



THE NIGERIAN BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
P. M. B 4008, OGBOMOSO, NIGERIA
DEVOTIONAL CHARGE AT THE FACULTY/SENIOR
ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF RETREAT: “RELATIONSHIP FOR
EMPOWERMENT”
(Luke 24:49; Acts 1:8)

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Introduction

We are together again to have another mountain top experience to sharpen our spiritual and professional skills for improved performance at our various duty posts. A year ago, our theme was “divine expectation.” We are building on that theme this year as we focus on the theme “Relationship for Empowerment.” Our theme texts are Lk. 24:49 “I am going to send you what my Father has promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high” & Acts 1:8 “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” Our devotional thought focuses on the two key terms in our theme “Relationship” and “Empowerment.” This devotional thought will clarify these concepts briefly.

Relationship as Grafting into the Source

The concept of relationship is broad but we hereby concern ourselves with the divine-human relationship with specific focus on the grafting experience between Jesus the vine and those who have truly confessed Him as their Saviour and Lord as branches. When it comes to relationship with God, the depth is so unfathomable that it is the grace and mercy of God by the Holy Spirit that expands our hearts to perceive the meaning intelligibly. Looking at our biblical references, a relationship with God that will be beneficial to God’s children must take note of some requirements.

1. Tarrying is required - “...but stay...” (Lk. 24:49b). The preposition “**but**” matters here because it plays a very important role of demarcating the boundary between the promised gift and the receivers till the receivers’ faith, patience and seriousness have been tried, tested and trusted. This is because things gotten cheaply are mostly treated with less seriousness.

2. Location matters – “...in the city...” (Lk. 24:49b). The location identified here is based on the love of Jesus who was and is all-knowing that fake and destructive gifts or powers may present themselves to the children of God from any angle. The disciples were instructed to wait at a location and they did, praising God in the temple (Lk. 24:53).
3. Timing is important – “**until** you have been clothed with power from on high” (Lk. 24:49b); “...**when** the Holy Spirit comes on you...” (Acts 1:8). Timing is very important when God plans to carry out His intention. For instance, we would recall the story of the battle David had with the Philistines and God asked him not to go ahead until he heard the sound of marching in the tops of the balsam trees (2 Sam. 5:22-25). Waiting to act at the right time created confusion in the camp of the enemy. Though we always tend to be impatient about our expectations from God, God uses the waiting period to put things in order in the spiritual realm before they appear in the physical.

Empowerment as Spiritual and Skill Sharpening

The eternal benefit of a relationship with Jesus is to receive power. The power is to equip believers in all ramifications of life for all responsibilities. The empowerment is for spiritual growth and skill sharpening. There are some requirements to meet if believers will receive the true power and use it for the divine purpose.

1. Identifying the source of the power is a necessity – “**I am** going to send you what my Father has promised” (Lk. 24:49a). This is the only true and reliable source of power. It is direct empowerment as it does not require incision, concoction or incantation. This is the ‘I am’ who is the way, the truth, and the life. He is the same ‘I am’ who is the bread of life. He is the ‘I am’ who is the alpha and omega. He is the ‘I am’ who is the same always.
2. Ascertaining the purpose is essential - “... and you will be my **witnesses**...” (Acts 1:8c). The empowerment is meant for kingdom service. When we are empowered, we are to go into the world and make a difference in word and action. We are to powerfully bear witness to the Saviour who was born, who suffered, was crucified, who died, was buried, who resurrected, ascended, and is coming back to judge the world.
3. Personalizing the experience is important – “Until **You** ...” (Lk. 24:49)

Conclusion

A Christian life is an aberration if it is without power and this power must have the Holy Spirit as its source. Any other power is fake and will surely lead to destruction. Every Christian should desire empowerment by the Holy Spirit. The rule of the game of empowerment is to have relationship with Jesus through salvation experience and the in-filling and indwelling of the Holy Spirit. We are to deploy the power wherever we find ourselves like a thermostat influences its environment by witnessing to Jesus Christ. When we do this, God the Father will be glorified, Jesus will be happy with us, and the Holy Spirit will continue to teach us all things.