

Brotherly Love

preached by Rev J. O. Soyinka
on May 11, 1986



We have come to meet the Lord this morning particularly in respect of Brotherly Love. We as people that serve God have a special privilege which we many of us do not understand and appreciate. Many of us just take this for granted because it just comes our way. What is this privilege? And this is the fellowship we have in dealings among ourselves as brethren. Who are brethren? They are people out of the great love and mercy of God have been called out of darkness into life, these are people who have got the mercy of God and God has washed away their sins. They could be one or two, they could come from one nation or the other and they joined together under feet of Jesus. These are the people called brethren. These people called brethren belonged to one family of God. These brethren have an elderly brother who is the first born of their father and that is Jesus Christ.

In our experience as family men and women, we do know that in the family we usually have a child who is the first born and after the first born is the second born. The first born accepts the second born as his own baby and treats this child as his own baby and gives him all his love, he appreciates the fact that he belongs to him and will sacrifice anything to take care of this baby, and whenever we have visitors from other families that visits this family, they will ask the child of his own baby, because they have accepted that the second one is the baby of the first one. It is the love that each children has for each other when they are young that makes them to know that they are brothers and sisters and once they continue to grow in this love until they become elderly, they will know more about each other and they will know that they belong to another. We have given this short explanation so that we may have full knowledge about the step we want to take in learning about Brotherly Love.

What is the source of this Brotherly Love? The source of it? What is the source of this love? This brotherly love? We will like to examine this first. We usually know a source to be the beginning of where something originally originates. Where we can see that thing happening for first time and continue to see it progressing. As someone born in a village and that grew up in the village, we use to go to a farm all the time. Whenever we want to fetch water, we would go to the stream, and at the stream we would see the water gushing out from a particular source. All the other villagers would come round to the source of this water to fetch water for our individual need for our individual needs and requirements. We would like to know the source of the love that exists among brethren in the family of Christ.

The source of brotherly love –

8 But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Romans 5:8

6 For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. Romans 5:6

This is the source of brotherly love, and springs from God, and it is behold in Christ. It present God as God of love, and present Jesus Christ as the sacrifice of that love. And it presents us as very weak, unworthy, and as sinners. We want to examine the deep love of God, and we should appreciate the fact that God had loved us even while we are sinners, before we knew him, God had loved us. In this passage we referred to when we have the review in the morning, we stated the fact that the steps of man had been ordained by God and he delighted in his ways. God in his goodness, had called each one of us from our various end, he called one from Badagry, another from Ibadan, another from Kano, so that we would all come together and know the will of God for them. When we first of all invited to the foot of the cross, what was first presented to us was that the sin we were committing was giving us a lot of punishment, it was leading us into a lot of hardship and suffering and that there was somebody who could rescue us from this position and that is our elderly brother who is Jesus Christ. As soon as Jesus Christ

called us, he would reveal our wretchedness unto us and our suffering and hardships we were going through and if we continue in that position of sin, hell of fire was going to be the end. But immediately he reveals Jesus Christ to us as well – that is our elderly brother. He will show him to us as the person who had stopped all the work of Satan, so that we do not go to hell, and he will show us the alternative way out, which is the way of life and into everlasting peace and joy.

As soon as our elderly brother steps into the show, he will give us all possible help and encouragement so that we can obtain the mercy of God. First of all that our heart which have been hardened, God would soften the heart, and make it humble so that we can obtain the mercy of God, and Jesus Christ while we are praying is standing on the right of God, showing God the mark which he received on our behalf, he would plead our cause to God for us, and God would look at that and show mercy on us and forgive us all those hideous sins which we were committing. As a result of this, joy will be ours, we would have peace, have contentment and peace with God. By this, we shall become children of God. By this we shall become a member of the family of God.

When we become a family of God we experience an immediate change, it is not a gradual change, but an immediate change and old things will pass away, and everything will become new, and because of the new life we are living, because of the changes in our life and in our interest, we definitely recognize the fact that we have now become one of the members of the family of God.

¹⁰ He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not.

¹¹ He came unto his own, and his own received him not.

