

DO NOT BE REPLACED (PART 1)

1 Samuel 16:1 (KJV)

And the LORD said unto Samuel, how long wilt thou mourn for Saul, seeing I have rejected him from reigning over Israel? fill thine horn with oil, and go, I will send thee to Jesse the Bethlehemite: for I have provided me a king among his sons.

Why was the prophet Samuel mourning for Saul? Because he thought Saul would rise up again and do what God had ordained him to do. Samuel was troubled, he thought one day, it will get in Saul's head that obeying God is more important. Day in and day out Samuel the prophet would grieve over King Saul. He thought he would be given more opportunities; Saul will rise up to do what God wants but it never happened.

It was not late until God came to Samuel in the above verse and said "How Long will you mourn over Saul, seeing I have rejected him....." In other words, God was saying to the prophet, don't waste your energy and your time on Saul anymore, I have rejected and replaced him as king over Israel. Which means what Saul was called to do someone else was now going to do. This is the most painful thing in this life, when what you know God has called you to fulfill, someone else is fulfilling it.

When I understood this I trembled, my body shook, I discovered God can replace me. He can't wait for me if I am not ready to obey. He can put someone else in my place. I can't imagine the pain of seeing that happening. Someone doing what I was called to do. Brethren be careful, nothing in this life can compensate the void created by seeing someone doing exactly what you were meant to be doing. Do not waste a chance to serve in any capacity, that opportunity will not stay forever. If you are chosen to serve in any role, it's an honor, no one is irreplaceable before God. Some are chosen to lead cell groups in church, that honor of leading people that Jesus died for can't stay forever. Grab it, run with it, let no one do it in your stead. Paul said I discipline my body so that after I have preached to others I won't be disqualified. **1 Corinthians 9:27**

1 Samuel 16:2 is even scary, when the prophet heard that God had replaced Saul and wanted him to go to Bethlehem and anoint David in Saul's position. The Prophet was scared, he said " if Saul hears about it, he will kill me....." Do you know that people whom God is replacing are dangerous? Samuel the prophet knew that Saul could kill him for announcing his replacement. Even pastors today, they are scared of replacing certain individuals whom God has rejected for fear of being "killed". Be careful of people whom God is replacing, they can turn out to be killers. They can destroy the church for replacing them, they can badmouth the pastor and the leadership for replacing them and they can even attempt to kill the person who is replacing them. We see Saul would spend many years hunting down David to kill him. Sometimes it's wisdom to move away from people whom God is replacing with you. They won't take it kindly that you have moved into their space even though they abused it themselves.

The pain of being replaced is painful and can make you dangerous, the pain of seeing someone accomplishing the task that was first given to you but you took it with slack and a reckless hand. Work hard to keep the privilege of serving what you were given. Most people who are badmouthing the church and the pastor today aren't doing so because we are really that bad but they took for granted the privilege of serving God, and the Lord took away the anointing and what is left of them is only the desire to kill and destroy the work of God. I don't want to be replaced. I will work extra hard in my assignment; nothing will derail me Amen!

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DO NOT BE REPLACED (PART 2)

Esther 2:4 (KJV)

And let the maiden which pleaseth the king be queen instead of Vashti. And the thing pleased the king; and he did so.

This story is about a Queen Vashti, who was the beautiful wife of the King of Persia (He reigned in the whole world at that time). His name was King Ahasuerus. The queen was the most beautiful woman at that time and occasionally the King would call her in to flaunt her beauty before his guests. On this special day the King had a big function for his nobles and princes to show them his riches and also Queen Vashti had rightly made a feast for the royal women of the palace. Trouble began when the King wanted the queen to come and stand before his guests and show them how beautiful she was and the queen 'excused' herself saying she was also busy (**Esther 1:12**) Read the whole of **Esther chapter 1-3**.

The King was angry, and immediately Queen Vashti, with all her beauty and potential, was banned from coming before the King again and was to be replaced by Esther who was an orphan and a foreigner in that land. Who knows maybe this book in the bible would have been called the book of Vashti not Esther? All the beauty that Queen Vashti had could not help her from being replaced.

What do we learn from this story?

Sometimes when you get too busy to come and serve the King, he will replace you. How many of us have been called to come and do God's work but have been tied up in their own business? Some could even be full time ministers but chose to be busy with their own programs? How many times have you put aside a church program to run with yours? Don't you think that it angers God who is your King? If we become too busy with our lives to ignore the calls of God the King, God is left with no option but to bring in a new queen and replace us.

My sister my brother, God is calling you, He wants you to serve him, all those things you are chasing will just be given to you if you respond to his call. He is sending people to you to

communicate his message to you. He sends pastors to tell you that the King is in need of you. Please do not be too busy for Him. Do not ignore His call. Do not tempt Him to replace you with another. Replacement is painful, you will not forgive yourself later in life. Some ladies were appointed to be pastor's wives but have refused because they couldn't put up with the demands for the job and God has allowed others to take their place. Whatever God is calling you to do please don't delay. It is more important than anything else this world can give. When you hear His voice, let us not harden our hearts (**Hebrews 3:15**).

God's voice is becoming clearer and louder now than ever. Young ladies and young men are harkening to it, the call to join ministry is louder than ever now. Do not ignore it! Whatever reason you have of not joining the ministry is not important, respond to the call now. Choose to do something for God. It doesn't matter how small, just do. Hallelujah!

