



NEWSLETTER
August 27, 2023



Everything Rises... and Falls on Leadership

THAT's not an original. That's from Leadership Guru John Maxwell.

I agree. Think about it. The success or failure of a team, or family, or company, or church, or ministry depends on its leader. Because the leader sets the tone, embodies the vision, and builds the culture.

This is one of the biggest reasons the world is in such a mess. When bad leaders are in charge, bad things happen to the group they're leading. When parents are selfish, or proud, or petty, the family suffers. When politicians exploit the poor, the country suffers. When religious leaders are abusive, the church suffers. When entrepreneurs just care only for their profits but not their customers, they may earn in the short term, but the business will suffer in the long term.

Today, I pray that God makes us His Leaders that mirror His goodness to the world.

Have a life-altering Feast today!

May your dreams come true,

Bo Sanchez

WELCOME
to the continuation
of our Feast Talk Series
Dear Prodigals
Talk 4:
Great Leaders
Sacrifice Greatly



LETTERS

Who's Barking?

THE Canaanite woman asks Jesus to heal her demon-possessed daughter.

Jesus, at first, tells the woman He cannot minister to her daughter.

Jesus says, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of Israel...It's not right to take the children's bread and toss it to the dogs..."

But the woman points out, "Even the dogs eat the scraps from the table."

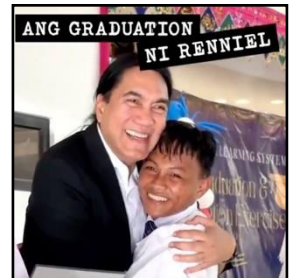
That's from Matthew 15:21:28, last Sunday's Gospel. And in his homily, Fr. Mario Quejadas pointed out how Jesus was impressed by the woman's humility. The woman is pagan. She, is to the ancient Jews, as low as *dogs*. But impressed by the woman's faith, Jesus heals her daughter, *page 3*.



Humility is being good, especially to others, those below us. It is not easy to do that especially for leaders already way up on a pedestal. But *Great Leaders Sacrifice Greatly*. That's the key message of today's Feast Talk 4 of our ongoing series *Dear Prodigals*. Bro. Bo Sanchez's intro is on *page 1*.



Yes, that's what our Ultimate Leader, our Lord Jesus, demonstrated to us—dying on the Cross as His Ultimate Worship to satisfy His Father. We learned more about Worship in last Sunday's Talk 3: *God Is Committed to Your Well-Being*. Starting on *page 17*, *Flashback* by Bro. Bo and Bro. Alvin Barcelona who continues his inspiring story of Rennie Jabagat you don't want to miss.



Yes, Worship is much more than rituals, as Bro. Audee Villaraza and Bro. Tony Valenzuela emphasized, *pages 12-13*.



We express our Worship through our many Ministries as Bro. John Ben Rodriguez and Bro. JC Libiran announced, *page 15*. And also, as Bro. Didoy Lubaton pointed out, through our tithing, *page 9*.



One who well expresses her Worship is Sis. Judith Enriquez who serves as executive assistant of He Cares Mission, our featured Mercy Ministry this month of August, *page 40*.



So, who's barking? Let's attend to them, just as Jesus did for the Canaanite woman and her daughter.

All for God's Glory,

Randy Borromeo
Media Ministry
Executive Director





FLASHBACK!

AUGUST 20, 2023

Holy Mass



TWENTIETH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Homily

FR. MARIO QUEJADAS

on the Gospel: Matthew 15:21-28
The Faith of a Canaanite Woman



FR. BOB McCONAGHY
Concelebrant

CHURCH, today I want to talk about how God is always impressed by humility. Humility is always the birthplace of your miracles.

Church, today we have this beautiful Gospel which is very confounding—*nakakalito*. Why? Because people are saying, how come Jesus is snubbing this woman, so much so as to call her a dog.

Jesus is supposed to be merciful, kind, but what about to this woman? Jesus is always impressed by humility. And everything is going against this woman.

First, she's a woman. Remember, not only today, by the way, but thousands of years ago, women are not seen as equal to men. Women are seen as objects, sometimes even property.

Second, she's from Canaan. This is the Canaanite woman, and the Gospels of Mark-- because there are two Gospels that mentioned her-- she was mentioned as from Syria Phoenicia, which is in the outskirts of the land of Israel. These are the people that don't worship the One God. They are pagans.

Are We Judgmental?

So, she's a woman and she's a pagan. And yet look how abject her humility was. First of all, she doesn't know Christ. She calls Christ the Son of David, that's a big leap of faith. Not only that-- she started to kneel, pay homage in His Presence. Knelt in front of a rabbi-- you don't do that, by the way. And not only that.

She started to say, "Lord, have pity on me."

Have you ever been desperate in your life? You had no one to turn to. You had a problem and you could not even turn to your family, you could not turn to your friends, you could not turn to your own spouse. You are desperate, so desperate.

The woman in our Gospel, what's beautiful about this is what's driving her is her love. Desperation is so beautiful when its very root is love. You will do everything to overcome it. Mothers will do this, especially. You will do everything for your child and she, out of her desperation, would do everything for her child.

And Jesus, ignoring her, even said that it is not right to take what is to the people of Israel and give it to the dogs.

Remember, preceding this Gospel was Jesus facing his fakers, his doubters, and his haters-- the Pharisees and the Sadducees. And because this is the very theology of Israel, because they are the chosen people, *sa kanila lang ang grasya*—grace is exclusive to them. And if you look at your life and are humble enough, you will notice that there is something like this in your heart.

Father, he is an adulterer, why would God bless him? He's a Muslim, he's a Hindu, he does not believe in God. He or she is LGBTQ (transgender) why would God bless them? They don't even believe in God-- they don't practice the faith. I go to The Feast every Sunday-- I'm the one who's blessed! No.



Reading I: Isaiah 56:1, 6-7

¹ Thus says the LORD: Preserve judgment, and accomplish justice. For my salvation is close to its arrival, and my justice is close to being revealed.⁶ And the sons of the new arrival, who adhere to the Lord so as to worship him and to love his name, shall be his servants: all who keep the Sabbath without profaning it, and who hold to my covenant.⁷ I will lead them to my holy mountain, and I will gladden them in my house of prayer. Their holocausts and their victims will be pleasing to me upon my altar. For my house will be called the house of prayer for all peoples.



Todos, Todos, Todos

I love Pope Francis. A week ago, at the World Youth Day in Lisbon, he mentioned the word *todos, todos, todos*—all, all, all! He’s saying all are part of God’s family, all baptized are part of the Church.

Todos, todos, todos! Because God is a Father and each and every one of us are His beloved children. This is your first identity. My first identity is that I am a beloved child of God.

Nothing in your life—not death, not your addictions, not your sins, not your circumstances, not even you leaving the Presence of God will make God not love you!

The woman replied to Jesus, “Even the dogs eat the scraps from the table.”

Jesus was amazed by that. Because you know what, the Greeks, the non-Jewish people love dogs like we Filipinos do-- but not the way the Jews do. For the Jews, dogs are nothing. They don’t have rights. For them, they’re not cuddly, for them they are outside of the house. No wonder they call the non-Jewish people dogs-- it’s an insult.



Reading II: Romans 11:13-15, 29-32

Brothers and sisters:¹³ I say to you Gentiles: Certainly, as long as I am an Apostle to the Gentiles, I will honor my ministry,¹⁴ in such a way that I might provoke to rivalry those who are my own flesh, and so that I may save some of them.¹⁵ For if their loss is for the reconciliation of the world, what could their return be for, except life out of death?²⁹ For the gifts and the call of God are without regret.³⁰ And just as you also, in times past, did not believe in God, but now you

have obtained mercy because of their unbelief,

³¹ so also have these now not believed, for your mercy, so that they might obtain mercy also.³² For God has enclosed everyone in unbelief, so that he may have mercy on everyone



Fake News!

The woman didn't think of it in a Jewish setting. She thought of it in a Greek way: "Even the dog eats scraps."

It means that: "Even I, who do not believe; I, who is a woman; I, who is not a Jew, have a place at the table. *Maski na ako'y makasalanan—even if I'm sinful, I have a place at the table. Maski ako full of addictions—even struggle with*

addictions, I have a place at the table. Even though I still cannot figure out myself, I have a place at the table.

My dear friends, you are a beloved child of God. You always have a place at the table. *Always!*

You know, it perplexes me, confuses me, and sometimes I am exasperated that when you ask a Catholic, "Are you saved?"

Most Catholics will answer like this, "Ammmm, oh, Father, I need to be a better wife." "Oh, Father, I need to fix myself first." "Oh, Father, I need to do this..."

Church, do you know that there was a time in my life that I was like that? I was a teenager and I believed in *quid pro quo*—it's Latin that says *I do this for you, you do this for me*.

I thought that I had to earn the love of God. If I prayed several novenas, God would love me. If I am good in class, God would love me. If I am better, then God would love me.

That's fake news, Brothers and Sisters!

Parents, mothers, what does your baby need to do to be loved by you? *Kailangan ba ng baby na maglaba? Kailangan ba ng baby na magwalis? Kailangan ba ng baby na mag change ng diapers niya?* – Does the baby need to wash clothes, sweep the floor, change his diapers? No!