¹² But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, *even* to them that believe on his name:

¹³ Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

John 1:10-13

We have related the story of the change of our life in those three verses we read. We have been made to understand that Jesus Christ is our elder brother who made himself a sacrifice for us so that God can receive us. Jesus Christ came to his own, but his own received him not, though we referred to his own as the Jews but this same Jesus went about in all the churches, house, and towns but we ought to appreciate the greatness of what God did for us. We ought to look back in retrospect and see the amount of grace which the Lord showed on us when we first came into the gospel, probably about 10 or 20 of us first came to the church and we prayed our way to salvation and started the way together, but now if we look back, at least 2 or 3 are no more in grace, but we should appreciate the fact that God had made us to stay in his love and in the gospel because of his love. How is it with you? v. 12 –

¹² But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, *even* to them that believe on his name:

Those who truly accepted Jesus Christ, were given the enabling to become sons of God. This is the secret of your ability to stay, and also the secret of the inability of your fellows who could not stay in the gospel. Those who received him – those who received what? Those who received Jesus Christ. Is it that name or the dual name of Jesus Christ – is that what we are referring to? That is not. Those who truly believe in Jesus Christ are those who believe in his doctrines. What are his doctrines? Which we are told when first came, that all men have sinned and fell short of the glory of God. The word of god also stated that if we confess our sins, and forsake them, God is faithful and righteous to forgive us. You believe it, but your friend did not, your carnal brother, your brother in flesh did not believe it. You believe that you were a sinner, and that faith allowed the spirit of God to deliberate with your spirit. His own unbelief, lead the spirit of God to depart from him and did not say anything to him. The spirit started to talk to you about the evil ways which you were walking before you came about the gospel. You were able to discover all the sins and the mistakes which you have committed to God and man and surrender to God. And God told you that your elderly brother was able to deliver you from your sins. Some people wonder why we call on that name of Jesus Christ so frequently, we keep on repeating the name always. But do you realize that it is only that name of Jesus Christ that had been given through which one can be saved. The reason why we plead the blood of Jesus Christ all the time is that since the first man was created, there had been none who had been able to sacrifice is own soul for mankind except Jesus Christ. This was what you believed, and you prayed, may be in this holy assembly, or at Moloney Street, or wherever you have met the gospel, it could also have happened in your home something happened. v 13 –

13 Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

Imagine the word of God like a chain coupled onto one another. It was telling Nicodemus that except a man was born again, he could not see the kingdom of heaven. Jesus Christ is explaining unto us through the mouth of John that the one who believes in Jesus Christ was saved only through Jesus Christ, he was born again through Jesus Christ. This new birth he continued to explain unto us is not like somebody been pregnant having a baby in the womb for 9 months or having a child been born by water and flesh but by the love of God.

18 Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers;

19 But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: 1 Peter 1:18-19

That is the means through which we were born again. That is the means by which we were received into the family of God – the blood of Jesus. When God was going to destroy the first born in the land of Egypt, it was through this same blood by which he was able to receive the children of Israel into his own fold. He said when I shall see the blood, I will pass over you. Even up to this our time whenever we make use of the efficacy of the blood of Jesus Christ, forgiveness will be ours, new birth will be ours, and lot of things will be ours and in the end we shall be accepted into the family fold of Jesus Christ. These people who have been born of God and who are living a life of victory over sin, people who are living a completely new life, these are the people called brethren.

26 For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.

27 For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.

29 And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise. Galatians 3:26-29v

There are many worshippers who surround us who use to get angry with us because we call ourselves children of God. The passage we read in St John told us that those who believe in him and in the only child born of God are those people given the power to be children of God.

The passage we now read in Galatians now tells us that all of you are children of God. It is only talking of only those that have been redeemed, those who have been born again according to the short explanation we made, those whose behavior and manner of practices agree with their family and which family is this? – the family of God. He told us a secret which many of us do not understand and this prevents us from enjoying brotherly love. Many people do not truly appreciate the new birth which means we are born of God. When we are born of God, many of us have been baptized, and when we are baptized in the Lord and dipped in the water, that indicates that we are already dead to sin, that we do not belong to the world or to the worldly family anymore. So when we are raised up from the water, we belong to Jesus Christ and belong absolutely to him. Look at how the words follow each other: in v. 26 it is stated that we are children of God, while in v. 27 told us that after we have been children of God we were baptized. When we were baptized, we were making a covenant with God, we were making a covenant in the presence of our family in the Lord, we saying to them that we have a child of God as from that day on and no more of the world, we are a member of the family of Christ today and we would not be separated from that family. But refer to v. 28, this where lies our greatest problem, this where how knowledge is short, it says that there is no Jew or Greek, no male or female, he said all of them are children of God. What is worrying us is that we thinking that Ijebu people are still here, Akure people are still here, people from Abeokuta are still here, and Badagry people are located here. It is because you do not understand, he said there is no Greek or Jew, no man or woman, there is no bond or free, there is no highly learned sophisticated academician or a complete novice. What joins us together, what common name do we have? Children of God. We do not understand. Many of us cling to a blood relation more than the family of God all because we do not understand.

