

GREEN PASTURES

DANIEL 11:32

*...but the people that do know
their God shall be strong, and do
exploits*

A CHRISTIAN YOUNG ADULTS MAGAZINE



Seasons Greetings

BY PASTOR FEMI OLAWALE

The Christmas season for some is usually a time of beauty and togetherness, giving and receiving of gifts, laughter and a time of rest. For some it's a season filled with stress and anxiety or painful memories as they experience their first or another Christmas season without a loved one.

This Christmas marks a remarkable one. One in which we are forced to seek joy instead of happiness, peace instead of just lack of conflict and hope where there seems to be none in the horizon.

I rejoice with you, because you have made it thus far! I celebrate your steadfastness and your commitment to embrace hope in times like this. It is indeed a Merry Christmas because we know that God became man and lived among us. He laid down His life and resurrected on the third day - this we have as an everlasting hope. It's a season of thankfulness as we intentionally count our blessings. Yes, your ability to read through this article is one of many reasons to be thankful!



I urge you to consciously take time this season to reflect on the true meaning of Christmas. While away from the hustle and bustle that may distract from the essence of the celebration, spend time appreciating the love God has for mankind.

Make a fresh commitment to understand how wide, how long, how high and how deep Christ's love for you is. (**Ephesians 3:18**)

Make a renewed decision to submit to the Lordship of Christ and begin to enjoy the benefits of having the Almighty God as your Lord this season and beyond. Then take the next step and share this love with your sphere of influence.

Merry Christmas to you and yours!



The Christ in Christmas

BY PASTOR NIYI ADEJUGBAGBE

It is that time of the year again to celebrate the gift of God to us. More than two thousand years ago, history was made in Bethlehem of Judea, when in a manger was born unto mankind by a Virgin, God's only begotten Son – Jesus Christ. His birth was a game changer to mankind as He was born to fulfil and establish the heartbeat of God to reunite man to God and restore man's stolen glory and authority through His birth, death and resurrection.

"For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace." Isa. 9:6. As we celebrate God's faithfulness this season, it is important we remember that no Christmas celebration is complete without Christ.



Jesus was born a sacrificial lamb to atone for the sins of man. His birth marked the beginning of Hope restoration to man, deliverance from the slave master of sin and access once again to Man's stolen authority by the devil.

This new beginning which was completed through His death has now delivered us from being alien to the citizenship of heaven.

"So now you Gentiles are no longer strangers and foreigners. You are citizens along with all of God's holy people. You are members of God's family. Together, we are his house, built on the foundation of the apostles and the prophets. And the cornerstone is Christ Jesus himself." Eph. 2:19-20.



As we reflect on the life and ministry of the Lord Jesus this season, let us endeavor to share the good news with someone.

The story of Christmas is a story of love, hope, the best exchange of gift to man and of eternal glory that would someday be revealed to those who believe and trust in God through Christ Jesus.

'For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.'

John 3:16-17.



God's love for us is the Christ in Christmas which has restored those who trust and believe in God through this gift to the original blueprint and God's blessings in the beginning.

"Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth. Then God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth." Gen 1:26,28.



Finally, I want to appreciate the grace of God upon your life and for sparing your life and enabling you to celebrate this Christmas.

A lot happened in the year 2020 but despite all that happened, the Lord was faithful to His promises concerning you. I want you to be expectant of greater glory in 2021.

I wish you a Merry Christmas and a prosperous year 2021. Shalom!





They That Know Their God

BY ADETOMIWA ODETOYINBO

As a young believer, one verse that I heard quite often which had an impression on me was Daniel 11:32 “but the people that do know their God shall be strong and do exploits.” Probably because the idea of being “strong” in all spheres of life was and is appealing to me. This verse depicts a person who is not only strong, but also a doer. It brings a powerful realization that the **knowledge of God** births two things: **strength- which is knowledge** (a man of knowledge increaseth strength Proverbs 24:5) and ability to obey this knowledge (James 1:22).

