ARE YOU GETTING ALONG ON THE BOAT?

By Akola Mbey Denis.

The word “boat” is defined in the Cambridge Dictionary as “a small vehicle for travelling on water.” To use the boat as our means of transport from one place to another, we need to pay our faire before we are allowed in. The sailor will only consider to go on the journey with people who have paid the price for his service. The physical view of the boat shows the boat is a risky means of transport and there is always a higher chance of accident-capsizing in the water. On the boat, we are always convicted and convinced that the sailor is going to send us to our destination safely. Some parts of the world were the boat is a major means of transport, people who wants to travel must go by it. There is no alternative and the people need to get along on the boat. Yes! So it is with us, we can only be saved if we become Christians and stay tuned with the word of God. We must stay on the boat of God till death. Staying on the boat of God will give us salvation at the end of life. We can only do that if we can only allow God the chance to direct our footsteps. Jeremiah 10:23

Genesis chapter 6:1-6 give us an account of how God was displeased with humans and regretted for creating them. God decided to destroy the human race by flood. Genesis 6:7 – “The lord said “I will bloat out man whom I have created from the face of the land, from man to animals to creeping things and to birds of the sky; for I am sorry that I have made them””. But Noah found favor in the eyes of God. Genesis 6:8. Noah was a gospel preacher in his generation and he got only his family on the boat. He only convicted his immediate family (his wife, children and his children’s wives). As an encouragement to preachers, as the bible commands us to preach in and out of season. 2 Timothy 4:2- “preach the
word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with patience and instruction.” We ought not to be ashamed of the gospel of Christ and we must be burning out to preach the gospel of Christ. Romans 1:16. We must sow the seed, water it and leave the germination and growth to God. As Paul says in 1Corinthians 3:6. Our business is to preach and what is left is for the Lord. The lord will add those who believe to the church. Acts 2:47. In short, Noah was a successful preacher because he got his family on the boat.

Genesis chapter 12 gives an account of how Abraham was ordered by God to depart from his family in order to enter into His boat. Genesis 12:1-3 “Now the Lord said to Abram “1Go forth from your country ,And from your relatives And from your father’s house, To the land which I will show you;2 And I will make you a great nation, And I will bless you, And make your name great; And so you shall be a blessing;

3 And I will bless those who bless you, And the one who curses you I will curse. And in you all the families of the earth will be blessed.” In the same Chapter verses 4, Abram obeyed God and did as God ordered him. For most of us, breaking from family union is a great impediment on our way doing God’s work. We become homesick. Can you take a brief moment to think about it-Can you imagine if you were the Abram God wanted to send out of his family into a strange land? Will you be ready to go? We have to get out of our comfort zones in order to move along with the boat of God.

No wonder the bible put it this way in the Gospel according to Luke. Luke 14:26-27 ,33 “26 “If anyone comes to Me, and does not [a]hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be My disciple. 27 Whoever does not carry his own cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple. 33 So then, none of you can be My disciple who does not give up all his own possessions.” “. Abram who was later called Abraham had to move out of his comfort zone in order to get himself on the boat of God and so we must do today.

In Genesis 3; we read about the falling away of man. The first man and woman created by God disobey Him and God punished them. They were deceived by the machinations of the serpent. (Genesis 3:1-6). God cursed them (Verses 14 through 19). They veered off the boat. And as the bible tells us in Galatians 6:7 “Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap.” Adam and Eve sowed sin and the reaped the punishment of God. We might be
praying to God and we are not receiving answers. Yes, we have to examine ourselves to see if we are holy before him. Isaiah 59:1-2 “Behold, the LORD’s hand is not so short That it cannot save; Nor is His ear so dull That it cannot hear.² But your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God, And your sins have hidden His [a]face from you so that He does not hear.” We don’t expect God to answer our prayers if we are living in sin.