Our Home, Our Inheritance

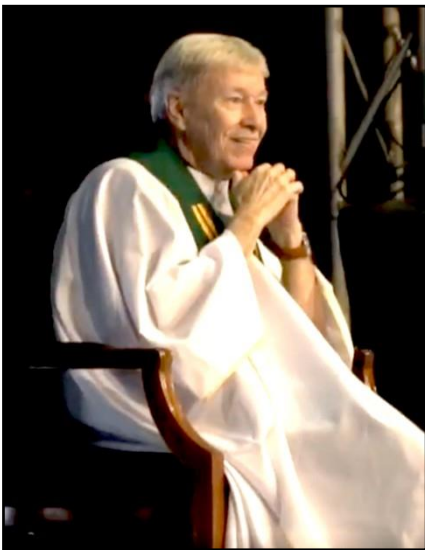
Catholics, when you are asked if you are saved, this is how you say it:

“I was saved by Jesus 2000 years ago on the Cross, and I am being saved now by Jesus because of His works, and I will be saved because of His goodness.

Church, God is good not because you are good. God is good because He is good! Heaven is your home. Heaven is your inheritance. *Ang langit ay iyong tahanan, ang langit ay iyong mana.* —Heaven is your home. Heaven is your inheritance. *Nasasaiyo ‘yun kung ayaw mong umuwi.*—It’s up to you if you don’t want to go home. *Nasasaiyo ‘yun kung ayaw mo na ng mana.*—It’s up to you if you don’t want your inheritance. *Pero may karapatan ka sa langit. Anak ka ng Diyos! Anak ka na minamahal ng Diyos!* – But you have a right to be in Heaven. You are God’s child. You are a beloved child...

Jesus was so impressed by the woman’s faith. You know, we have all learned from the preachers here, especially from Bro. Bo, that humility is all about service. That’s why everybody can be humble. Humility is all about service.

You know, that’s why I’m very touched because this house is so full of humble people. When I arrived, your leaders were already there, getting my stuff, carrying it for me -- even though I’m not used to that. *Pagdating doon sa likod—at the back stage,* they were assisting me dress and undress. I’m not used to that!



And you know, we have Fr. Bob for 20 years now. He has served the Filipino people with all his heart and soul. You know that during The Feast, he hears confessions for hours for us. You probably think that hearing confession is very easy. It’s very draining. That’s why when I hear an hour of confession, I need Jollibee.

Fr. Bob, on behalf of the Filipino people, thank you very much.

Surrender

Would you be so humble enough to tell Jesus, *“Jesus I’m a sinner but I am Your beloved child. I have a place at the table and you have given that to me.*

Jesus, would you please hear my prayer today—for my child, for my spouse, for my addictions, for healing, for grace.”

Please rise. If this is comfortable for you, please raise both of your hands. Surrender ourselves before our God. As you bow and close your eyes, talk to Jesus. He is here and He is impressed by humility, and He wants to serve you today as He has done so 2000 years ago, when He became one like us, when He died on the Cross, when He washed the disciples’ feet, and He has already served you a gazillion times today by making you alive, making you breathe, giving all things that you need—your family, your friends, your faith, PICC, the people here, the air conditioning, the privilege of being a Filipino.

He is here—the greatest Servant of all, the humblest of us all, and He is here to woo you. *Gusto ka Niyang ligawan ng pagmamahal, ligawan ng Kanyang yakap, ng Kanyang katapatan, ng Kanyang kaloobang hindi magmamaliw.* He wants to court you, embrace you with the faithfulness in His heart that never ends.

He is here. He’s listening to you. Talk to Him right now, be this Canaanite woman. Tell Him, knock at the door of His heart. Seek and you will find, He will open it to you. Talk.



Responsorial Psalm

Oh God, Let all the nations praise You!

Lord, thank You very much. I love You so much. Thank You for everything, thank You for Your mercy. Thank You for being our family. Give me the grace, Jesus, to be more like You, to be a servant, to welcome all, and to be Your hands and feet for this world hungry for love. This is my prayer in Your sweet Name. Amen.



BRO. DIDOY LUBATON:

God's people in the house, I'm so happy to be in this place!

Make some noise! Give a big shout to the Lord! Can you greet the people around you, "Good Morning!"

Welcome to the Family! Welcome home! To our dear priests, thank you, Fr. Mario, Fr. Bob, thank you so much!

Love Offering

It's time for our giving. I hope you have a generous heart today. We have beautiful, bountiful Feast prepared for you today as well. I want to tell you today what God does in you when you give.

1 Timothy 6:17, says *"As for the rich in this present age, charge them not to be haughty, nor to set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly provides us with everything to enjoy..."*

Are you enjoying PICC today? We're going to do more Feasts here in PICC, moving forward.

"They are to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share, this storing up treasure for themselves as a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of what which is truly life." (1 Timothy 6:18)

Guys, money is power and God is the source of all power. And He shares that to us because He wants us to live a full, abundant, beautiful, meaningful life. Money gives practicality—it pays for the bills, it gives us comfort, it gives us food and shelter and this is an opportunity that provision and abundance of the Lord is shared here in our Community.

Thanksgiving

This is in alignment of God’s plan to take care of His family. This is our mission, and I ask that you would care right now to give to the Family because we are feeding a lot of people in body, mind, heart, and soul.

I’d like to highlight as well your Thanksgiving Prayers. We have been reading your prayers. Let me read some of them:

From Israel: “Thank You, for helping me with my finances. I am feeling I’m not anymore drowning. Thank You as well for giving me love.”

Cai said: “Thank You for giving and blessing us with baby number two! Thank You so much, dear Father. We love you!”

From Chris: “Thank You for the negative results of Anna’s biopsy and all the blessings!”

From Shane: “Thank You, Lord, for helping me fix my relationship with friends. *Mas magaan po sa life at mas masaya*—The burden is lighter and I am happy-- *though meron pa po akong hindi naaayos*—though there are some areas that still need to be put in order.”

From Eve Joy: “Thank You, Lord, for guiding me and for granting my prayers to graduate this 2022-2023!”

From Arnel: “Angela, passing the board exam for Architecture and she took her oath for professional license.”

Maya said: “Thank You, Lord, that I’m able to attend The Feast face-to-face after more than *three* years! (I was) attending only online as we are based in Hong Kong. Thank You that I’m able to celebrate my birthday in the Philippines!”

From James Andre, this is beautiful: “I will forever be grat-I-am-happyeful, Lord, for the opportunity of waking up another day. Thank You for accepting me to be an altar server every Sunday at The Feast. Thank You for letting me join the Student Council of our College Department.”

And lastly, from Mary Janina: “Last week, it was my first time attending The Feast. I wrote my prayer requests and almost everything came true already: Family’s in a good state; I recently got a job offer; and everything seems to be conspiring already and working not the way I envision it but the way I know God orchestrated it. Thank You, Lord!”





We Do Life Together

God is orchestrating everything for your good and it will always be beautiful, and through your generous giving, we are building our Community.

We're getting our faith together in union and communion with our God and this is beautiful that we get to do life together.



Help the Feast Mercy Ministries. Help them all.

 Akwini Lay Missions Foundation, Inc.	 Grace to Be Born Maternity Home and Nursery	 Ho Care Foundation Street Children Caring Center	 Jeremiah 33:6-7 Foundation	 Pag-asang Family Scholarship Foundation
 LOJ Prison Ministry	 LOJ Pastoral Care Center	 HAIL Mary of Abba	 Jesus Christ Cares for Cancer	 Shepherd's Voice Radio and Television Foundation, Inc.

Receive Feast Magazine e-copy when you subscribe to monthly giving of Php 500.00. Visit us at the lobby!




WAYS TO GIVE

Help us continue this ministry

FEAST BAY AREA, INC.
000 - 4000 - 24937

 GCash



FOR DEBIT OR CREDIT CARD GIVING, VISIT
WWW.THEFEASTPICAM.COM/COMMIT

Ways to Give

Worship!

EXHORTATIONS

BRO. AUDEE VILLARAZA:

Good Morning, Feast Bay Area! How many of you have a reason to rejoice this morning? Just raise your hand.

I see some people who don't raise hands. I get it. Sometimes, I have that feeling: Why do I have to celebrate today? I'm still tired, I'm still broke, I'm still sick, I'm still lonely. What in the world can I celebrate today? If in case that's you, let me speak to you right now.

You need to shift your focus. Because if all you're focus on right now are the liabilities in your life, let me tell you this:

God doesn't want you to look at your liabilities. He wants you to see the possibilities. He doesn't want you to see the limitations-- but He wants you to see what He can do in your life!

Let me prophesy over somebody's life here today.

Father, I believe that this year, this season of our life, is going to be our breakthrough season. This is going to be a year that You will not just give us what we want but You're going to exceed every expectation. Father, we prophesy over this place that for these people standing here, Your children, that whatever doors have been closed upon them, Father, if that room is for them to enter in, You're going to swing that wide open. And even if people will try to close that door, if You want that open, it will remain open!

We declare that in Jesus' Name, for all those who are sick, all those who are physically disturbed and mentally anguished, that in Jesus' mighty Name, they will receive healing, moving on forward!

We declare in Jesus' Name that whatever the enemy tries to steal, kill, and destroy, in Jesus' Name, You will restore, replenish, and revive!

And lastly, let me declare this: That in the Mighty Name of our Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior, whatever dreams and goals that have died and you thought that you buried it long ago, I pray that there will be an exhumation today, that the Lord will exhume dead dreams, dead relationships, dead purpose, and God will revive them and raise them to His Son Jesus Christ. Amen!

You want to know the best part about this? Jesus said, "It is finished."

It means that His finish line is actually your starting point. His ceiling is actually your ground. His landing ground is your launch pad. How many of you believe that God wants your breakthrough today? How many of you believe that you're ready to take off? Give me a shout! Come on! Let's praise the Lord.





