your neighbor as much as you love yourself.* All the other commandments and all the demands of the prophets stem from these two laws and are fulfilled if you obey them. Keep only these and you will find that you are obeying all the others."

Jesus didn't just talk about it, he lived and displayed it by dying for you and I. Jesus was deeply anguished and like any human He was scared and could feel the crushing weight of the cross even before bearing it. The Bible said, "*Being in anguish, He prayed more fervently, and his sweat became like drops of blood falling to the ground*" - **Luke 22: 44**. Yet, he loved God

and loved us enough to say, “...*nevertheless, not my will, but yours, be done*” - **Luke 22: 42.**

Love kept Jesus going despite the hardships, insults, beatings, persecutions and betrayal. He was obedient in His purpose. He that was without sin, became sin for our sake. He was rejected by men and despised by God for God hates sin. And finally, He said those powerful, death breaking, grave shattering and freedom giving words, “**It is finished.**” He paid the debt for our sins once and for all.

Today, you and I are free from condemnation in Christ Jesus. You and I can boldly go before God and cry out Abba Father. All because of Jesus’ obedience that was prompted out of His love for God and for you and I.

So my dear friend, as a believer, you are already equipped with the spirit of love and all you need to do is tap into it, believe in it and obey God. Don’t listen to what people say or think, let love drive all that you do.

“Little children, let us not love in word or speech, but in action and in truth.” (1 John 3:18 CSB).

CHAPTER 5

The Power of Love

I am all about God's family and love. I earnestly believe that the church can be restored to how God intended for it to be and make it into the church that Christ willingly laid His life for. And we cannot do this until we understand how important and deep love is. We will never have a family without love. Even in a traditional nuclear family, the only thing that holds them together is their love for one another. The moment that begins to fade and die, you start seeing brother plotting against one another, sisters against one another, parent against one another and their children.

Jesus warned us, that in the last days, the love of many shall wax/grow cold. That includes the love for God and the love we have for one another. Thus, as a church and family of God, we must continue to grow in love and encourage one another to keep the spirit of love burning in us.

THE GREATEST COMMANDMENT

In **Matthew 22: 35 - 40**, “And one of them, an expert in the law, asked a question to test him: “Teacher, which command in the law is the greatest?” He said to him, “Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the greatest and most important command. The second is like it: Love your neighbor as yourself. All the Law and the Prophets depend on these two commands.”

The love God and love of others pretty much sums up the whole ten commandments in the old testament.

LOVE GOD

If we love God:

- We won't have any other gods (Exodus 20: 3)
- We won't make or worship idols and crafty images

(Exodus 20: 4)

- We won't misuse God's name (Exodus 20: 7)
- We will obey God at all time and follow His commands

to keep the Sabbath holy (Jesus is the Lord of the Sabbath).

(Exodus 20: 8)

LOVE OTHERS

If we love others:

- We will honor our father and mother (Exodus 20: 12)
- We won't murder (or hate) one another (Exodus 20: 13)
- We won't commit adultery with a brother's or sister's spouse (Exodus 20: 14)
- We won't steal from one another (Exodus 20: 15)
- We won't bear false witness against one another (Exodus 20: 16)
- We won't covet one another's possessions (Exodus 20: 17)

In fact, I believe that the two greatest commandments goes deeper than just the ten commandments. It involves way more because love should guide all that we do. When we love God and others with agape love, the commandments of God won't be a burden to us (**1 John 5: 3**). We will not drag our feet when the Holy Spirit whispers an assignment to us. We will not care what people say or think and most importantly, the church (Body of Christ) will start becoming what it's supposed to be: "**John 13:35**, "By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."

OBEY THE LITTLE THINGS

It was a beautiful day before my class by noon. I was finishing my assignment which was due by start of class. As I was doing it, the Holy Spirit said to me, “Call your friend and remind her to do hers.”

“Hmmm, I am sure she did it already.” I brushed the still voice aside.

Few minutes again, I heard the same thing, “Remind your friend to do her assignment.” Reluctantly, I sent her a text. Two minutes later, she called. “Esther, oh my God, thank you so much. I totally forgot about the assignment.”

My jaw dropped.

Wow! I couldn't believe that just happened. I realized how important it is to obey immediately. That was just about a school assignment. What if this time, the Holy Spirit says to you, pray for your friend and you disregarded it. Few hours later, you receive a call that your friend is dead because she got into an accident. How would you feel?

Our obedience to the word of God is very, very important and must be **immediate**. While you are dragging your feet, lives are being affected. You are not living just for yourself, many souls are connected to you. You must show God that you will be obedient with the little things, so he can trust you to be obedient with the big things.