We still find that there are some after this meeting, many people will still go to their social club for a meeting. There are some that attend the Ibibio descendant society, or Okrika descendant meeting and meeting like these. We do not realize that the meeting of the family of Jesus Christ is always the best. Here we have communion among ourselves, and we have communion with God as well. Some people will pretend to go to Ijebu to hold a meeting or want to run down to Akure to hold their meeting, we want you to realize that children of God

are here, and therefore believe that children of God are here. Some people may be thinking that the interpreter is from Ondo State, hence I prefer someone from Egba area, we do not believe in that thinking at all and this does not exist in the gospel, the rational behind our decisions when we give someone something is that the person is the one fit for the award, it is not because he comes from Idanre or Akure, but we are all children of God. There is no respecter of person in the house of God and we should realize that the thing that binds us is stronger than the bond that binds us with our own natural family or with anybody else. Please do not misunderstand me when we are laying emphasis on the family of Jesus Christ and that is very good and then turn deaf ears to your own family. According to our Sunday school lesson of last week, we were told that there are so many things we have in common with our natural families, things we have to do with them, things we have to carry out with them that do not involve sin. We cannot forsake them all because we belong to family of God, if we forsake them, we deny the faith. We usually say that it is the bastard that refers to his father's house with a left hand. Your family is your family. If there is anything in which you have to participate for the honour of your family without involving sin, you must contribute your quota.

But brethren in Christ, it is very deep indeed. God wants us to understand, so that we may know the behaviour and reactions which we adopt among one another because the family of Jesus Christ is very wide. It is this fold that will accommodate our natural family. For example, if the interpreter takes me to his own natural family, I will just be there as a visitor, I will be there for a couple of days, before I take my leave, but he belongs to that family, part and parcel of that family. But the family of Jesus Christ is a wide family, the whole family of Adegboye will come there, the whole family of Soyinka will come there, the whole family of Esther will come there, the whole family of Oni will come there, and the whole family of Ojo will come there, but they will no longer bear Ojo anymore, they will no longer bear Soyinka any more, they will no longer be Adegboye, they will now become the family Christ. That is the benefit and purpose of that family.

⁷ Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God.

⁸ He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love. 1 John 4:7-8

Now we understand the fact that the source of brotherly love is from God. The source of brotherly love had been planned and ordained by God through that our elderly brother who is Jesus Christ. He now gives us the admonition that we should love one another for God is love. Many of us glory in the fact that we love God, we say it in our testimony and in our daily proclamation. But according to the song writer, he says that if you truly love God show it by your behaviour. The scripture says - **Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God.**

¹³ Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. John 15:13

Who is that person? He is Jesus Christ and elderly brother, he is the first son of God. All the love that are obtainable in heaven, he exhibited it by laying his life for us so that we can become children of God. When Jesus Christ had exhibited such a great love for us, so we are being admonished therefore that we ought to love one another, we ought to love all the brethren, we should love the brethren, we should love our brothers and sisters in Christ. We have accepted the fact that there is no Badagry, Ondo, Egba here, we are all children of God. Those who are children of God, those who are beaming out of the love of God every day, those who are beaming out of the blessings of God every day, God is admonishing them that it is mandatory for them that they should show this love to their brothers and sisters in Christ. During the life ministry of Christ, one of the scribes came to Jesus Christ and ask him which was the greatest among the laws? Jesus Christ answered him that he should love his God with all his heart, with all your soul and with all your strength, and the second is likened unto it, you should love your neighbor as yourself. Who is your neighbor? When we were going to school, when we were very young, anyone you have the ability to render any help, anyone you have to rescue from a pitiful state is your neighbor. Jesus Christ told the man that that is your neighbour. You should render help to your neighbour. The scribe then asked who is my neighbour with all the multitude of people around you? In those days when Chief Solanke was having his birthday party, I gave him N500.00, hence he is my neighbour. When the mother of Mrs Ladipo passed away, I gave her a gift of N1000.00, and it will be springing up in your heart that when your mother died, Chief Soetan gave you N300.00 after all and another gave you N1000.00 – that is give and take, that is not what we are talking about. That is in a way pouring water on the ground so that you can tread on soft ground – the usual proverb, that is give and take, and it is not what we are talking about. Jesus then told there was a man going on a journey and fell into the hands of robbers who cut him and he was between life and death. Then there was a man who saw this man who was suffering and he was a priest in his garments and would not want any blood stain at all, he looked at him and just passed by. Then secondly a Levite saw him, somebody working in the vineyard of God, probably he