TONY VALENZUELA

Are you blessed to be here today? Are you overwhelmed to be in the Presence of God right now? But I want to ask you one honest question, is it okay? I want to ask you this question because I also experienced this. How many of you here, right now, have experienced God being distant?

The feeling of God being far away, the feeling that, “God, where are you? Why don’t you answer me? *Patong patong na ang mga problema’t sabay sabay.*—Problems on top of the other, simultaneously. God where are you?”

I think we all experienced the same. Maybe you experienced it at one point in your life. Maybe many times. Maybe you’re here right now asking that question.

But I just love what Fr. Mario mentioned earlier *quid pro quo*—it means that I’ll do good then I’ll receive good. I’ll do good and you’ll be good to me. You scratch my back, I’ll scratch your back. But when it comes to God, we take it the wrong way around. We have to be good so we can be in His Presence? But it’s the other way around. God is already good to us. God is showering His love on us. God is showing His mercy and forgiveness to us. It’s overwhelming that every minute of every day God is there embracing us!

What am I trying to say? Hey, to come into God’s Presence, you don’t have to be perfect. Maybe what you’re going through right now is as heavy as the *Titanic*. You’ve watched the film, right? And what happened? It sunk, *lumubog*. It couldn’t even stand the tip of the iceberg. And you may feel right now that what you’re carrying, what crosses you have, what struggles, what pain, what loss, what feeling of distance from God you might be carrying right now—it may feel like the *Titanic*. But guess what? The *Titanic* sunk because it’s surrounded by so much water...

Friend, don’t wait for the tip of the iceberg to come and hit you. Maybe it already has, but even if it hit you already, the ocean is God’s love, the ocean—it’s surrounding you right now. The ocean is there for you even if you’re sinking.

Psalms 38:18 says that *the Lord is close to the broken hearted and He rescues those who are crushed in spirit*. It means that even if you feel far away from God, at that very moment, that’s when He’s closest to you than ever before!

And right now, He’s saying, “Come into My Presence. You’re already surrounded by My love. You’re already surrounded by My grace.”

God’s love is for free. Now, the choice is yours. Receive it freely. Breathe in, breathe out.

As we worship God again today, don’t let anything hold you back from receiving that love, from basking in that love, from enveloping yourself to that ocean, that infinite ocean of God’s love. And like the *Titanic*, just sink.

Can you put your hand over your chest now? Close your eyes... Breathe in, breathe out. Don’t hold back. Declare that even one day, one day in God’s Presence is worth it, compared to a thousand in this world. One day in God’s courts is greater than a thousand days that this world can offer. If you’re ready to dive deeper, let’s worship our God!



FEAST BAY AREA WORSHIP

TAKE OFF

FEAST WORSHIP
 WORDS & MUSIC BY: PAUL VERNON LIM | VERA YAJAIRA VIÑAS
 © 2019 FEAST MUSIC AND RESOURCES, INC.
 CCLI # 7200428



BRO. JOHN BEN: First-timers? Let's applaud them. It's so good to see you here. Later, don't leave right away. We want to meet you. We want to pray for you. And we have a very special gift for you.

And to those watching online, if you can, please be here because the experience here is really different.

Next week, we will be here again in PICC.



BRO. JC: Not just one but two sessions. We have the 9:00 a.m. session and the 2:00 p.m. session. And our invitation to you, *Bring One, Bless One*.

We want you to know, we're so blessed in this our Grand Feast.

Kindly bring out your *Feast Bulletin*. Let's go through it quickly. I want to direct your attention at the back page, because that's where we have all the announcements: on the Confession; upcoming LUX, the Couples Weekend Getaway event this September; for young people in the house, we have an upcoming Youth Forum.

Let's applaud our women because they just had the Jewels Conference.


And, of course, about finances, Truly Rich Club has an event as well this September.

And please, follow us on our social media account—The Feast Bay Area Facebook page-- for all the other announcements and the inspirational content that we produce every day.


BRO. JOHN BEN: We have a kids' play area. There must be a guardian for each kid.

I know you're all excited to receive the Word this day. So, let's all welcome with the love of the Lord, Bro. Bo Sanchez!

NOVENA TO GOD'S LOVE **DECLARATION OF ABUNDANCE**



Today, I receive all of God's love for me.
Today, I open myself to the unbounded,
limitless, overflowing abundance of God's
universe.
Today, I open myself to God's blessings,
healing, and miracles.

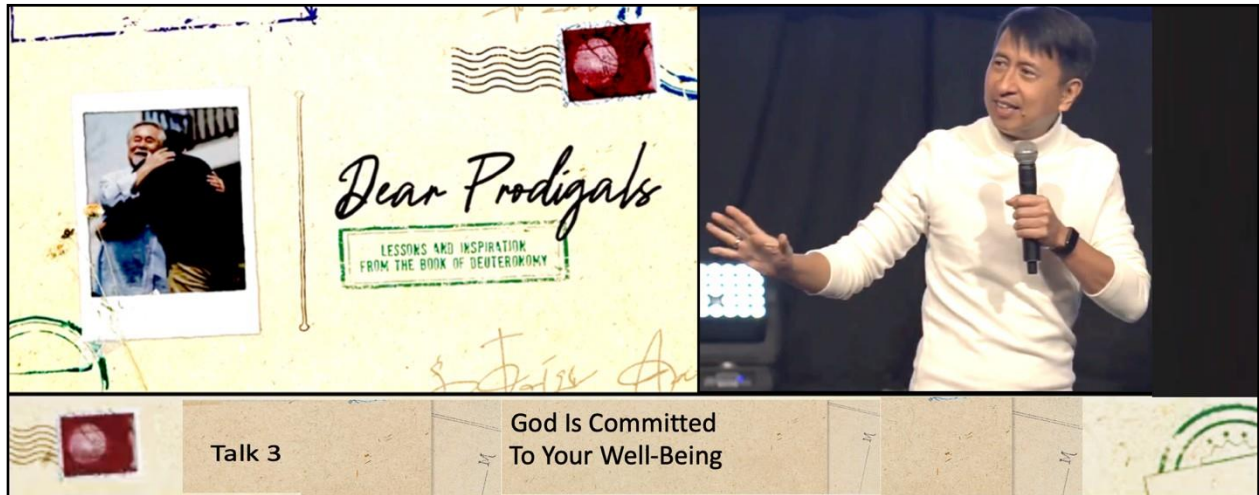


Today, I open myself to God's Word
so I become more like Jesus every day.
Today, I proclaim that I am God's Beloved.
I am God's Servant. I am God's Powerful
Champion.
And because I am blessed, I am blessing the
world. In Jesus' name. Amen.

*Thy Word
is a Lamp
unto my feet
And a Light
unto my path*



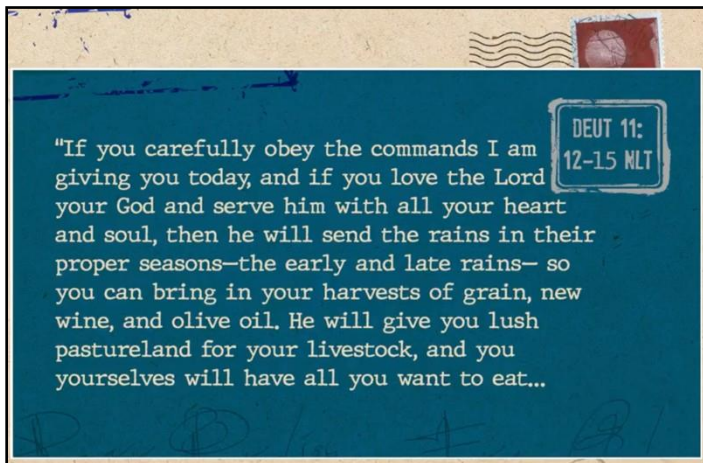
Talk



BRO. BO SANCHEZ:

WE'RE in Talk 3 of our series *Dear Prodigals* on the book of *Deuteronomy*. And we're going to read this passage together -- it reveals God's heart. Moses was giving like a History Class from Chapters 12-16. What we're going to talk about today is it is as though he's giving a Worship Seminar.

In Deuteronomy 11: 13-15, we read:



Imagine that we are now living in an agricultural society during ancient times-- no modern massive dams, no modern irrigation systems, everything dependent on rain. And so, here is the promise of God, saying the rain is going to come:

"...the early and late rains—so you can bring in your harvests of grain, new wine, and olive oil. He will give you lush pastureland for your livestock, and you yourselves will have all you want to eat..."

Be careful to obey all my commands so that all will go well with you and your children after you because you are doing what is good and pleasing to the Lord your God.



Today, I'm going to preach this message:
God is committed to your well-being.



He really is. And this is an original vision of God. You go to the first book of the Bible, to the first story, God's Creation: God wanted us to be in Eden and He wanted us to eat from the Tree of Life and He wanted us to eat the abundance of the Garden.



And the reason God has given us these laws and commands is He wants us to be brought back to the Garden.

WHY LAWS?
God wants to bring us back to the Garden.

My dear friends, this is God's plan: He wants us back in His Garden.

How many of you want to go back to the Garden? A representation of all that is good. He wants your well-being.

Now, I need to say this because people misunderstand: "Bro. Bo, really? God is committed to my well-being? *Bakit hirap na hirap ako sa buhay?* Why do I have problems? Why do I have struggles, and difficulties, and storms, and earthquakes, and tragedies in my life? Why did I lose a loved one? Why am I going through so much hardship financially? *Bakit nahihirapan ako sa trabaho ko?* If God is committed to my well-being, why am I not well?