God is always talking to us. Many people say, “I can’t hear him, He doesn’t talk to me.” Yes, He does talk to you. You must spend a lot of time with God so you can get used to hearing His voice and you can recognize it immediately. How can you recognize the voice of someone you barely spend time with? But when you devote time to that person, you get so familiar with their voice, that from a distance you can tell right away that it is that person that is talking. It is the same with God. And many of us do hear Him talk but we neglect it because it doesn't feel spiritual and spectacular enough. We look for those type of communication and encounters with people like Abraham, Moses, Jacob, Paul, Peter, etc., had with God in the Bible. We are waiting to hear a voice from heaven or see a bush burning before we believe that it is God talking to us. But God does not need to scream or shout from heaven because He lives in us. He is super close to us. So why shout? You just gotta be still and

listen. God also does not communicate in just one way. He communicates in different ways and method such as dreams, the still small voice, the Bible, a sermon, a friend, etc. You must be alert and ready to hear from your father. And when you hear, you must be ready to obey!

Many times, I just wake up in the middle of the night, which is highly unusual for me because I love my sleep and I can sleep for 2 days if possible and permitted. But someday, I suddenly wake up in the middle of the night and the Holy Spirit tells me to pray, praise, read my Bible or study my book. And no matter how tired I am and I would love to continue sleeping, I am learning to jump up and obey immediately. When God speaks, He speaks to be heard and obeyed immediately, even when it is not convenient for us. He is more concerned about your obedience than your comfort. If God can't trust you to do what He tells you concerning your own life, how can He trust you to obey Him concerning others' lives? It's like, "Esther, I love you but I also love my other children and I can't entrust them to you because you hardly obey me concerning your life. You don't even love yourself enough to obey my words about you, how can I trust you to love my other children enough to pass this

message to them, to stay up late at night to write that blog post, that book, study more, etc., for the sake of my other children and to the glory of my name?

Many of us want a big ministry, but with the little God has given us to test our love and obedience, we are failing at it. Instead of waiting to love and obey God in the future when we have that big thing we are asking for, why not start loving and obeying him now in the little that has been entrusted to you. If you are not grateful and obedient now, there is no guarantee that you will be obedient in a bigger position. In fact, you are bound to be big headed and allow pride to seep in.

This reminds me of the parable of the talents in **Matthew 25: 14 - 30**. The wicked servant knew what the master wanted, yet he buried his one talent. Many of us know very, very well, what God has told us to do and what He require of us, but we refuse to do it. And then we get jealous of others talent. I want you to know that they have more talents and have been entrusted with more because they obey and have used their talents well.

I love to tell myself, “Esther, the only reason you notice their gifts and talents is because these people are using it. If they

never used it just as you are not using yours, you won't notice it. So, stop looking at others talents, stop coveting their gifts, stop the comparison, stop the jealousy. You've got yours, all you gotta do is use it or your gift and talent will be taken and given to them. Since they obviously know what to do with it.”

Luke 16: 10 -11 says, “Whoever is faithful in very little is also faithful in much, and whoever is unrighteous in very little is also unrighteous in much. So if you have not been faithful with worldly wealth, who will trust you with what is genuine?”
No one and definitely not God.

This is why you must allow the love of God to be deeply rooted in your heart because it will make obedience to every of His word much easier. His love will drive you to start using those gifts and talents to the glory of His name and the edification of the Church. If we love God we will be able to trust him with faith and obey even when it makes no sense.

I wish I can go on and on about how your love for God will transform everything you do. It will transform the way you speak, the way you dress and the way you think.

Your love for God and others will:

- Drive you to evangelize and spread His word to the lost souls because you love them so much and you will love to see them experience God in their lives.

- Help you to stay committed in college and study hard so you can go into the workforce and make a difference.

- Keep you going at that 9 -5 job despite your dislike for your work or boss, because you love God enough to trust that, this too shall pass and you are where you are for a reason and season.

- Shatter every bit of shyness in you and get those life changing words out of your mouth, when you see a sister or brother backsliding.

- Make you go out of your way to serve others without expecting anything in return.

- Keep you up at night and on your knees in prayer for your sisters and brother in Christ and for the lost souls in the world.

- Shatter every spirit of jealousy and comparison and you will rejoice happily at others success.

- Help you to love even your worst enemies and pray for them.

- Help your faith grow and increase your hope in the second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Dear friend, do not allow yourself to become a victim of cold love. Keep it burning. Don't quench the spirit.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Ahhh, what a ride!

Before we alight, I will love to make this clear: You and I are never gonna be able to love God more than he loves us. Never!

He loved us first. He loved us before the beginning of the world and even while we were still sinners, He was in love with us. But, it's never too late to start loving Him with the gift of life and heart of flesh that he has given unto us. We must love him with the whole of our heart, soul, mind and strength through the help of the Holy Spirit.

