

Beyond Dead Ends

(An Excerpt from Rev Benjamin Adetutu Joshua's writings)

Principally every road leads somewhere. In our journey through life, we may be liable to experiences or challenges beyond our grasp.

This article is for those who have come to their end of devices and are considering throwing up the towel or wanting to give up as it were. Also for those contemplating suicide as an option to end life's struggle, or perhaps giving God an ultimatum to act and intervene. This article is for you. It is also for you who may not be experiencing any struggles or problem now but to embraces the fact that you may soon pass this 'road' which many have gone through victoriously, and even beyond.

To understand the concept behind: Life Beyond dead ends. You must come into terms with this fact that Christians more than any other group of people do and would continue to experience problems. Their 'dead end' experience ranges from the mundane trials and challenges to severe persecutions in their endeavours. Yet in all these things, the LORD is still in control and we are more than conquerors and are able to overcome.

Life's journey might currently be tough just like the 'road to Emmaus', where the road expresses shocks, surprises, confusion and disappointment. It may also be difficult to see the light at the end of the tunnel, or comprehend the situation as it presents itself. Even at such times, our Lord Jesus says '...learn of me, for my yoke is easy and my burden is light...'

Let me pause a moment and see if you can identify yourself with any one or more of these dead-end experiences. For instance there are some who go through this life road of indecisions: A mind set of confusion, can't decide or not sure of what is the right step to take. You may be one who cannot stop borrowing, and this road has caused you so many embarrassments; the banks have added a huge interest to your debts and threaten you with court summons. It may be you are on the run even when your creditors are not in pursuit, and you wonder when these struggles will ever end. Perhaps your case is that incessant temptation: The testing and those trials in life might have brought you to a cross roads, and you are now unsure whether to carry on or not as every formula and avenue tried by you does not seem to work.

May be your situation is somewhat different and is in the area of unreliability. The Christian road appears not to match your expectations. People you meet in your everyday seems to be untrustworthy you feel the Christians around you also do not meet the mark in this respect, and you wonder how to elate with them. At times it is the whole concepts surrounding relationships: All the while you are finding it increasingly difficult getting involved with anyone, and sometimes feel that you get along much more with unbelievers than those of the same faith. Then you wonder what is beyond this dead end?

Disappointment is another dead end scenario that people face. However much they try, or hard they work, a certain spirit of failures tends to loom over them, thereby overturning their resources and frustrating all their efforts. And then the question again is asked, 'Is there a way beyond these frustrations?'; These are more of dead ends I can highlight but these will suffice for now.

So the question remains, what lies behind these dead ends? Listed here are some answers I offer you to carry you through your dead end scenarios:

ENDURANCE: This divine word denotes continuance and constancy perseverance. In other words for anyone to go or live beyond dead ends, such must hold out and remain steadfast in that capacity. One must continue under such difficult circumstances to draw strength from the Lord. I advised that every believer must learn to endure in hostile, confusing and frustrating circumstances.

HOPE: Again beyond dead ends lies hope, a divine substance given to believers to enable them to trust God even when there seems not to be no lasting solutions to their daily struggles. We are told in the word of the living God that "hope does not disappoint...because the love of God has been poured into our hearts...." in no way does God abandon us in our circumstances for he himself sympathises with our infirmities, and having himself gone through untold agony, temptations and hurts beyond man's comprehensions. Thus our daily living must be characterised with hope as "long there is breath in you there is hope as well";

Now, only those who live in hope and believe that joy comes in the morning easily over comes their despondencies. However, what keeps anyone in hope is "faith"; the act to believe and trust in the midst of impossibilities. This becomes the proving evidence that God can do it for you even when there seems not to be light through the tunnel. In other words you cannot talk of hope without faith nor faith without hope, both have strong bond and are intertwined.

GRACE: I am aware that there is this well known definition of "grace" as "unmerited favour". I beg to differ as for me everything that God gives is well merited, i.e by reason of his death of Jesus Christ for our sins and hence, His love for us. Now grace is "merited" and not "unmerited". Therefore I define for you here that "Grace" is that divine substance too that energise and enable you to stand, established, rooted, unmovable and strong in the midst of all crisis in life. No wonder in the fierce agony of Paul the apostle, our Lord could say to him that my "grace" is sufficient for you! And I say amen to that. Grace becomes that which we must crave for, ask and receive freely. Never should we do anything in our crisis without waiting upon God for His grace. We should never look for short cuts to our problems but find grace. Then we shall receive help to go beyond dead ends and impossibilities.

PATIENCE: This factor produces character. Our daily experiences are supposed to build in us patience. A patient personality pays off. One thing this concept is that there are no time limit to patience. Each day what you and I need to leap over our dead ends is to exercise patience. Then you see the salvation of God in real action! And yet we must understand that impatient leaves us perspiring, confused, and robbed us of our clarity of purpose. Please exercise patience!

PRAYER: This is the "mountain mover". I have never seen anything that pushes aside difficulties in life like prayer. Healing, deliverance, and every form of spiritual blessings come only by virtue of prayer, and that is why to see beyond one's dead ends, you must pray more than you usually do - it called "pray without ceasing". I remember that encounter when Jesus has to say to his disciples that the deliverance at hand could only come about by prayer and fasting. It makes sense to say here that our troubles can only give way when we pray whilst believing. I said this because whoever is of double mind cannot obtain his break through from God.

WORD: The Bible offers God's promises that breathe fresh air of assurance, confidence and courage to overcome our troubles. Only if men put their trust in God's word, will they see break-through in their dead ends. God's word brings life in the midst of confusion and frustrations. It gives hope in all hopeless situations, and gives light in our darkest hour, and I assure you that we serve a God that is mindful of his own. God's word say "we do not serve a high priest who is not touched with our infirmities"; I find the Word of God most reliable to strengthen His people when we are cast down

THANKSGIVING: It may sound funny and unrealistic that I am suggesting to you here that you should praise God in your hopeless moment of dead ends and press on. Job in his dark moment could say: "though you slain me I shall yet praise you". Paul and Silas in the bible burst into "songs of praise"; for them to divinely see the power of praise that break loose their chains, and see the angel of the Lord walked them out of all locked prison cells. So

dearly beloved have faith in thanksgiving even when you have come to the end of the road and there seems to be no solution. Ps. 73:26, Acts 16:25-26, Romans 8:35-39, Philippians 4:13.

Here I conclude that you and I can surely go beyond dead ends, for our God has given us 'all-grace-sufficient' in these storms of life.

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