May I give you an answer?



GOD IS COMMITTED TO YOUR
WELL-BEING, NOT YOUR COMFORT.

The Answer

God is committed to your well-being, not your comfort. Chew on that. If you're as old as I am, you have already accepted the fact that if you want to have well-being, you're going to have to suffer... And if you have not yet accepted that, you're going to be in a lot of distress because you're going to have false expectations about what life is.

God is committed to your well-being, not to your convenience. You're going through a lot of inconvenience to experience well-being in your life. You can't even become healthy if you won't go through discomfort, and pain, and struggle, and suffering. You cannot even have a beautiful, wonderful marriage if you will not go through a lot of pain—a lot of dying, a lot of self-donations, a lot of generosity that will cause struggle in your life.

And so, friends, I just wanted to share this with you before we go into it. This is just a little intro. Before we talk about Worship, and the laws of Worship, and Moses, we'll talk about that. We need to establish this: Why is God giving all these laws? Because He is committed to your well-being.

If He's not committed to your well-being, God will tell you, "Bahala ka sa buhay mo. You do what you want to do. You'll be greedy and you'll be lustful, you'll be proud, and you'll be selfish. I don't care!"

No. God says, "I'm committed to your well-being—here is how to do it..."

Put your hand over your chest, and Everybody say:

Father, I thank you for being committed and working for my well-being. Thank You. I receive this commitment, this relationship with You. In Jesus' Name. Amen.

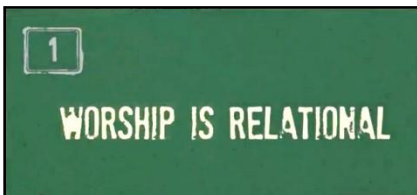
*Thy Word
is a Lamp
unto my feet
And a Light
unto my path*



Two Revolutionary Lessons on Worship

So, Moses started talking about Worship in five chapters. And you will be surprised at what comprises Worship in the mind of Moses and in the mind of the author of *Deuteronomy*. What you would not think as Worship somehow ends up in this Worship Seminar by Moses.

And so, there are two very important lessons that we need to learn about this and after reflecting on the five chapters, I came up with these two lessons that I'm going to share with you.



Worship is relational. Worship is not doing something. Worship is relating to someone. Worship is God saying, “I want to have an exclusive relationship with you.”

We modern people, we look at that and we say, “Why? Why does God want me to have an exclusive relationship with Him?”

And maybe, a part of us will think, “Hmm, maybe God is insecure. He doesn't want any competition. I don't know, maybe He's power-hungry. *“Ako lang. Ako lang.—Me. Only Me.”*”

Why is God like that? None of the above.

God—He is the only One who is committed to your well-being. The other gods, they're not. They are either indifferent to your well-being or they're committed to your destruction. Those are the false gods that we have.

Many years ago, I was talking to a young pretty woman, 26 years old. Let's call her Carol. She told me how her boyfriend was two-timing her. The boyfriend actually left her without talking to her. And she was crushed. Later on, she found out that her ex was with that other girl. And she told me a very humiliating situation. There were many times where she wanted to end it all because she was so devastated. She really loves this guy.

And she told me a scene: That one time, she was talking with her ex and when the ex left his office, she rushed to him and in a busy intersection in front of many people, she knelt down in front of her ex-boyfriend and said, “Please, I cannot live without you. *Bumalik ka sa akin. Come back to me!*”

I thought these things happen only in the movies, right? No. Reality is stranger than fiction and she was like (singing), “*How can I live without you? I want to know. How can I live without you? If you ever go...*”



Worshipping Another God

It was so humiliating. Imagine that picture. What do you call that? Worshipping false god. We can make human beings as our false god.

I was talking to this girl and I was telling her, “You’ve got to turn to the Lord.”

She said, “*Bro. Bo, araw-araw akong nagdadasal... na sana bumalik siya.*

I pray every day that he will come back to me.”

And I said, “Not that prayer. You’ve got to let go and you’ve got to let God.”

If I’m going to use the language of this talk, if I just came from giving this talk, then I would talk to her like this: “Your ex does not care for you. Only God is committed to your well-being.”

Friends, we have a problem. We make human beings our gods. And it’s crazy because we make the other person the core of our identity, the core of our meaning, the core of our purpose. And when that person leaves us, when that person departs, when that person is unfaithful, when the person is not true to his promise, what happens is we get hurt and we get devastated.

Because here’s the thing: That happens when we expect from other people what we should expect only from God.

When we expect from another human being what we should only expect from God—perfect love, perfect faithfulness, perfect friend...

If you do that, you are worshipping another false god who is not committed to your well-being the way God is committed to your well-being. They are either indifferent or you are worshipping a demon that is committed to your destruction.

God is saying, “Guys, let’s have an exclusive relationship. Worship me alone because I’m the only one who’s on your side completely, one hundred percent. I’m willing to die for you on the Cross. I’m the only One who’s going to do this! If you’re going to worship money, if you’re going to worship power, if you’re going to worship fame or worship another human being, a human being cannot do that. Only Me. If not, you and your existence will be in danger...”

My dear friends, human beings are not very good deities. We are too broken for that lofty position. Have you made another human being your god? I pray that you and I, all of us, will repent.



Why Destroy the Idols

If you make another human being your god, you'll be frustrated. But not only that-- if you make that one person your god, you will be toxic to that person and you will load up expectations too high for that person's fulfill.

So, God is telling you, "No. You worship me. Let's have an exclusive relationship."

There's another lesson about these entire chapters on Worship that we need to learn from and it's in Deuteronomy 12:2-4:

DEUT 12:
2-4 NLT

"When you drive out the nations that live there, you must destroy all the places where they worship their gods-- high on the mountains, up on the hills, and under every green tree. Break down their altars and smash their sacred pillars.

DEUT 12:
2-4 NLT

Burn their Asherah poles and cut down their carved idols. Completely erase the names of their gods! Do not worship the LORD your God in the way these pagan peoples worship their gods."

Why bother? Let's just worship God alone. Why do we have to destroy these idols and altars that don't belong to the Lord?

Two Reasons:

1
DECREASE TEMPTATION

No. 1: You want to **decrease temptation**. You left the altar of Baal there, and you left the altar of another god there. You know, they lived amongst people and nations and tribes that worship so many gods.

The Canaanites, for example, they worshiped 234 deities. The Egyptians have more. Depending on the list that you will look at, they have 700-2,000 gods and goddesses.

Israel, only One. Only one. Boring. The other gods were more alluring, colorful, captivating, and all these dramas of fighting, having step-gods. It's just so colorful -- all their envy, and jealousy, and battles.

And sometimes, I think it's tempting when we all have these foreigners-- especially the foreigners who are worshiping these false gods-- they are richer, they are more powerful, they have an army and they're conquering this land.



Only One God

The little Israelites, they have only one God. And they were weak, smaller, and probably envy would hit them and They would ask, “What’s wrong with us?”

And so, Moses said no, choose our One True God and destroy these idols. Because you don’t want to be tempted-- you don’t anymore see the temptation there of you worshiping another god.

I have a confession to make. I was a junky. I loved *chichirya* for decades. And then my wife, I want to thank her, she changed our *chichirya* to something healthier-- but it was still *chichirya*.

But you see, if you want to remove the temptation and you want to decrease junk food, all you do is this: Go to your pantry where you store all your food and get a box and get all the junk food from the pantry, and go get your phone. Look at your phone and all the people there and find a friend that you least like.

And you say, “I have a gift for you.” I’m just kidding... 😊

And you give that box away. It’s common sense! Decrease temptation and rid of the stuff.



No. 2: You want to **increase protection.**

This is the theology of the sacraments, the sacramentals. Why do we believe in holy water? The holy water is holy because it opens us in the Presence of God that manifests through the medium of water. We believe in that.

So, spiritual power, I repeat-- good or bad-- manifests through symbols. So, you could go into an obsessive pursuit of stuff in your life or objects in your life that you think are evil and get rid of them.

But I think, in our modern age, the most powerful symbols are in media.

You want to get rid of symbols of evil in this world by being more choosy of what you watch, and what you listen to, and what you read-- because those power, they open your mind.

I just need to read you 1 Peter 5:8, “*Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.*”

Moses, he wanted the Israelites to get rid of the idols because it’s possible that they were used for evil.



Getting Rid of Idols

I'll give you an example: Molech. The practice of worshiping Molech was so evil at that ancient time that they would take their babies and throw them crying into an open pit of fire in the belly of this idol made of iron. It's evil!

Or the Asherah gods where there would be a temple with prostitutes and it is part of their cultic worship to have sex with prostitutes. Evil!

And so, Moses was getting rid of them. And in our life, we need to be aware that we can either worship gods that are indifferent to our welfare or we can slip into being subjected to demonic forces that are committed to destruction. And you don't want that.

Two More Messages:

First, please be aware that there is an enemy that prowls around you. He wants to steal away your joy, your marriage, your relationship, and you need to be aware. There is an enemy and you need to be careful.