Ah! There is one truth I forgot to share with you. As I was writing this book, I started seeing various blog posts, sermons and messages concerning love and obedience to God and I wondered, "Why bother? Why bother writing a book on this topic when there are already so many articles on it. I guess I am so late."

And the Holy Spirit whispered unto me, "So, you are just going to go ahead and disobey again?"

Me? Disobey? Again?

“No, God forbid! I am going to write this book and obey God’s command. I know there might be various writing on this topic out there already, but my story is different and God is my wisdom and inspiration. I do not have to be bother by what I see or hear, I just have to obey and let God take care of the rest.”

Why did I share that with you? Because I realize that many of us are stalling or we are not doing what God has called and put in our heart to do because we have not tapped into the spirit of love in us and we believe that many people are already doing the same thing, so why bother? There are already many Christian bloggers, preacher, leader, doctors, nurses, lawyers, makeup artist, singers, technicians, poets, authors, worshippers, chef, etc. Therefore, we wonder, “Why do I have to bother?”

My dear friend, you do have to bother. God knows and sees all those people, yet he placed the same desire on your heart, why? Because you are different, because you story is going to be different, because you might be able to reach the population they were not able to. Besides, the harvest is just too plentiful and we need many laborers on the field not JUST ONE. We need laborer everywhere: in the church, in ministries, in the workforce, in blue collar jobs, in white collar jobs, in the homes, on the street, and every corner of life.

So, get out there and take your position in God's field and family. Like my step aunt always says, "Obey before complain."

LET'S LOVE AND OBEY TOGETHER

I have not arrived. I do not have it all figured out. I continue to seek after God's heart. My heart is not in "park" or in "neutral." I keep driving until I get to my destination. I keep seeking God's love and obedience and I will find it. I still love God. And we have this relationship where I discover new things about Him everyday and my love for Him keeps growing.

So, if I was to delay writing this book until I have it all figured out so I can come here to boast about how much I love God and obey all His commands, then that day will never come and this book will never be written. However, I went ahead and obeyed God's command to write this book despite my doubts and worries, because I love God and I love you all and I want us all to do it (love and obey God) **together** as a family of God. My hope is that you will also repent (recognize your sins, change your thinking and action) and get devoted to God as much as He is devoted to us all. Be intentional in your relationship with God,

because he is very intentional with you and me. He intentionally blesses us, not because we deserve it, but because He desires to.

As a family in Christ Jesus, my goal is that we journey down this path together praying and holding hands in spirit, to love God and obey him with all of our hearts, soul and mind and actions in Jesus name, AMEN.

My prayer is that you are able to rearrange the words, “Do I love God?” into “I do love God”

Confidently. Proudly. No question mark needed.

God Bless you.

“Wait Esther, one more question”

“What question?”

“So do you love God?”

“*Chuckles and smiles* Are you kidding me? Of course I do love God. I do not just say it, feel it or think about it but I will live the rest of my life proving it with actions and obedience that are fully packaged with love for God and others by His grace in Jesus name. Amen.”

He is mine, and I am His forever. Nothing can separate me from Abba's love.

I hate to say this, but at this juncture, we must take off our seat belt and alight from this ride. I hope you enjoyed this ride as much as I did?

Though the ride of this book ends here, I hope you are just getting started on your journey to love God and obey His Word. I look forward to another awesome ride with you by God's grace.

Till then, never forget that you are

Eternally Loved,

Esther O. Ademiju

Your feedback to this e-book will be very much appreciated. I would love to know if this book was helpful at all to you. I especially want to know if you have decided to fall deeper in love with God. Please feel free to send any feedback and comments or prayer request to officialggef@gmail.com

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Thank you

I love you

About the Book - DO I LOVE GOD?

In a world where the word “I love you” is easily mentioned whether it is meant or not, we must pause to consider what that really entails when we say, “I love God.” Do we really love God? What does it mean to love God? Is it enough to just feel like you love God? I hope that reading this book will help you confidently say you love God and live it. My prayer is that you are able to rearrange the words, “Do I Love God?” into “I do love God.” Confidently. No question mark needed.



About the Author - Esther Ademiju

Esther Ademiju is a young woman who has decided to go against the status quo of the world and live a life dedicated to God. She is an aspiring medical doctor but currently a senior at a Nursing school. Her passion is to make the world see the power in unconditional love. She believes that, *“God is sweet and everyone needs to taste him.”*

Esther Ademiju is the founder (under the lordship of Jesus) of **Growing God’s Eternal Family** (www.growinggodseternalfamily.com), an online non-denominational Christian ministry with the mission/vision of growing the eternal family of God as we obey His word and fulfill His commandment to love (God & Others) and His commission for us to GO into the world, make disciples and bring more people into His kingdom.