In Daniel 11, we see a continuous war of dominion between two kingdoms (verses 3 -5), with intelligences and allegiances being formed in the process (verses 6, 13 & 15). In verses 28-29, it becomes clear that **this war is between the Kingdom of the holy covenant and those that despise this Kingdom: the kingdom of darkness.**



From here, we observe verse 32, which says “they that **KNOW** their God shall be strong.” Strong against what? Strong against the enemy- the king of the opposing kingdom. One inevitable result of knowing God is overcoming our enemy, the devil, who has sworn to destroy the children of God. As revealed in verses 32 and 34, the devil’s way of attack is **flattery**. Strong’s Concordance (which translates bible verses from Hebrew to English) defines flattery as treachery and reduplication- an act of consistent deception. This is why we must watch and pray always, as the attack is not a one-time occurrence, but like a lion, he is consistently seeking who to devour.

So far, we have looked briefly at who is being attacked - **believers**, and how? by **flattery**. Let's now explore how not to fall prey to this attack. As revealed in verse 33 and 34, those that understand (the overcomers), will help many come into this understanding and although the overcomers will fall, they will be helped. This fall could be outward or obvious offences, as well as inward. Let's look at fall as 'a time of need' as reflected in Hebrews 4:16 - 'Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to **help** in time of need'. What inspires coming in boldly here is a strong, desperate desire to be helped- as Jacob cried: 'I will not let you go unless you bless me' (Genesis 32:26). This has to be the heart posture of every believer in order to overcome because having an arch enemy who is the king of deception, and having a deceitful heart (Jeremiah 17:9) leaves us with little or no hope for victory.

But thanks be to God, who has revealed in His word that they that know their God will overcome, and as John 17:3 puts it, 'this is life eternal, that they might know Thee, the only true God and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent.'



This is a spiritual knowing that can ONLY come about when the eyes of one's understanding has been enlightened by the Spirit (Ephesians 1:18), because our enemy is also a spirit who is able to work in men (Ephesians 2:2). It is a darkened understanding (Ephesians 4:17-18) that weakens us from seeing that spiritual understanding (riches).

Knowing and pursuing God is far more valuable than chasing after the physical, as far as the heavens are from the earth. We must be Christians who desire to **KNOW** God from the heart, and not for the things we can get from Him.

The emphasis here is in realizing that every believer, no matter the level of their understanding, cannot overcome evil without supernatural or spiritual help. This help through spiritual understanding comes about when Christ is revealed through faith.

A man starts to come into revelation of Christ by faith when a realization begins to hit the heart through the scriptures that what needs to be saved is unseen. It is the soul- 'receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls' 1 Peter 1:9.

With faith defined as the evidence of things not seen, it implies that when work is being done in the unseen (in this case, our soul), it means the scripture is being revealed by faith.

I pray that we find grace to follow after, and to come into all the fullness of the knowledge of God, unto the saving of our souls, through Christ, Amen.

Process

BY SOREFUNMI OLAWALE



As you read this, I encourage you to ask the Holy Spirit to grant you understanding.

I believe it was inspired by him, and trust you will be blessed by it.

"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. And God said, Let there be light: and there was light."

Gen. 1:1-3, KJV.

God is light and in him is no darkness at all [See 1 John 1:5]. When God comes into a place, the first thing he does is to give light because he cannot dwell in darkness. Looking at the first three verses of Genesis 1, we catch a glimpse into how God prepares a place for his coming. In verse 2, we see the state of the earth before any work was done in it. The first person of the Godhead that we are introduced to after verse 1 is the Spirit of God, and we see that he moved upon the face of the waters. I am reminded of Prov. 20:27 which says that "The spirit of man is the candle of the LORD, searching all the inward parts of the belly." The term 'searching' stands out to me in particular, and perhaps the Spirit of God – who searches all things even the deep things of God according to 1 Cor. 2:10 – was searching, and scanning to assess the state of things.



Moving on to verse 3, we are inconspicuously introduced to another person in the Godhead – the Word [refer to 'God said...']. Throughout the rest of the chapter, we see an interaction between God the Father and the Word in creation. This interaction culminates in the creation of the first man, Adam [Gen 1:26- "Let US..."]. From here, we'll jump over to Isaiah.

"Thus saith the LORD, The heaven is my throne and the earth is my footstool: where is the house that ye build unto me? And where is the place of my rest. For all those things hath mine hand made, and all those things have been, saith the LORD: but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word."

Isa. 66:1-2, KJV.