was an usher, or someone doing any other thing in the household of God, and he saw him, and he said he would not allow him to prevent him from carrying out his duty for God, and he quickly pass by. Next to that was a Samaritan who was going on his own journey and he saw this man who fell into the hands of robbers, and he came down from his ass, and rendered all possible help and he treated him and put him in the inn, and Jesus Christ asked the scribe that of all these three people who was his neighbor? He told him that it was the Samaritan and he told him to go and do likewise. Anyone you have the ability to render any help onto and to deliver from any sorrow and affliction is your neighbor. This man who was injured by the robbers and he was between life and death had no means or way of returning the help which the Samaritan had offered unto him. That is why the songwriter said Rescue the perishing, rescue the dying. Those people who are in trouble and affliction require our help, they want somebody who will bring them into a place of comfort. it is true that when people saw us in our wretchedness and misery and without asking us for any money, or any gift, they brought us into this holy gospel. Will we not like such people make sacrifice as it were to bring other people who are perishing into the love of God.

There are some evidences and marks which definitely show that we love the brethren. Signs which do indicate that we love the brethren. Let us refer to James 2:

14 What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him?

15 If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food,

16 And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit?

17 Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. James 2:14-17

The proof that we love the brethren. One of the proofs is that it should be planted in our heart that we should provide for the needy. The Lord said that he loves a free giver, it is not an outward show or exhibition like saying that those who are out of employment should come to my house tomorrow and take up their meals there. No the scripture says that what your right hand doeth, the left hand should not know. It says that without work it's dead. Do not forget that what we regard as faith is obedience, what we regard as faith is having absolutely faith in Jesus Christ, it is in believing in Jesus Christ. We have given an earlier explanation that we are all sinners. Jesus also said in his words that if we confess our sins, he will forgive us. Jesus Christ is also saying here that it is true we have faith and we were saved, we have faith and we were sanctified, we have faith and were baptized with the Holy Ghost and fire, but he is equally giving us his word on top of this that any faith that we have without work is dead. He was comparing it with the faith of Abraham that the faith of Abraham did not stand until he supported it with work. What was the faith of Abraham? God called him out of Ur of the Chaldees, God called him out of idolatry to follow God, God said he would turn him into great nation, he would be a blessing, and that he would be a blessing to the whole world. Abraham hearkened and came out as you heard it, and as you accepted it, what followed it? Abraham believed God and it was counted to him for righteousness. Abraham believed God and he was saved, that was how Abraham was saved. How was he saved? It was by obedience. He obeyed the law of God. He obeyed the precepts of God. There have been many years rolled over, many months rolled over, he had past through a lot of experiences. God had given him a boy, and now God said that he would take that boy. It is very deep. What God had given him, he was going to take him away. How out of the blessings that God gave Abraham, that he would take it away. Out of all the abundance of the help that God used to surround him, God said he would take it. If Abraham refused and said that he could not offer him, God would not force, but look at him. We are been told that by being miserly that we become a pauper – just thinking about oneself alone, acquiring for one self alone, that is why you go into poverty. But Abraham did not do that, he came and did what he was asked to do. He followed faith with works. He had faith in God, the work he came to do made his faith to stand. If Abraham did not have faith, nor did not have salvation his work would not have stood. Abraham was saved indeed, but if he did not have works, when God asked for Isaac and refused to offer him, his salvation would not have stood. That is where we are going. Now that we have become children of God. The inheritance and blessing that god have bequeathed unto us are quite varied. God wants us to add to our faith by distributing what we have to the needy. As an example, look back to the platform, one violinist started. May be we can count 4 or 10 violinists on the platforms this afternoon, only one trumpeter started, however we may be able to count 1, 2l or 3 trumpeters this afternoon. What happened? God gave them the gift, God gave them the enabling, and they started to distribute it to people. They have faith, they added works to it. Look at our wide it is today. If we have faith and we fold our hands and stop distributing to the necessity of the brethren, it will lead to us having nothing.

9 But as touching brotherly love ye need not that I write unto you: for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another.