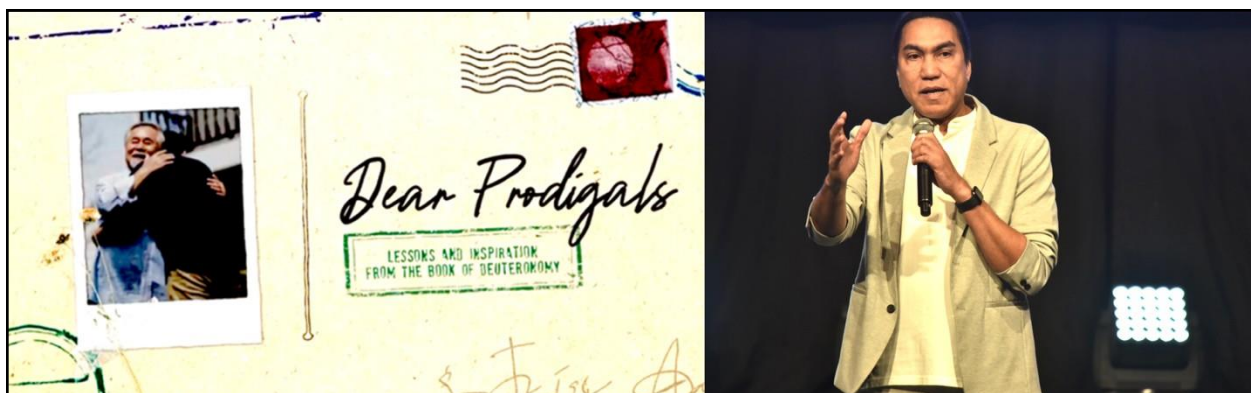
Second, instead of fear, I want you to trust in God who is working on your well-being and He is mightier than your enemy. Don't fear. Just trust in the God who is committed every single day of your life, working hard for your well-being.

Next, Alvin Barcelona!



Baby being offered to Molech.

iStockPhoto.com
<https://www.istockphoto.com> › Stock photos



BRO. ALVIN BARCELONA:

The second lesson on Worship:
Worship is transformational.

Moses in his continuing lecture on Worship in *Deuteronomy*, powerfully reminds the Israelites—and us today—that real Worship should always change you.

When I was in my 20s—about three years ago ☺-- I was sort of an actor. So, I attended an Acting Workshop.

Our directors taught us that in acting, when you are playing a character, you should be that character. That’s called *internalization*.

So, for example, if your character is a mad person, you should be convincingly insane. Right?

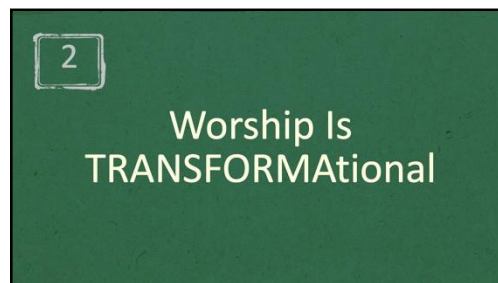
But this is what’s important that I learned from our directors: When the director says, “*Cut!*” You go back to your original, real self.

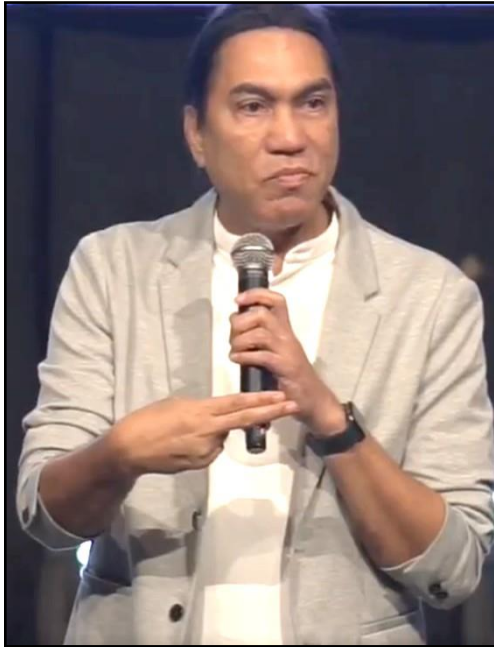
Might be that even as the scene is already done, you’re still insane. You internalized the role too much.

That’s why we have workshops where you give your all to portray the character. But when the director says, “*Cut!*” the scene is done.

Your role onstage, or in front of the cameras, is different from your real life.

That’s what I will never ever teach in Worship. Because in Worship, there is no “*Cut!*”





No “Cut!”

When you’re here worshipping, you’re so holy— “Oh, Lord, Lord...”

That’s okay.

But after The Feast, when you go to the parking lot and get into your car, some driver cuts you and, pissed off, you growl at him, “Hey, didn’t you see me?”

And the guy says, “We were together worshipping at The Feast...”

And you’re like, “Iba ‘yon! —That’s different!” 😊

I know someone, his hands used in worshipping, raising them as he sings, “*I love You, Lord...*” are the same hands he uses to hit his maid when the maid errs: “Why is this soup not hot?...”

If that happens, what you did at The Feast cannot be called *Worship*. It’s called *Acting...* Because here there was a “Cut!”

In *Worship*, there’s no “Cut!” What you do here, at The Feast, continues outside.

That’s why in our highest form of *Worship*—the Mass—what does the priest say at the end?

“The Mass is ended.” But, “go in peace to love and serve the Lord.”

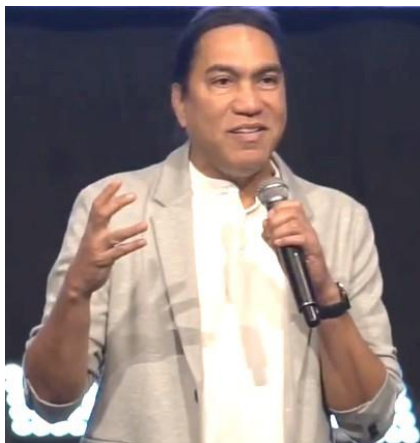
The Mass is already done, but you continue to love and serve – especially outside the church. Amen.

That’s why our life as preachers is difficult. Because we’re always seen here onstage—so, we’re like fish in an aquarium. So, we have to be careful with what we do outside.

Like... okay, this is gross. Long time ago, I had this bad habit of spitting just about anywhere... Then I became a preacher... I’m glad I overcame that habit.

Because what if I am spitting, and Alden, a Feaster, comes and greets me, “Bro. Alvin!”

So, I quickly switch to, “Oh, hi, Alden, Praise God!” 😊



Doing It Like Elvis, or the BTS

Well, I am also always saying, don't look up to us preachers all the time.

We teach everyone to look up to God...

But it's difficult to separate being a preacher and being your true self.

And that's not just for us. It's for all of us.

Later, when you go eat in a restaurant, your order is delayed, and you snap at the waiter, "O, why is my order late?"

And the waiter smiles, "Ah, you're the preacher at The Feast earlier..."

So, at once, you're like, "Ah, okay... We can wait... Love, you, Brother..." 😊

Yes, it's difficult. Our

Worship should be our Life.

What Bro. Bo said earlier is beautiful—we always hear this: *You become like the God you worship.*

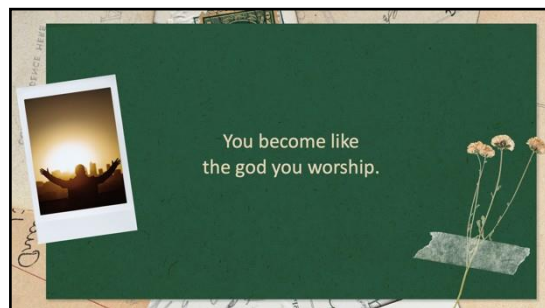
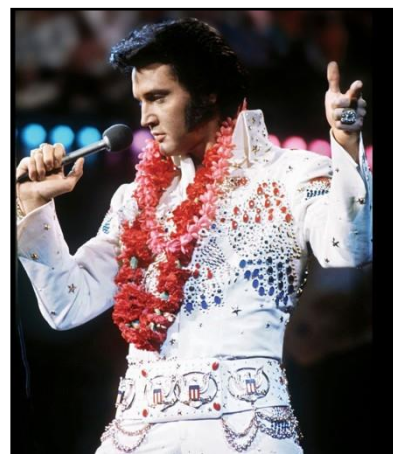
That's why we are compared to God because God is not just here. He is God there up to the outside. We bear Him with us.

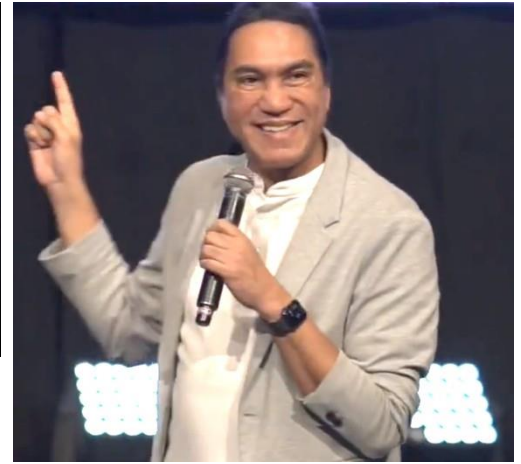
I am glad about what Bro. Bo said: "We may not be aware of it, but sometimes we make human beings our gods."

Well, in Entertainment, it's not morally, intrinsically wrong. But look: we copy our movie idols. During my father's time, Elvis Presley was the fad. During that time, all the men had sideburns, big collars, imitating the way he walked.

Remember the movie *Ghost* starring Demi Moore? All the women then imitated Demi Moore's short haircut—even if the style didn't suit them.

Today, K-Pop. The teenagers now, they look like the BTS (boy band)—trying hard to have *singkit*—narrow-- eyes, and violet, purple, or green hair.





Idol!