Here, God refers to those things which he made in Genesis almost with disdain, as though it were not sufficient for his purpose. In verse 1 of Isaiah 66, we see that God is looking for a house and a place for his rest. He refers to the heaven as his throne, as in where he sits, and from where he rules, as does a King.

Then he refers to the earth as his footstool, a place under God's feet. We see here that God does not consider either 'heaven' or 'earth' as his place of rest, as he still makes inquiries about his house and place of rest after making mention of them. In verse 2, he tells us just what he is looking for, what he considers a house and a place of his rest: A Man. Not just any man, but a man that is poor and of a contrite spirit. Now let's turn over to Titus.

"For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age, looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself His own special people, zealous for good works."
Tit. 2:11-14, NKJV.

In this passage, what I see is a process. The bible talks about Jesus being full of grace and truth. When we received Christ, we received access to grace to become the man that God is looking for [John 1:12]. God is looking to dwell in man, but he cannot dwell in a dark place. So this passage in Titus gives us a view of what Christ [the repository of grace] came to do. Being full of grace, as we draw near to him, the grace that is in him will teach us to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and show us how to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present age (or present world per KJV). Through this process, we are prepared and purified for God as "His own special people." Let's hop back to Psalms ...

"When Israel went out of Egypt, the house of Jacob from a people of strange language; Judah was his sanctuary, and Israel his dominion."

Ps. 114:1-2

"For I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land. Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you."

Ezek. 36:24-25.

Here we see more process – sanctification. Next, we'll run over to John ...

"Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man loves me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him."
John 14:23.

Earlier, we saw that as grace comes, it teaches us and instructs us on how to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world. As we learn from, and obey that which grace teaches, which comes through Jesus Christ [John 1:17], Jesus said he and his Father will love us and will come and make an abode with us! As we have seen through the many scriptures laid out earlier, God desires to abide in us. He longs to fellowship with us, but because he is holy, he cannot behold iniquity. There is a work that Christ will do in us if we obey him, that will prepare us as a place where God can dwell in, where he can rest. As we saw, God will come first through his Holy Spirit, who will guide us and lead us into all truth [John 16:13]. As we follow the Spirit's leading and obey his instructions, light will illuminate our dark places and make it a place where God can come and find rest.

I pray that God will guide and instruct us in the way that we should go, until we are changed into that honorable vessel where He will be pleased to rest, just as it was with Jesus [Romans 8:29], in Jesus' name, Amen!

BENSON & ADE

EPHESIANS 2:10
NEW LIVING TRANSLATION

FOR WE ARE GOD'S MASTERPIECE. HE HAS CREATED US
ANEW IN CHRIST JESUS, SO WE CAN DO THE GOOD THINGS
HE PLANNED FOR US LONG AGO.

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Strengthening the Immune System through Healthy Living

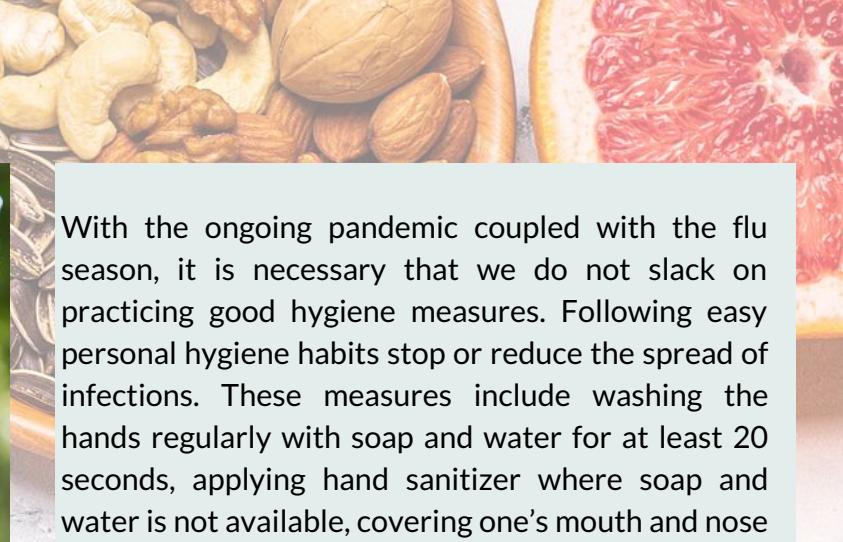


BY EDIDIONG EKANEM

The winter season is here, and in this part of the world this usually means the flu season too. Coupled with the flu, the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has greatly increased the importance of cultivating a healthy lifestyle to strengthen and maintain our immune system. The immune system is the body's natural line of defense against possibly harmful foreign bodies, also known as antigens. A strong immune system usually means resistance to falling ill frequently, consistent fatigue, and the ability for one's body to fight off infections such as common cold and the flu.