10 And indeed ye do it toward all the brethren which are in all Macedonia: but we beseech you, brethren, that ye increase more and more; 1 Thessalonians 4:9-10

That is the call of God for us. When God has given us faith, which we called as salvation and all the spiritual blessings which we ought to have, he may give us wisdom. God had given us that wisdom so that we may help those who do not have wisdom. He may give us strength, God had given us strength, vigor and good health so that we can be of help to the weakling. It may also be possible that God had given us to eat and drink in abundance even to excess of what we need, God had given these to us so that we may give these to the needy among the brethren. You have seen a brother, somebody who truly believes God, somebody who has absolute faith in God, he is in poverty, he is need, and he is very hungry, due to lack of food for the past few days and he is rolling down on the ground as it were because of hunger, meanwhile you have a lot in abundance and more than your need, and you met him and said Br Albert, God will help you, God will provide food for you and be warm, though your fridge is packed full, you refused to call Albert home to come and eat or please make food for him but you said go in peace and be warm, how will his stomach be warmed? The work which our prayers can wrought is different and the work which we ourselves can do and carry out with our own hands are equally different. You see a brother who is a believer in God, and his shirt is already worn out, not only that, and it is brownish though it was white before because he does not have the means of upkeep to wash it and clean it, and you see him tattered trousers and his suits are already worn out, and here you are, you have in abundance, you cannot turn round and be of help to him this is your condition. Do you not know his name? You see your brother, don't you know his name, maybe he is John in need of money, all you have to do is just put some money in an envelope and write his name and drop it in the tithe box, and the people in charge shall surely deliver it unto him. Maybe he is in need of clothes, you should wrap up the clothes and write the name may be Julianah who has no clothes you should send it to him. But here you are, you have everything in abundance, you keep on changing your raiment everyday and you said the brother should go and God will bless him and provide for him and you could not do anything whatsoever to help him.

17 He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the LORD; and that which he hath given will he pay him again. Proverbs 19:17

We are not referring to the beggars on the street, but Brethren, people who belongs to family of god, who you know that they belong to the family fold of God.

13 Whoso stoppeth his ears at the cry of the poor, he also shall cry himself, but shall not be heard. Proverbs 21:13

That is the attitude of God to such people. You see a brother or sister in need, and you did not go to God to ask – do you want me to help him or her? If God places it in your heart, you will not have peace until you carry out the will of God. There should not be world show or exhibition of it at all, just put it in the tithe box or where the person can be sent to him, and the people who are in charge will make sure that the needy actually receive it. You may be surprised about what we are discussing – I do not fail to reveal the secret of God to you, that is the truth of God among brethren.

If you truly love the brotherhood, we have heard it and understood it that we must distribute to the poor. If you actually love this brother or this sister –

11 Speak not evil one of another, brethren. He that speaketh evil of his brother, and judgeth his brother, speaketh evil of the law, and judgeth the law: but if thou judge the law, thou art not a doer of the law, but a judge.

12 There is one lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy: who art thou that judgest another? James 4:11-12

Listen to how he started – Brethren, brethren! We now understand who brethren are. Those same people who have been redeemed by the precious blood of Jesus Christ. Those members of the family fold of God of which you are one of them. If you truly love them, it is not a love of you do this, I contribute the other. If the love of Jesus Christ is truly planted in your heart, you should not talk evil about them.

11 Speak not evil one of another, brethren. He that speaketh evil of his brother, and judgeth his brother, speaketh evil of the law, and judgeth the law: but if thou judge the law, thou art not a doer of the law, but a judge.

Do you not recognize that brother, he is your own brother, you were born of the same father, and God is your father. Jesus is your elder brother. Do you not recognize that sister, who you are speaking evil off, who you are talking about evil off, do you not realize she is your sister, you belong to the same brother, and Jesus is your senior brother? He said whosoever speaketh evil of his brother, is judging the law, can you see anybody who is judging the bible and still stands? None. Can you see anybody casting stone into his own house? None. If you do that you want to destroy and spoil that house, therefore if you are speaking evil of your brother, if you speaking ill of him, all the time without stopping, even when you are admonished, you kept on speaking ill of him, you are throwing stones to your own house.

12 There is one lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy: who art thou that judgest another?

Who is the lawgiver and that is able to save and to destroy? That person is Jesus Christ, so who are you that judgest another? Let us look at Psalm 101:5

5 Whoso privily slandereth his neighbour, him will I cut off: him that hath an high look and a proud heart will not I suffer. Psalm 101:5

May the Lord not cut you off. The word says that whoso privily slandereth his neighbour, God will cut him off. The fold in which we are is a holy gathering, it is a perfect fold, the family to which we belong is a very holy one. Nobody can hurt you in here and get away with it, for whosoever that hurt you, had hurt your senior brother who is Jesus Christ. Whosoever that hurt you had hurt the Lord God who is the overall father of us.