In book of Jonah Chapter 1 God gave the Prophet Jonah a command to go to Nineveh and proclaim his word. Jonah 1:1-2”¹ The word of the LORD came to Jonah the son of Amittai saying, ² “Arise, go to Nineveh the great city and cry against it, for their wickedness has come up before Me.” Jonah disobeyed God and took a different course to Tarshish. (Jonah 1:3). God punished Jonah. Jonah was thrown into the sea (Jonah 1:15) and he was swallowed by a great fish. (Jonah 1:17). Jonah repented (Jonah chapter 2) and God caused the fish to vomit Jonah up onto the dry land. Jonah disobeyed God, repented and his sins was forgiven him. We need to pray to God and ask for the forgiveness anytime we fall short of His glory. Jonah was reconciled back to God and he preached the word of God to the people of Nineveh and they repented of their evil ways. I am 100% sure that Jonah was running away from the presence of Lord because he did not want to move out of his comfort zone to go to Nineveh.

We must all try to get along on the boat. How do we get along on the boat of God? In Acts 2:36-38 The Pharisees came to Peter after he made the acclamation that Jesus is Lord and God. They asked him what they will do then and this was Peter’s reply. “36 Therefore let all the house of Israel know for certain that God has made Him both Lord and [a] Christ—this Jesus whom you crucified.” ³⁷ Now when they heard this, they were [b] pierced to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, “[c] Brethren, [d] what shall we do?” ³⁸ Peter said to them, “Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.”.

This is also applicable to us today. God has a plan to save man. Romans 6:23,” ²³ for all [a] have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, we have all sin and fell short of God’s glory.” We cannot enter into the kingdom of God if we are living sinful lives. 1Corinthians 6:19-21-“¹⁹ Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: [f] immorality, impurity, sensuality, ²⁰ idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, [f] factions, ²¹ envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these, of
which I forewarn you, just as I have forewarned you, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. “Therefore we must be reconciled back to God. Romans 3:23-tell us “For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.” Salvation is the greatest gift of God for all humanity. In Romans 10:1 Paul says -“Brethren, my heart’s desire and my prayer to God for them is for their salvation.” We cannot hide any sin we commit in the dark from His presence as the Psalmist says in Psalm 139:1-2. Also Hebrews 4:13.

The chart below shows God’s plan for our salvation.

![Steps of Salvation: From Sinner to Saved](chart.jpg)

What hinders you from been baptized today? The only time we have is now no later. After baptism the Lord will add you to His church which he purchased with His blood. Acts 2:47. After this, we become new creatures in the side of God.2Corinthians 5:17

We can easily fall off from the boat and be drown in water if we are not extra careful. The doctrine of once saved always saved is nowhere to be found in the bible. We can go off track along the way if are not careful. After baptism, we have to work out for our salvation with trembling and fear. Philippians 2:12. We may
still fall into sin but when we fall we must rise up. We must continue to be faithful until we die for the crown of righteousness to be given to us.

After baptism, we must:

- Not forsake the assembly of the saints (Hebrews 10:25)
- Not chase after the material possessions of the world. (1John 2:15-17).
- put on the full armor of God as Christians (Ephesians 6:11-17)
- Study God’s word (2Timothy 2:15)
- Do our part in fulfilling the great commission of God. Matthew 28:18-20 Mark 16:15.
- Do all things to the glory of God. Colossians 3:17,1Corinthians 10:31.
- Speaks as God speaks.1Peter 4:11.
- Make it a point to be spotless when the Lord appears. James 1:27
- Be faithful till death. Revelation 2:10
- Grow in our faith. 2Peter 3:18
- Accept the bible as our only guide in our Christian journey. We must not embrace any man-made doctrines and creeds. The bible is sufficient for us. 2Timothy 3:16-17. Hebrews 4:12

And when our lives on earth comes to an end, we would be convicted and conceived as Paul was in 1Timothy 4:6-8. God loves us. John 3:16. He only demands us to obey Him. God bless us all. Let us be like the Christian brethren in Berea and let us search the scriptures daily to find the truth about God word. Acts 17:11. We must allow ourselves to be sanctified by the word of God. The bible is truth and we must be sanctified by it. John 17:17—“Sanctify them in the truth; Your word is truth.” It is my prayer that we will meet in Heaven and we shall rejoice in the presence of the Lord.

N.B: All bible texts are taken from the New American Standard Bible (NASB)