Regular intake of foods that are high in vitamins and minerals are natural ways to keep the immune system strong and healthy. Vitamins and minerals are found naturally in a wide variety of fruits and vegetables. Foods such as oranges, tangerines, bananas, spinach, kale, among others, are common and affordable fruits and vegetables in this part of the world that can be easily included in a regular diet. Eating a diet of foods high in vitamins and minerals can also be supplemented with daily intake of over the counter multivitamins in the specified doses.





Exercise is also a natural way to maintain the immune system. The recommended amount of exercise for an adult (19-64) is 150 minutes of moderate-intense aerobic exercise per week or 75 minutes of vigorous aerobic exercise per week. However, one does not need to have a gym membership to get in this amount of exercise. Exercises such as jogging or brisk walking are effective for maintaining a healthy lifestyle. As we enter the colder months, indoor exercises from the comfort of your home are good substitutes. There are numerous free videos of indoor exercises on various online platforms that can be used to stay active during this season. It is very important to avoid overexertion when following these exercises. Listening to your body and finding what works best for you is the key.

In addition, daily intake of water in sufficient amounts is vital in maintaining a healthy lifestyle. It is generally recommended to drink a minimum of 2 liters of water daily. Keeping up this minimum intake daily can be difficult, so one can monitor their water intake by using a calibrated container such as a water bottle. It is also good practice to minimize intake of liquids high in sugar such as processed juices and soft drinks.

These liquids do not keep the body hydrated for long periods and could contribute to the development of long-term diseases like type 2 diabetes and heart disease.



With the ongoing pandemic coupled with the flu season, it is necessary that we do not slack on practicing good hygiene measures. Following easy personal hygiene habits stop or reduce the spread of infections. These measures include washing the hands regularly with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, applying hand sanitizer where soap and water is not available, covering one's mouth and nose with a tissue when sneezing or coughing, or coughing into one's elbow rather than the hand. A good tip for when out and about is to always have pocket hand sanitizer, as access to soap and water may not always be possible. Monitoring and following the government issued guidelines on physical distancing is also important, as these guidelines are updated frequently to match the evolving situation.



In conclusion, it is essential to remember that God is the giver of good health. Let us pray for ourselves and our brethren as the Apostle did in 3 John 1:2; 'Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth' [KJV]. Also, let us keep God's promise to us in Jeremiah 33:6 at heart, and pray for the healing of the land even in the midst of the pandemic; 'Nevertheless, I will bring health and healing to it; I will heal my people and will let them enjoy abundant peace and security' [NIV].

Shalom.



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Worship

BY DANIEL OJO



daniel_psalmist



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I was preparing for a live session a while ago, and in prayer I asked God "what would you want me to talk about?" "What is worship?", hours went by, and a still small voice whispered to me " That is Worship". I was like, sorry what? And the Holy Spirit whispered - " Asking me what to talk about is worship".

How important this is about Worship! Prov. 3:5-6 "Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths."

Out of so many definitions of worship, Worship to me is an act of putting God first, putting God in the scene.

Worship is more than singing, releasing songs or what we do outwardly. This is what brings him pleasure. Rev. 4:11 "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power; for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created." He is Worthy to receive all GLORY, HONOUR & POWER. How often we have taken all the glory, all honor and stood in place of Power ourselves! We were and are created for his pleasure, and a man or woman that seeks God's heart over anything else is a true worshipper!