We become the gods we worship. Of course, I'm not saying that it's intrinsically wrong. We also do the same. But sometimes, we become not just our human idols... When our life goes around one idol...

Fr. Quesadas said we love our pets. It's okay. But there are some individuals whose life is centered on their pet. So, they become the spitting image of their pet. Hey, they even smell like their pet.

Here, in Filipino, what do we say? Well, money is not bad—we preach that money is important. But when you turn your back from everything for money, what do we call that in Tagalog? *Mukha ka nang pera.* – You look like money. At least in dollars 😊.

That's why, we look like the gods we idolize. So, let's watch out.

Sometimes, even in songs... I'm a singer, songwriter. The lyrics, actually are simply poetic. But during the time of my grandpa and grandma... You know the singer Pilita Corales, right?

She belted out: *Pag-ibig ko, kapantay ay langit, hirang...*

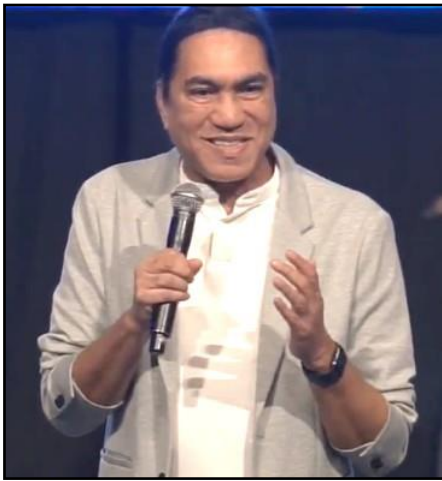
That's saying your love for a human being is as the level of Heaven.

Oh, don't, blame Pilita. She just sang that...

Then, came Rico Puno, with his version: *Pag-ibig ko, kapantay ay langit, baby...*

Added *baby* to *Heaven*.

When I was in high school, a friend—he's still my friend up to now—Rey Valera, he had beautiful songs. But he had one song which I want to ask him about if we see each other, if he's serious about its meaning: *Sinasamba kita... Higit sa 'yong akalang iniibig lang kita...* I worship you much more than you think that I just love you...



‘All of Me...’

Beautiful, poetic lyrics. But is that how we really love? We’re worshipping the one we love? Isn’t it, Bro. Bo said, if your life centers on one idol. Like even around your spouse, if that person dies—and really, one of you will go ahead—if your spouse is being buried, you’d be like, “Ay, sasama ako, sasama ako! I will go with you!”

When you see people crying out like that, push them into the grave! Let’s see if they don’t panic.

Tell them, “You said you wanted to go with your spouse. Then go...” 😊

O, Millennials, you also have a song: *All of me, loves all of you...*

Well, that’s not really bad. I also sing that song...

You see, for songwriters, that’s style. They are using metaphors. But for those hearing those lyrics, they take them seriously. Imagine, *All of me loves all of you?* You gave everything to each other... But then, what if you didn’t end up officially together? He exchanged you for another!?

So, you’d be wailing, “I gave everything to you...!”

Well, why did you give everything? You should have left a bit with you.

So, let’s be careful. Because, you know, our Worship rubs on to our lifestyle.

What did Moses say?

In Deuteronomy 12:31:

That’s why we hear this:

Why does God want that we worship only Him?

Is He ego-tripping? Is He insecure?

No. God wants that you worship only Him – for you. Our Talk title is correct. God wants you to worship Him with all your heart, with all your mind, with all your soul, with all your strength because *He is committed to your well-being*.

Those who gave their life to celebrities, will soon regret it when the celebrity dies, or already has-been --anyway, everyone will fade away.

Or, if you give your life to money, you know money knows no other word but *goodbye*.

Even the powerful, the wealthy you idolize, they will vanish.

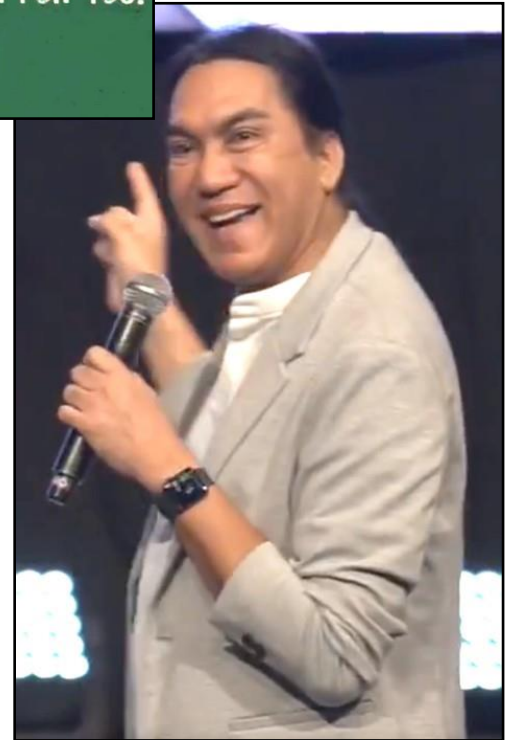
“You must not worship the Lord your God the way the other nations worship their gods, for they perform for their gods every detestable act that the Lord hates. They even burn their sons and daughters as sacrifices to their gods.”

DEUT
12:31 NLT

That's why God does not want that you to be frustrated... If you gave away everything, and you lost everything, you will be lost too.

THAT'S GOD'S DREAM FOR YOU:
EDEN!

But if you give everything to God, He won't vanish. He's always there—all of your life, all of the time. So, since you're putting your life at stake, you might as well bet it on Him all your life.



The worshippers of false gods are led to a life of death and violence.

The ancients, they bet on false gods whose culture was death, violence.

God does not want those. Because you'll be simply lonely. You'll be frustrated.

But if you worship Yahweh who always gives us Life, you end up creating Eden for others.

Beautiful. Bro. Bo said, it's a Call-- for us to go back to Eden. Why? Because Worship is much more than rituals.

Again, it's amazing that we sing Worship songs here, that we're all immersed in God's Presence. That's fantastic.

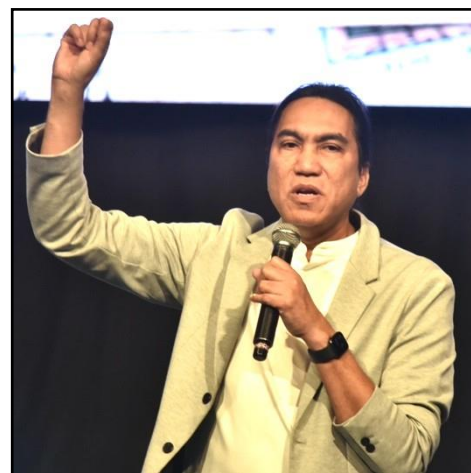
But as I said a while ago, Bro. Bo said, Worship goes beyond singing. If it's based only on that, it stops. And, as we said, Worship should not have "Cut!"

Because look at the structure of Moses's lecture:

First, Moses discusses the details of altars and sacrifices (chapters 12 to 13)

Second, he talks about seemingly random stuff like (1) tithing and (2) freeing slaves, forgiving debt, and helping the poor (chapters 14 to 15)

Third, he goes back talking about sacrifices again and religious festivals (chapters 16 to 17)



What's interesting there is tithing—giving, freeing slaves, cancelling debts—is worship?

Yes. We talked about this when we discussed *Leviticus*. Let's go through it because it is again mentioned in Deuteronomy 14: 22-28; 15:29:

What is this saying? Let's give to our spiritual family.

"Be sure to set aside a tenth of all that your fields produce each year... At the end of every three years, bring all the tithes of that year's produce and store it in your towns,

DEUT 14: 22,28 NLT

DEUT 15:29 NLT

²⁹ so that the Levites (who have no allotment or inheritance of their own) and the foreigners, the fatherless and the widows who live in your towns may come and eat and be satisfied, and so that the Lord your God may bless you in all the work of your hands."

The Levites, they are the ones serving in the Temple – they're the musicians, they're the gatekeepers, the guardians, the Temple officials. Moses said you give to them. And that continues until now. That's why we invite you.

We call you to give to your spiritual family.

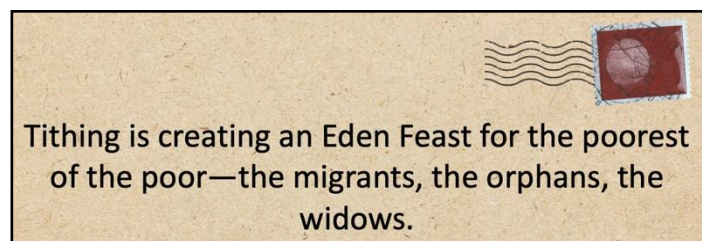
That's very much part of your worship in the Lord. Why? Because as you give, we are able to continue what we do.

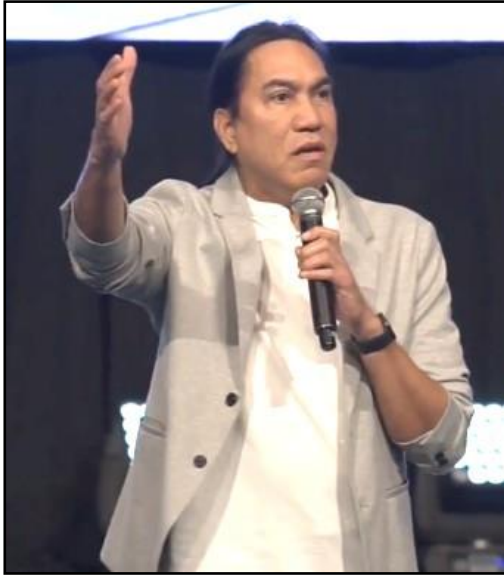
And then, Moses says, give to the foreigners. Today, those are the migrants.

