**Cross And Crown Christian Outreach**

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**He Did Not Leave You Hopeless.**

**For there is hope of a tree, if it be cut down, that it will sprout again, and that the tender branch thereof will not cease. -** Job 14:7 KJV.

Job, a man whom the Bible described in the biblical book named after him, as being wealthy, god fearing and righteous was never in doubt as to the negative effect that sin had on the relationship between man and the Almighty God. That was why he devoted precious time doing all he could to ensure that sacrifices were made to appease Him with regards to both known and unknown transgressions of not only himself but his entire family – Job 1:1-5. This his pro-active actions were however not sufficient to stop him from experiencing the effect of what seemed like a wager between the Almighty God and Satan – Job 1:6-12. It then dawned on him that nothing he could do would make him perfect and thus avoid the repercussion of transgressing the laws of God, at least that is what he thought, so when he found himself in the situation which he believes only a transgressor could find himself, he in what seemed like a last ditch attempt to avoid the wrath of God wondered why the Lord was setting so high a standard for man to meet.

In one of the several reactions during his trial period, he reminded the Lord that man who was a product of a sinful woman was destined to have a short life span which is full of trouble. He wondered how the Lord expected to bring out a perfect creation from an imperfect one, as he was sure that such expectation remains an unachievable one. He therefore wondered why the Lord will continue to assess and judge man on a standard that can never be met by man considering the origin of his creation and birth – Job 14:1-4, Psa. 51:5.

With this argument and the short lifespan that man is destined to spend on earth, Job pleaded that the Almighty God lowers His expectation from man so that man can at least enjoy the short lifespan that has been allocated to him by this same God instead of punishing him for what seems like unavoidable acts, considering the foundation of his creation – Job. 14:6.

Comparing the case of man with trees, he made it clear that no matter how dead a tree may be, there is hope for it once any of its roots touches water unlike the case of man who, once dead, just gives up the ghost and the journey of life ends instantly.

Hmmmm. Job must have been so convinced about his argument based on his failed attempt to meet the standard of God, but his argument does throw up some curious points for the believer then and now. Although, unknown to Job, what he was experiencing was not a consequence of his transgressions and so his reaction may not be the justified on this occasion, it is still important to address some issues raised by Job.

1. Is it really true that the Almighty God has set standards that are unachievable by man? Has He actually left man hopeless? – Job 14:1-4.
2. Is it true that man does not have any hope of resurrection after departing this realm in comparison to trees as argued by Job? – Job. 14:7-10.

Job’s argument, presented in his frustration, portrays the Almighty God as an unfair God. The god who expects superhuman actions from ordinary men and that unfortunately seems to be the stand of many Christians today who believe that it is impossible to meet the expectation of the Lord with regards to perfect living. They therefore either reject everything that is Christianity in frustration and become anti-Christian or they keep trying to meet spiritual standards using human efforts. The result of both acts is failure to meet divine standards and attain the ultimate objective of the Almighty God to restore man to his Garden of Eden state.

What needs to be made clear is that even during Job’s time on earth, the Almighty God acknowledged the sinful nature of man and so prescribed several ordinances to save man from the consequences of sin – Gen. 6:1-3; Lev. 1:1-27:34. Those acts seemed ineffective, not because a proper adherence to their practice did not produce the divinely expected result, but because it was simply impossible for man to steer clear of sin – Rom. 7:15-20. It was always a repetitive cycle of sin-sanctification-sin. Job’s argument in his own case may have been excusable on the premise of ignorance of what was transpiring in the spiritual realm but believers of his time could not hinge on such arguments as the Almighty God has always left an open and effective door for everyone that desired to return. It was definitely not a hopeless case for the people then but the case of ignorance and failed attempt at restoration through acts of self-righteousness.

The path to perfection has even been made easier for the Christian today. The Almighty God seeing that it was simply difficult to separate man from sin, which remained the barrier between man and God decided to offer on behalf of man the supreme sacrifice for sin by offering His only begotten as a lamb for the sacrifice – Jn. 3:16. All that was then necessary was for all those who had died spiritually because of sin to accept this Lamb of God as Lord and Saviour, and they will automatically be transformed and brought back to life. This act was not supposed to be effected in the life after life only but actually from this realm of existence. That simple act which gave all such people power to be called children of God ensured that such people were no longer bound by those sinful acts which were due to the desires of the flesh but were to enjoy the freedom that became available through the blood that was shed on Calvary – Jn. 1:12; Rom. 8:15. It is not unusual to have Christians today who are so good at wanting to claim total adherence to the instructions of God and wanting to justify their relationship with God based on self righteousness – Isa. 64:4-9. Such people will only be living in self deceit and will soon experience frustration in their Christian life. This new status is not by works but by Grace – Gal. 2:16; Rom. 3:20. It is indeed by Grace that the true Christian is saved and given hope of a new life. Sin may have produced death, not only of the spiritual life but also every success that man may have achieved, and may even have left man hopeless, but the simple step of acknowledging Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour restores life, not only to the soul, but also to every dead aspect of the life of such people. Stop living in hopelessness and frustration. Stop trying to justify yourself by your personal actions as it will never be sufficient to make you acceptable to Him. Enjoy the life of Grace that is in Christ Jesus as that is the Hope that the Almighty God gave to mankind. May our life not be that of hopelessness and frustration in Jesus name. Amen.