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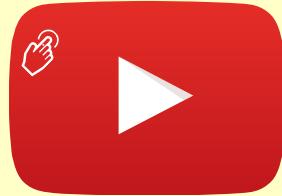
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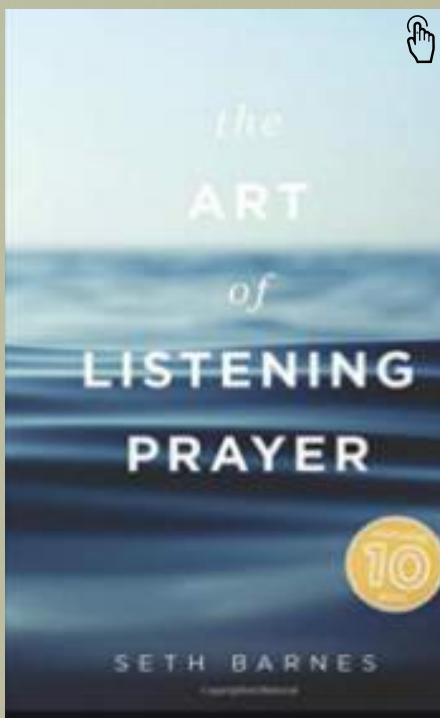
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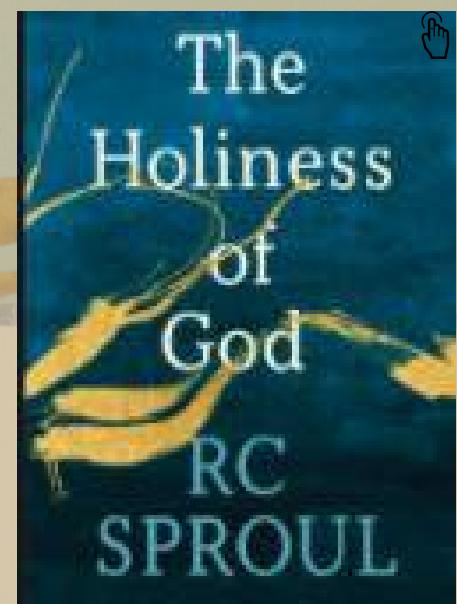
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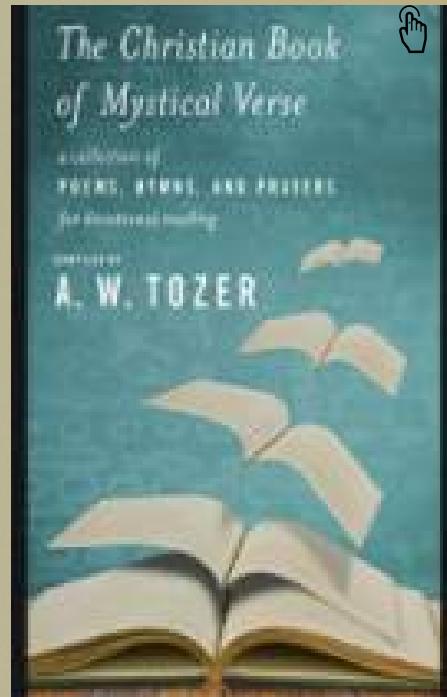
At a time when I had been seeking the Lord for growth, I stumbled upon this very practical and insightful book. Through each day, I've learned that communicating with God is two-way, and just as I can spend time talking to the Lord, I also need to take time to listen for His response."

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What a Wonder!

BY ANJOLAOLUWA LASISI



What a wonder we are called into,
A journey of faith, a walk in the realm of the unseen
(2 Timothy 4:7-8, Hebrews 11:1)
A relentless pursuit that ends in a gift that is of
eternal value (1 Timothy 6:12, James 1:12)
A baptism into a living hope that transcends time (1
Peter 1:3-5)
A fullness and completeness that is beyond measure
(Colossians 2:9-10)
Life unquantifiable, joy immeasurable, pleasures
unending (Psalm 16:11)
What an honor, what a privilege, what a blessing
Praise be to God who has made this possible!