Or to the fatherless, the orphans.

Our Worship should be connected with helping those in need.

Cannot be separate.





Mercy Ministries



That’s why our Feast gatherings are beautiful. But connected to these, we have our Mercy Ministries. It’s not enough if we just

sing and pray-- and not living our Worship and translating it into action.

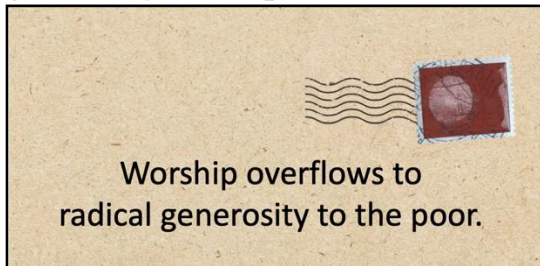
That’s why we have Anawim Home for Abandoned Elderly.

We have Grace To Be Born (for unwed pregnant women in crisis so that they won’t resort to abortion). We have Jeremiah Foundation for abused minor girls.

We have He Cares Mission for street children. We have a ministry for cancer patients—Jesus Christ Cares for Cancer. We have the LOJ Prison Ministry.

We’ve got to put our Worship into action. Our faith into action. Look at Deuteronomy 15: 1-7, 8 (*top*) and Deuteronomy 15:12.

What are these verses saying? Our Worship should overflow to radical generosity to the poor.



DEUT 15: 1,7-8 NLT

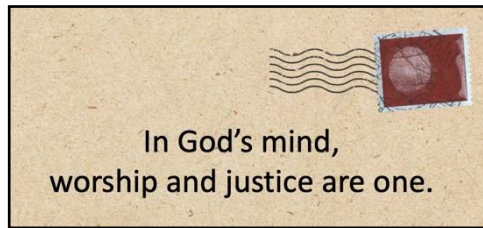
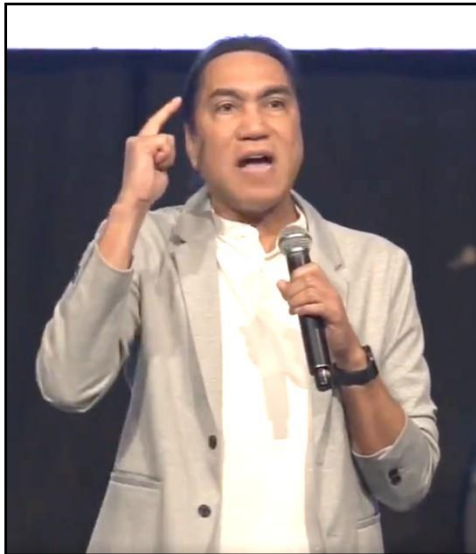
“At the end of every seven years you must cancel debts... If anyone is poor among your fellow Israelites in any of the towns of the land the Lord your God is giving you, do not be hardhearted or tightfisted toward them. Rather, be openhanded and freely lend them whatever they need...

DEUT 15:12 NLT

If any of your people—Hebrew men or women—sell themselves to you and serve you six years, in the seventh year you must let them go free.”

Kailangan makita sa gawa— sa kawanggawa. -- Our Worship must be seen in what we do, in our mercy.

We always hear that: The Church has a preferential option for the poor. That’s where it will be seen if we are changed when we worship God.



Look, even debts are cancelled, the slaves are set free.

Because in God's mind, Worship and Justice are one. That's why it can't be that you are a worshipper but at the same time, you're an oppressor. It doesn't match when you're a worshipper but you take advantage of the weakness of your fellowman.

I remember, do you know Yano? (Filipino folk/punk band formed in 1993.) They have a song that goes: *Banal na aso, santong kabayo... Natatawa ako... Holy dog, saintly horse... I couldn't help laughing, Hi-hi-hi...*

The song says a woman, riding in a jeepney, prayed and prayed the Rosary... But then she wanted to get off at a place where unloading was not allowed—the driver told her so, and pissed off, she cursed and cursed...

They don't match...Prayer and Unkind Words...

That's why sometimes, Bro. Bo and I, we were discussing long time ago—I even asked Bishop Lagdameo: Why are we, a Christian country, one of the Catholic countries in the world, or in Asia, we are No.1, but we still have many social problems, we still have many below the poverty line. Is there a mismatch between our being Christian and the way we live?

Because when I'm abroad—for example, in Japan, or in Europe, I see their pedestrians strictly following traffic rules. Like, when there are people crossing on the pedestrian lane, the drivers, even they're still far from the lane, stop their car and let the pedestrians pass. You know, they are said to be atheists—they don't believe in God. But they follow the traffic laws.

Here, in the Philippines, I remember, if you're crossing the street, it's like you're racing with Death! A jeepney would swipe you, and the driver simply growls at you, "Hey, are you crazy? Stay on the sidewalk, you crazy you!"

Then in the jeepney, there's are images of the Sto. Niño, Divine Mercy, Mama Mary.

Mismatched, right?

Wood and Fire

When I was in Japan, I saw sidewalk stalls with no one watching them.

One time, I wanted to buy a newspaper. But no one was minding the newsstand.

I asked someone how do I buy a newspaper.

The guy said, “You just put your money on the table, and get the paper.”

The money doesn’t get lost.

Then, they’re saying these people don’t believe in God.

Here, we have stalls right near the church...Or even inside the church, during Communion, we are told, “Before you go for Communion, secure your things, they might get lost.”

Don’t you think there’s a mismatch there?

Cardinal Luis Antonio Tagle once told me, because Christianity has a code, we’re okay with the code, we’re okay with the ceremonies, we’re okay with the Catechism-- but the Code of Life must be seen in one’s life.

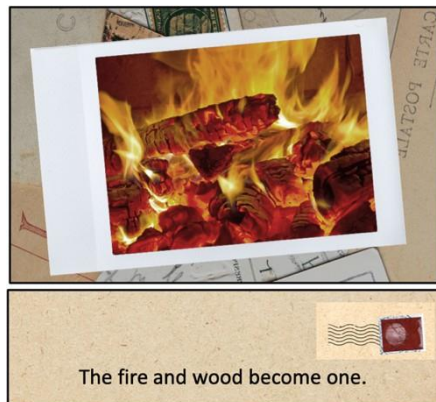
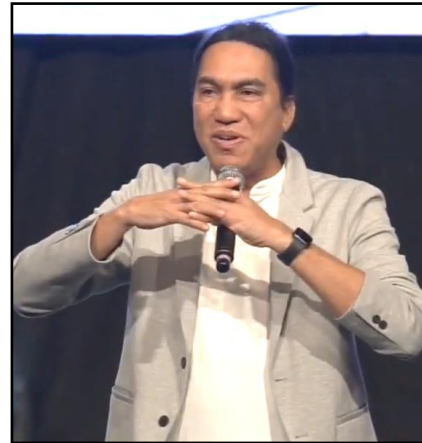
That’s why, as we worship day by day, we should be more like Christ. Our name is Krist-iyano -- Kristo, Christ-ian—Christ. So, we should be more like Christ. We should end up being committed to the well-being of others too.

That’s why, when we worship our One True God, we become like Him. We don’t become gods but we can be like Him, being committed to others.

I like the analogy of this wet wood. If you let it just pass over fire, nothing will happen with the wood. If you let the wood stay longer on the fire, about several seconds, it will become hot. But if you put it out of the fire, the wood will become cold again.

Sometimes, we are like that. We are cold when we go into the church... Then, we warm up with the Lord... But when we go out, we’re cold again.

But if you really want the wood to be one with the fire, immerse it into the fire. You know what happens to the wood? It will change in structure, in its chemistry— so that the wood and the fire become one.

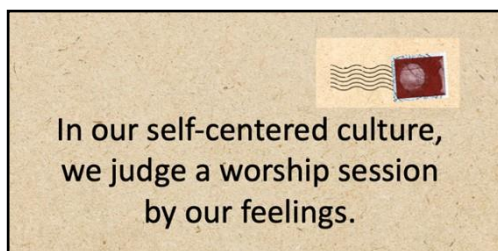
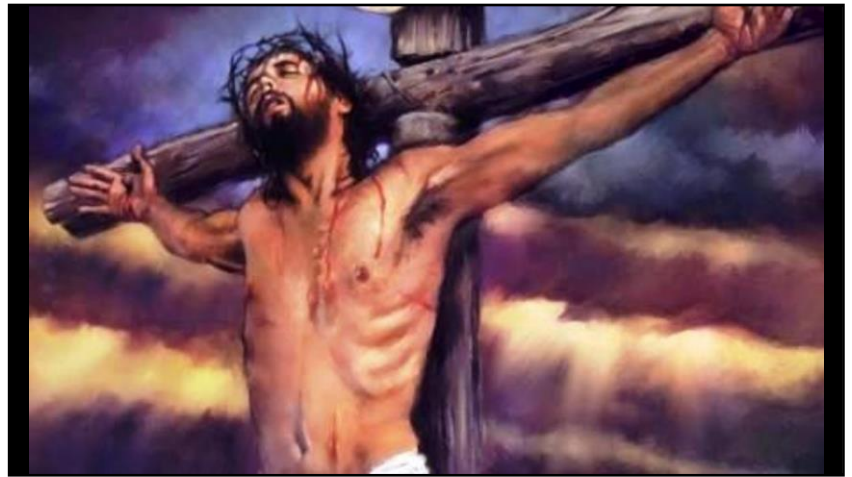


Ultimate Worship

And that's what God is saying:
We will be Eden. Because God
and man will dwell as one
and man will dwell with others
in harmony.

