**CHRIST COMPANION BIBLE CHURCH**

**Weekly Bible Study**

***Branch:Ido-Ekiti Date:24/09/2024***

 **HEALING FOR THE BRUISED AND WOUNDED (Part 2) Study 29**

**TEXT:** Matthew 18: 1-10,Romans 12:18,21

**MEMORY VERSE**:***Galatians 6:1 Brothers, if a man be overtaken in a fault, you which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering yourself, lest you also be tempted.***

The scripture says***: It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor any thing whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak. Romans 14:21 (KJV).***

 God desires for everyone in Christ is a gracious life that enhances, encourages and edifies others to know Christ, live godly and serve fervently to grow God's kingdom and promote people's welfare in every sphere of human relationship. God in the above text sees such possibilities in the life of an individual that is humble, loving and selflessly disposed as little children. (Matthew 18:3-4). The question to ask oneself is how can I avoid becoming a tool of offense and casting stumbling block on the paths of fellow believers by my actions and inactions? The Lord Jesus cautions on being the cause of offense and losing faith by any of His followers. **Offend Not, But Edify!** Matthew 16:14-24. In the scripture above, Christ affirmed Peter for revealing His identity as Christ, the Messiah. He got it so right! In another instance, Peter became a mouthpiece for Satan! Christ discerned it and rebuked Satan, rather than been offended by Peter's affront. ***Christ was very sensitive and careful in dealing with the situation. Otherwise, Peter could have got seriously injured and the healthy relationship with Christ hampered. He simply enlightened and restored Peter to steadfastness! Satan was made to bear the brunt***. This is wisdom in operation.

**These are lessons to believers**:

**1. Always be vigilant so as not to be hired by Satan to cause offense to the way of Christ or others!**

 Titles like: Born again, worker, pastor, bishop etc. are not respected by Satan. He can temporarily or permanently hire anyone to cause offense to cause the saints to fall! Don't be careless to become a tool in the hand of the devil. Luke 22:31-32.

**2. Satan can lay hold on any of the following to cause offense in any relationship and the body of Christ:**

*i. When your words are not seasoned with truth, love and grace*. Example was Peter who chose to rebuke Jesus due to ignorance, and self-conceitedness. Thanks to Jesus matured handling.

*ii. Wrongly believe assumptions or unconfirmed suppositions.*

For example, a man met the wife sitting restlessly agitated said, "you are starting another trouble again!" When in the actual sense, the woman had just got information of her retrenchment at work place! Such insensitive and careless conversation has been known to result to quarrelling, abuse etc, with unhealthy domestic outcomes.

*iii. When you have underlying sense of insecurity, disagreement, hatred, rivalry etc. that is not dealt with and settled, Satan and self can always take advantage of little things:* For example, the song of the women celebrating victory of David over Goliath was without bad intentions. Saul's heart condition brought offense from it with unnecessary wars that follows!

 Purity of heart, intentions and openness will always disappoint Satan's plot and ploys to generate offensive and hostile scenarios.

*iv. Temptation to get involved in such attitudes that betray trust, hurts and water down your sense of integrity.*

 Jacob’s cheat in Esau created gap that lasted for years. It took divine intervention to broker peace in the long run! *Avoid such actions that make enemies out of people around you.*

**3. Like Jesus learn to focus on what God approves that will generate godly outcome, and act accordingly.**

When Peter's words and rebuke was offensive to His cause, Christ responded by discerning and rejecting Satan's evil move and at same time helping to edify Peter to overcome the trap of the enemy!

**4. Always have the right response and wisdom to dose tensions in difficult and offensive circumstances:**

 A good example worthy of emulation was Galileo. He was a super master in resolving conflict. Following the offensive and chaotic scene created by Demetrius in Ephesus, Galileo word of wisdom saved the day from potential mayhem! (See Act 19:23-41).

 The counsel of Solomon should always be your guide according to: Proverbs 25:11-13 (KJV),

 ***"A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver. [12] As an earring of gold, and an ornament of fine gold, so is a wise reprover upon an obedient ear. [13] As the cold of snow in the time of harvest, so is a faithful messenger to them that send him: for he refresheth the soul of his masters".***

**5. Stand and fight a just cause at all time. Stand on Scriptural principles, not pervasive presumptions!** Fight like Christ for the truth and not on selfish interest! John 5:30.

**6. Strengthen the weak, support the fallen and uphold everyone in pursuit of the righteous cause**. For instance:

*i. A man like Moses is always needed to lift up holy hand in prayer for Joshua in the battle field! Otherwise,* the young valiant man will become weary and defeated in battle!

*ii. Even our Lord Jesus received Angelic support at that terrific night in Gethsemane!* When He was faced with the horror of the cross! Likewise, leaders and front liners need affirmation and encouragement to fight the good fight of faith victoriously.

 ***Rather than insensitive criticism and accusations all the time, seek how you can help and contribute positively to improve and edify others.***

**7. Blessed are the peace makers,! Matthew 5:9.**

 So, determine to be an ambassador of Christ and His gospel of peace. Romans 10:15.

 In families, in your community and in the Church, give encouragement, affirmation and loving reproof that will curtail the festering sting of offenses, thus creating a pleasant atmosphere of peace, progress and fruitfulness. Psalm 133:1-3. Amen.

**HYMN: OLD RUGGED CROSS (CHS84)**

1. On a hill far away stood an old rugged cross,

 The emblem of suffering and shame;

 And I love that old cross where the dearest and best

 For a world of lost sinners was slain.

 *So i'll cherish the old rugged cross,*

 *Till my trophies at last I lay down;*

 *I will cling to the old rugged cross,*

 *And exchange it someday for a crown.*

2. O that old rugged cross, so despised by the world,

 Has a wondrous attraction for me;

 For the dear Lamb of God left his glory above

 To bear it to dark Calvary.

3. In that old rugged cross, stained with blood so divine,

 A wondrous beauty I see,

 For 'twas on that old cross Jesus suffered and died,

 To pardon and sanctify me.

4. To that old rugged cross I will ever be true,

 Its shame and reproach gladly bear;

 Then he'll call me some day to my home far away,

 Where his glory forever i'll share.