16 But unto the wicked God saith, What hast thou to do to declare my statutes, or that thou shouldest take my covenant in thy mouth? Psalm 50:16

Let us start from the end of this verse. Well, why do you testify that Jesus Christ had saved me, sanctified and baptized me with the Holy Ghost and fire and he has even healed me, and yet speak evil of your brother. That his holy word, why do you put it in your mouth, which his holy attitude and righteousness given unto you, and why do you proclaim it? God does not regard you as a child of God anymore, because of the way you are speaking evil of your brother.

17 Seeing thou hatest instruction, and castest my words behind thee. Psalm 50:17

Will you say you have not heard of this before? You never knew this before? That it is not good to speak ill of a brother? Particularly your neighbour, those who belong to the family of God, that you should not speak evil of them.

20 Thou sittest and speakest against thy brother; thou slanderest thine own mother's son. Psalm 50:20

Listen to what he says, thou sittest and speakest against thy brother, against thy sister, against Br John and Sis Esther. He did not refer to those who are outside; thou slanderset thine own mother's son. Some people have earmarked some certain people and continue to speak evil of them. They pick on the ushers, they say they are very bad, just terrible, they also earmarked some workers and say they are just intolerable, who are you referring to? Your brother and sister in the Lord? We are regarding to this holy gathering? Such people may refer to the interpreter - Adegboye for example and speak evil of him and say things that he had not done. Something you are not sure about, they may say that he has a second wife at Akure, as far as I am concern, I will not take that information, I will not accept it from anybody, because I know his wife – Funmilayo and he will not do such a thing. However from your own point of view, you have accepted it and speaking evil of your brother particularly of things that you are not sure of. That one that has not received a reproach against his neighbour. Who is thy neighbour? It is your brother, it is your sister. Some people who do not stand firmly in the faith, the mixt

multitude, they bring this type of evil information to you and making a reproach against your own brother and you accepted it particularly against those who do not stand firmly – brother to brother, speaking ill of one another. May we not find fire in the well as it were, you do not know the mistake he had committed, you do not know the sin he had gone into, and if he had done these, can you redeem him or can you discover him. Did you not hear the reference that was made during the review of the Sunday school lesson this morning, it stated that if he had fallen completely, God will not cast him out. Someone who had not been cast out by God, you are casting him out with your own words. We want our own stand to be clear, we take the stand of Jesus. One of the names of Jesus is that He is a friend of sinner. If I see any of the brothers or sisters that have gone into sin, who has fallen, - is that new that we have not heard before, but what I do is that they are my friend, I will invite them, I will talk to them, I will advise them, I will pray with them and pray for them. Such people God regards as someone who had fallen, but God has not cast, but God said he will raise him up. According to the adage, the calabash of last year and all the vessels at home bought many years ago are the treasures of the home. The foundation of this church was laid in 1972. Did all the furniture we have in this church arrive in 1972? The vessels of last year are the treasures of the home. If we say that one has got old or broken and therefore throw it out, and another one has become obsolete, we will send it out, how then can we have the treasure in the home? God is saying that if he shall mark iniquity, who is able to stand, somebody that has not been marked by God, that is the one you are casting out with your own statement. We should be watchful.

21 These things hast thou done, and I kept silence; thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thyself: but I will reprove thee, and set them in order before thine eyes. Psalm 50:21

This is the family fold of God and children of God are in this fold. When you start to make a reproach against your brother or your sister, God stands aloof and he is looking at you as you were pointing a reproaching finger at a brother or sister, when you do that you must understand that you are doing it against our senior brother who is Jesus Christ, you are doing it against God who is our overall father and God is looking at you watching you. It is true that you are standing today, it is very true, but do you know what will befall you tomorrow?

The proof by which we know that you love the brethren:

13 Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumblingblock or an occasion to fall in his brother's way. Romans 14:13

Do you hear that my dear brother? Do you hear that my dear Sister? It states that we should not put any stumbling block in the way of a brother or a sister. When I was reading the word of God during the week, God had put a terrible judgement on someone who puts a stumbling block on the way of a blind man. You realize that this man is blind and you went and put a stumbling block in his way, and he came across it and fell. God is putting a very severe punishment on such a person. As someone belonging to the family fold of God as a brother or a sister, we should not put any stumbling block or anything that causes offence in the way of a brother or a sister, you realize that if you put that thing on his way, he is definitely going to fall, we must not do that. Do you not know the stand of the church?