God our Strength

BY TAIYE DAVIES



Walking through Life by our strength is tough
Doing countless good deeds by ourselves is never
enough
The flesh can initiate benign thoughts in your mind
that can lead to a path
Only to find out death looms around waiting to
show its wrath
Surely you feel downtrodden, weak, and scared
For having gone down that path instead
When all hope seems lost and worries set in
Christ our Saviour, Lord, friend, and kin
Will replace our burdens, fear, troubles, and
weights
With his everlasting love, strength, and grace
Causing all heavy loads to dissipate
A loving father that watches over His children
And protects them from the wicked likewise the
heathen
Will never leave us nor forsake us in our times of
need
For we are His sheep whom He has freed
From this world's deception of eternal life that
ends in pain, bitterness, and strife
God our Master and Healer who had made us
anew
He is truly our strength and song as Moses said in
Exodus 15:2 (KJV)

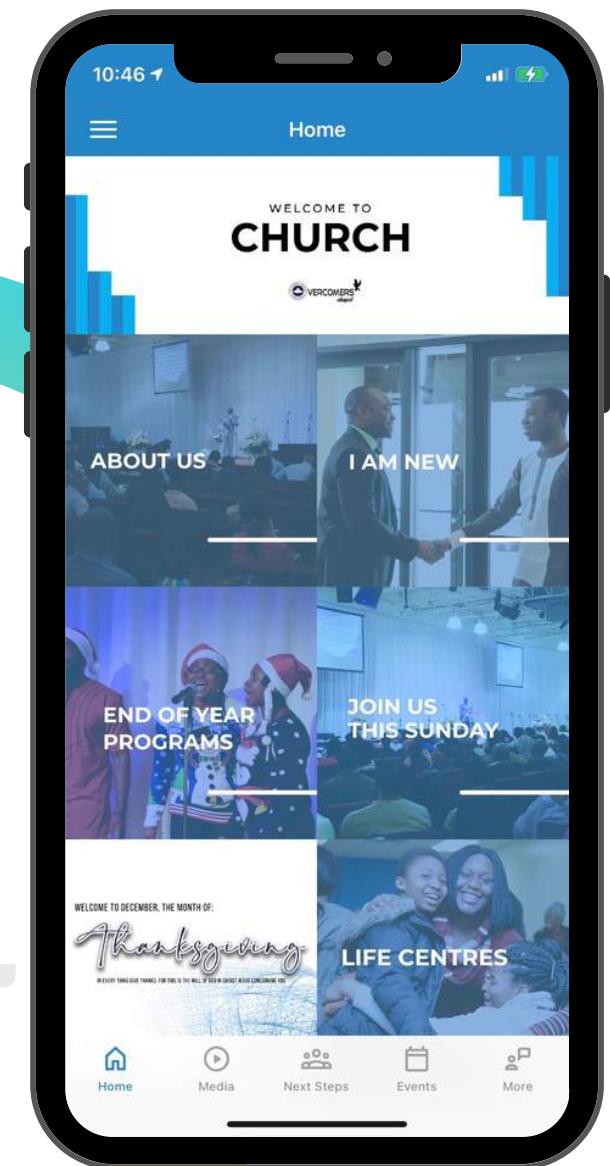
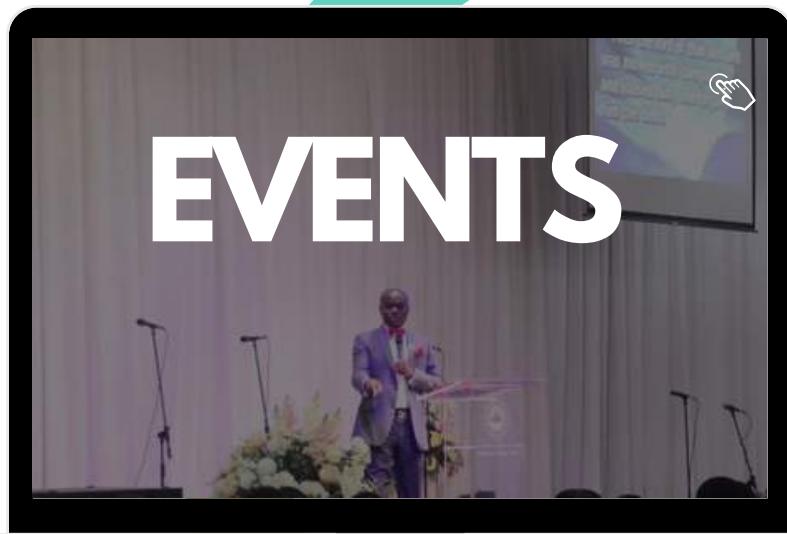
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