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DO NOT BE REPLACED (PART 3)

Acts 1:20 (NIV) For," said Peter, "it is written in the book of Psalms, "'May his place be deserted; let there be no one to dwell in it,' and, 'May another take his place of leadership.'

The above scripture was written in reference to Judas Iscariot. It was given in prophesy that someone shall take his place. It is sad to have someone take your place in the mind and plans of God. Never allow that to happen. Let no one or anything frustrate you from serving God.

Some people serve God but their service is not pleasing to God because they serve him without good motives and later God will replace them or disqualify them. A good example is this King of Israel called Amaziah. He came to the throne but the bible says this about him.

2 Chronicles 25:2 (KJV) And he did that which was right in the sight of the LORD, but not with a perfect heart. Which means that sometimes we can do correct things for God but God doesn't look at what we do, He looks straight into our hearts. Some serve Him with other hidden motives and God sees that.

King Amaziah was serving God but his heart wasn't right. His motives and his attitude was not right. If you serve God with a bad heart, God will replace you. You will be like an athlete who is competing in a race but disregarding the rules, such an athlete will be disqualified even though he/she would have labored in the competition. We don't just serve God, we have to serve Him well, which means with a good heart, correct attitude and good motives. Some think it's doing God or the church a favor by serving God. It's not, we serve God for ourselves not for him. He has trillions of angels who serve him day and night such that even if we don't serve him, it will not change anything.

Don't serve God for any selfish ambition, to be seen by the people or to create a name for yourself or to gain financially, all these are examples of serving God with a wrong heart and will lead to disqualification.

Disqualification is more painful because you would have participated but participated wrongly, so your energy would have gone for nothing. So, let us check and discern ourselves whether our motives for what we are doing are correct before God because He sees the heart. Some have gone to ministry for financial gain. God sees it and very soon he will separate them like a farmer separating wheat from chaff or goats from sheep.

Some believers will only work in church so that they will be given a position in church. That's wrong. God is not much concerned about who you are in church or what you do. He is concerned about HOW you do whatever you do. God doesn't respect your title in Church. He only respects how you use the title to service him. You can be disqualified with a big title; you can be replaced in God's agenda and only be left carrying an empty title. Judas Iscariot was an Apostle but was replaced, King Saul was a King but was replaced, Vashti was a Queen but was replaced, as long as you don't line up with God's will, He will replace you despite your title.

Take serving God to be an honor and if you are afforded an opportunity to do so, take it with humility and diligence and you will live a fulfilled life. Many people are living an empty life right now because they took their hands off the plough when they had an opportunity to be special in the eyes of God. Ignore Church politics, family politics and abandon yourself at the feet of Jesus to serve him with all that you have. Hallelujah!

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DO NOT BE REPLACED (PART 4)

2 Peter 1:8 (KJV) For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The only thing used to measure someone's Christianity is his/her fruits. The scripture above has put it clearly that you will not be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. Your knowledge of Jesus Christ should produce fruit. If you are barren in the things of Christ as a believer, how then will you be fruitful in the other things of life?

If you look at this scripture, **John 15:2 (KJV)** "Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he (God) taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit."

It shows us that God hates unfruitful people; He replaces them. Jesus clearly said any branch in me that does not bear fruits my Father (God) will take it away. God cuts away unfruitful people. God replaces those who are unfruitful from his list of his favorite children.

Do something for God. Have something that you will point at that you are doing for God except just praying and asking for blessings from Him. Even if it's small, God honors that. Even if it's just opening your house for people to meet and pray, that already is a fruit. Jesus clearly said any branch that bears fruit my Father will prune it so that it produces more fruit... uhm it's so powerful. God helps the fruitful to continue to produce more fruit. If you don't know what to do, engage the leadership of the church, they will show you where to start.

Never give God an excuse of saying because of my job, I can't serve you or I can't produce fruit for you, do you think God will bless that job? Do you think God will defend your job in difficult times? Some give excuses of children, if your children cause you not to serve God, do you think God will bless your children? That is why some children will never be favored by God, it's because their parents had used them as excuses of not sweating/laboring/toiling for God. Some still use money meant for God's work to spoil their children, don't you see that you are setting your children up against God? God is a jealous God, anything that takes his place in your life, He curses it.

Mark 11:12-25 is a very popular story about Jesus and the fig tree. Jesus wanted fruit from the fig tree, only to find that the fig tree only had leaves and no fruit. Jesus cursed it right away and the morrow day the fig tree had dried up from the roots. The fig tree represents a believer who only has leaves but doesn't have fruits. Jesus will curse such a life. Jesus is not looking for leaves, He is looking for fruit. If you keep on showing him leaves, he will replace you.

What are the leaves in our life? Anything that gives us earthly advantage, anything that make people admire us like our education, wealth, beauty, fame, good marriages, nice clothes, good jobs, nice cars, the list is endless. All these are leaves and Jesus cannot come again and find you with only these things/leaves. It is not bad to have the leaves but Jesus wants your fruit. We know you are beautiful, you are wealth, educated but where is the fruit of your faith? If Jesus comes again and the only things on you are only the nice clothes and nice weaves, the beauty then He will replace you. Change today and start bearing fruits, do not be found with leaves again.... Amen.

Pastor C & S