19 God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good? Numbers 23:19

20 Behold, I have received commandment to bless: and he hath blessed; and I cannot reverse it. Numbers 23:20

God had established this church so that he may bless people. To be a blessing to the people. Is there anyone who had received any blessing from God? Is there anyone who had received a blessing from God since he came to this church? Please do not lie, please do not raise your hand because your neighbour or friend raises his hand. That is what God want to do in this church. God had established this church so that he could bless the world. God had established this church so that he can rescue the perishing. God had ordained this church so that those who are going to commit suicide would hear the good tidings and thereby be saved. God had established this church so that he could bless the pauper so that he could be rich. God had established this church so that people who had been bed ridden, those people who had spent all what they had to the physicians and to the herbalists, so that they can come to the house of God and be healed. And as they stepped into the door of the church, God will lay hands on them and healed them. What God wants to do for us, once he had established us for is that these signs

shall follow them that believe, in my name shall they cast out devils, they shall speak with new tongue, they shall lay hands on the sick and they shall be healed. Do you want us to lay hands on the sick, and the sick will not received healing? He says these signs shall follow those who believe, in my name shall they cast out devils, they shall speak with new tongue, they shall take up serpent, and if they take anything deadly, it shall not hurt them. They shall lay hands on the sick and they shall recover, and he places another blessing on over and on top of these, he said that nothing shall be impossible for you. We do not want to loose that power, we want that power to be in this gathering.

Br Mohashi from Zimbabwe, many of us know him he had spent a lot of time with us, his wife is lame. What happened to her? She was training to be a nurse, and her eyes could not read the blackboard in the class, so she went to the physician, and she was injected, though she could not see but she became lame. You who believed in physician, it is up to you. I pity you. They cannot diagnose what is wrong with you, only God knows what is wrong with you. She became lame, she could not complete her studies, within a short time she was sent out of the institution, within a short time she was rejected by her parents and family. She was a spinster, herself and Br Mohashi had agreed to marry each other. She was in this terrible position, she heard about the gospel, she heard the sound doctrine, she believed in Jesus Christ, not a mental acceptance, she believed that Jesus Christ was the only one who could save her. As the sermon was going on, God told her that Violet stand up, she was pondering it in her heart, and God told her again Violet stand up, and she stood up. And she was walking, but that was not the miracle, God healed her. The wonderful miracle that happened was that Br Mohashi met sister Violet again. Sister Violet preached the sound doctrine to him, within a short time, he himself got saved. And he decided that if you are worse than this, I will marry you. To a great surprise, I saw them with my two eyes, the first child they had was big bouncing baby, do you know the name of the baby – Sign. That these signs shall follow those that believed. When God healed her, initially she could not walk properly, she was walking on crutches, and continued to carry out household work. When we visited the country recently, that sister Violet has had seven issues. It said would God say something and not do it? People knows that God is doing good to this church. We have mix multitude in this church and they know that God is blessing this church. Mention the name of Apostolic Faith anywhere, we are known. May God deliver you from the spirit of Balaam. Balaam was telling Balak, that God was going to bless this people, and he would not change it. God had promised to bless this church and he continue to bless, a sinner will come here and will have repentance, a sick person will come here and will be healed. A pregnant women will deliver safely. The barren women will open their wombs. I want to tell you that we have unemployment in the country, a lot of it, a very great percentage, but God had promised us that no good thing shall be withdrawn from those who love God. You, my dear friend who is unemployed, you will not die of hunger in this church, and want to assure you of that. Some people say that the great honour is making Balaam to be annoyed. Balaam was annoyed of the honour of the children of Israel. Balaam who is a man, Balaam who is a woman, and junior or little one Balaam, Balaam the adult, they are just here, they are very much annoyed with what God is doing here, they are not happy, why? Balaam said he had cursed, but the curse had no effect. He said he had used something that draws the heart, what do we call it? If I use it on a brother, he will just start to tremble, he will be afraid, and he had applied that on the children of Israel, but it was not effective. He said he had practised witchcraft abundantly but it could not catch them. Because as soon as he went there and see the blood of Jesus, he would not be able to go across. Hence Balaam was terribly annoyed. He said he would put a stumbling block on their way. Do not forget the admonition we have been given earlier on we should not put any stumbling block or anything that causes offence on the way of our brother or sister. Balaam was just giving the blessings, but he was not saying them wholeheartedly. He went to the Moabites the people of Balak, he said he would put things that would cause offence on their way, he would bring problems, what are the problems, what is the stumbling block? He would bring sin to come into their lives. Then if I curse them it would be efficacious, witches and wizards can afflict them, the evil doers will afflict them, the fears that confronted them would come back and they would be trembling. When sin comes in, then sleep disappears, when sin comes in, their blood would become to be hot and they would have no peace. Balak said how would you carry it out? He would do it. May you not be an instrument in the hands of Balaam, may you not be an instrument in the hands of Satan, to be a stumbling block to anyone in this church. Jesus said it was better that the person was not born. Anyone that makes anyone even the smallest to stumble and fall, it is better he was not born. Balaam had worked secretly, he had put stumbling block on the way of the Israelites.

¹ And Israel abode in Shittim, and the people began to commit whoredom with the daughters of Moab.

² And they called the people unto the sacrifices of their gods: and the people did eat, and bowed down to their gods.

³ And Israel joined himself unto Baalpeor: and the anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel.

4 And the LORD said unto Moses, Take all the heads of the people, and hang them up before the LORD against the sun, that the fierce anger of the LORD may be turned away from Israel. 5 And Moses said unto the judges of Israel, Slay ye every one his men that were joined unto Baalpeor. Numbers 25:1-5

What was the sin of Baalpeor? It was the sin of whoredom, it was the sin of adultery. Balaam said that was the only way by which he could get them. That was the only way that they could be humiliated. That was the only way to reduce the power of God in them. You should send pretty girls onto them! You should be watchful. You should be watchful as a young girl if you are the one that is causing offences to the people of God by your whoredom, by your adultery, by your fornication, remember what the Lord had said, a great punishment is awaiting you. He said that it was better that you were not born, he said a big heavy stone should be tied on your neck and be thrown into the midst of the nation. If the Lord mark iniquity who shall stand, but forgiveness rest with the Lord. God is faithful, God can hide secrets. We can make mistakes, God will cover up our mistakes if we surrender to God, and God will renew us, he will rebuild us, and that evil habits will be turned into a bad odour to us. We will live a life of victory and holiness. But the attitude of people is that if God is going to arrest the priest, it will not be in the presence of children. Some people think that others do not know how to do it, they do not know how to go about it.

6 And, behold, one of the children of Israel came and brought unto his brethren a Midianitish woman in the sight of Moses, and in the sight of all the congregation of the children of Israel, who were weeping before the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. Numbers 25:6

Do you know this place, this is a tabernacle, a holy tabernacle, this holy ground is a holy tabernacle of holy people. It is a tabernacle where the people of God gather. This sin of Baalpeor do not bring it in within. The sin of Baalpeor do not bring it in. It had wrought terrible things to some people. It has really humiliated a lot of people. Why do you block your ears to the warnings of God, like this people had done, in the tabernacle in the vineyard of God, in the household of God. One of the children of Israel took one of the Midianitish girl to the tabernacle.

7 And when Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, saw it, he rose up from among the congregation, and took a javelin in his hand; 8 And he went after the man of Israel into the tent, and thrust both of them through, the man of Israel, and the woman through her belly. So the plague was stayed from the children of Israel. Numbers 25:7-8

We usually say that those who commit offences usually multiply offences. Do you think that was the first time. He had been doing and he said who will arrest me. They are in the church now, nobody is around, let us do what we want to do, may God raise Phinehas, the princes of God, the people who are Phinehas, who are going to bring the sword of God, do not turn the house of God to the valley of Baalpeor.

Listen:

***16 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,
17 Vex the Midianites, and smite them: Numbers 25:16-17***

Expect the judgment of God

18 For they vex you with their wives, wherewith they have beguiled you in the matter of Peor, and in the matter of Cozbi, the daughter of a prince of Midian, their sister, which was slain in the day of the plague for Peor's sake. Numbers 25:18

That was in the tabernacle of the children of Israel. That was in their tents, where God's eyes were clearly opened unto. God's eyes are on this campground, they are in this tabernacle, they are underneath where you put your instrument. They are in the kitchen, they are in the powerhouse, they are in the mechanical workshop, they are in the carpentry workshop, the eyes of God are in the Cabins, God is going to raise Phinehas who are going to speak the truth, and they pierce you, because they do not want the judgment of God to come unto you. I do not want

God to trouble you. God told Moses to trouble the Midianites, because they dealt with the Israelite deceitfully, they pushed them to sin and the remove the power of God from their life they removed the blessings of God from them.

³² Give none offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of God:

Are you listening,

³³ Even as I please all men in all things, not seeking mine own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved. 1 Corinthians 10:32-33

Continue to expect God. God told Moses to trouble the Midianites. But I want you to wait for God for forgiveness and mercy. Anyone that defiles this compound, should be expecting God for trouble, you should be waiting for God for trouble, anyone that defiles this compound should be waiting for God for trouble. Do you hear that, you young man, do you hear that you young sister. You come to team, you come to this campground, it is God's campground, house of God, so be careful, so that God will not trouble you as he troubled the Midianites.