That's God's dream for us.

As we worship, we create
Eden and Heaven here on Earth.



Sometimes, our Worship becomes self-centered culture-- we judge a Worship session by our feelings.

Because when we worship, and we don't *feel* it, we are like, "Ay, I didn't feel the Worship—the songs were wrong, the sound system didn't work."

Even the Mass: "I didn't feel the Mass because the priest..."

We are dependent on what the Worship will do for us. We want the Worship to satisfy us. We want God to satisfy us.

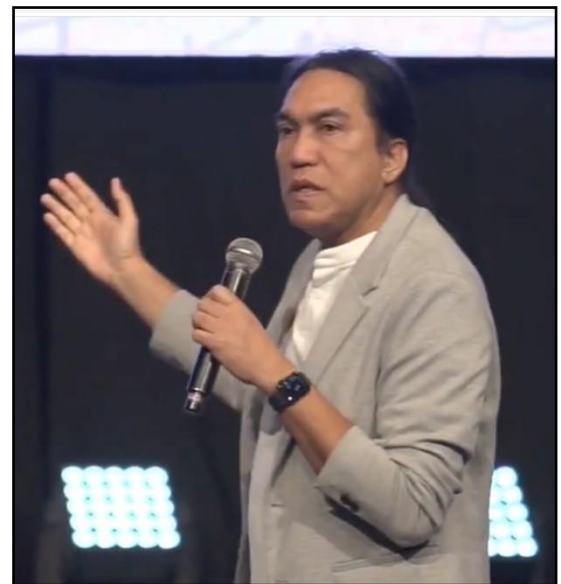
Looks like the reverse.

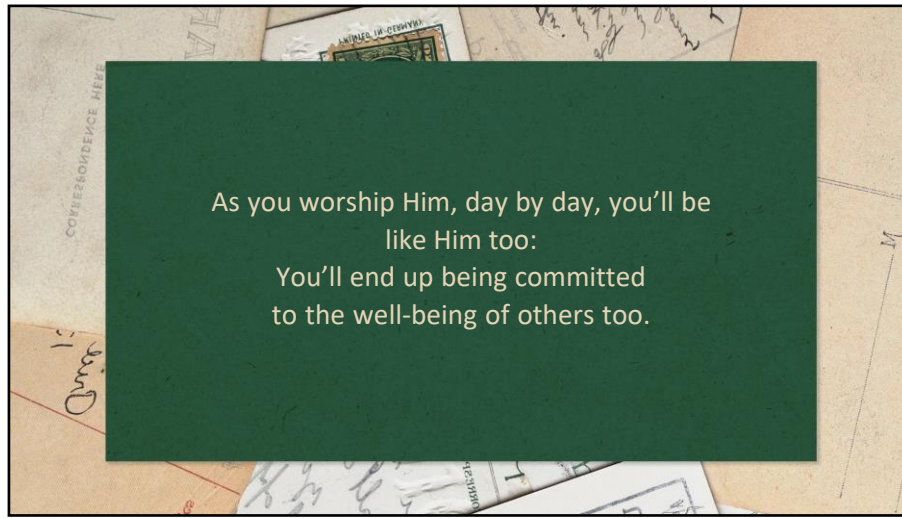
In Worship, we satisfy God.

Just like Jesus our Lord. It can't be that Worship is always good feeling.

How did Jesus worship His Father? He gave His life for Him. Is that feel-good? Being nailed on the Cross? Try it and see if it's good.

But Jesus embraced that-- because this is His Ultimate Worship to the Father—giving His life. He wanted to satisfy the Father.



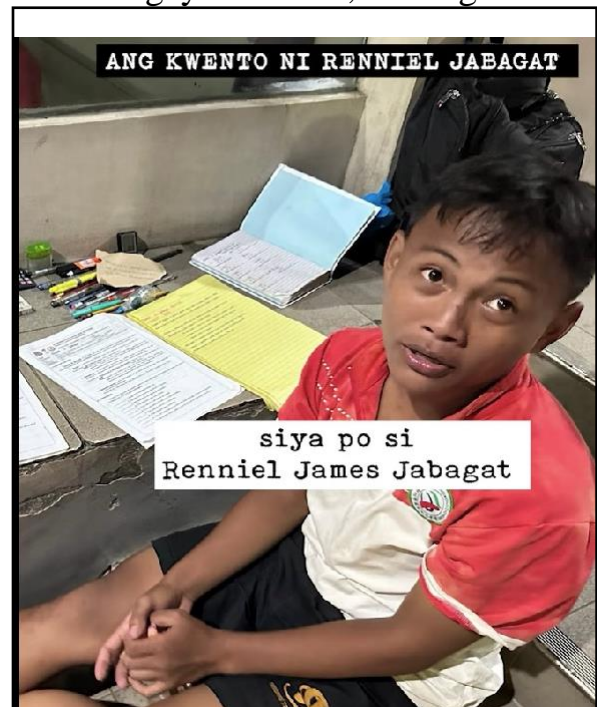


I'm going to end with the story that I will continue from where I left off during last Grand Feast.

Remember my story about Renniell James Jabagat? During the last Grand Feast, I told his story. We passed by him at the sidewalk in Cagayan de Oro, making his assignment there near 7/11 where there is light-- because there was no electricity in his family home.

Renniell dreams of becoming a soldier so he can rise from poverty and fend for his younger sister. That's because their parents abandoned them already. To earn money, he was also working as "watch-your-car-boy" – watching owners' cars parked near the sidewalk.

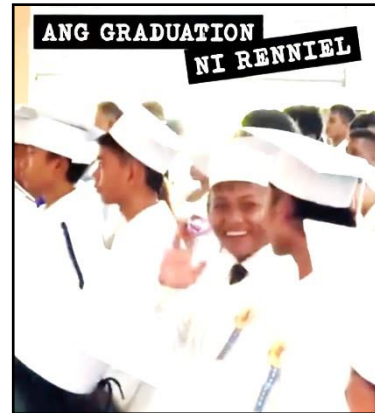
We became friends and we even gave him a cell phone so he could finish his school work. I told him, let me be the first you'd text when you finish your grade. And he finished-- Grade 10, Junior High.



Joy!

After three days, I received a text message from him, saying, “I’m done with my work, Kuya Alvin. Favor: I’m graduating, no one is coming to my graduation. If it’s okay, can you stand as my parent on my Graduation Day?”

I left that story hanging because our Grand Feast was on Sunday and the next day, Monday, was his Graduation Day...



Here’s the next story...

(From a video on Renniél’s Graduation Day: Bro. Alvin was able to go to Cagayan de Oro Junior High School. He was able to attend Renniél’s graduation. Renniél didn’t know Bro. Alvin was attending his graduation so he was pleasantly surprised.)

Above, Renniél happily receiving his diploma and Bro. Alvin presenting Graduation Medal on Renniél.

Renniel's Story: Part 3 and Part 4

This is just a wild guess, bold guess: That God sees me when I give talks. And God sees me when I preach, and when I sing. But I guess, God sees me more when I start being more like Him, when I commit myself to others—especially to those who need Him most.

I perceive I become more like Jesus when I am serving as His embrace to those who need Him.

Actually, this story has Part 3 and Part 4. Because it's not just I who committed to Renniel. This is not just a one-time thing—we give, then leave him. No.

That night, I introduced Renniel to The Feast Cagayan de Oro City. And Feast CDO adopted him. The Feast will journey with him and support him until he finishes Senior High and fulfill his dream of becoming a soldier.

Actually, since I've been presenting his story—I'm committed to this, but I can't afford to help Renniel through and through. We should unite to help him.

Two Sundays ago, at the Aliw Theater where we held our Feast, somebody approached me.

He said, "Bro. Alvin, I saw your video on Renniel. I want to help him in his dream to become a soldier. Tell him, he might want to be in the Air Force—because I am the general of the Mindanao Air Force. So, tell him, just finish his Senior High, and we will make arrangements to fulfill his dream and put his life in order."

Maybe, God isn't really asking that we be committed to the entire mankind—that's His mission. Most of the time, God calls us to be Jesus to just a few people—to our families, to our officemates in our job, our work, to our spiritual family.

But I guess He's also inviting us to commit ourselves to even one person who may be able to change and make a difference in this world.

I believe that when we worship our God who is committed to us, we express that more by committing ourselves to love others too.





ALL OF MY HEART
AND ALL OF MY SOUL



GOD I AM YOURS
FOREVER I'M YOURS



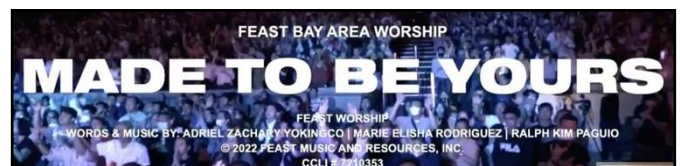
I'M MADE TO BE YOURS
FOREVER I'M YOURS

Commitment

If it's okay with you again, can you just lift up your hands as a symbol of us surrendering to God, and worshipping our One True God with all our heart, with all our mind, with all our soul, all our strength. And we lift up as well our dreams, for our family, for our health, for our finances, for our personal dreams, believing that we worship our God who is committed to us.

Come, let us commit ourselves to Jesus Who committed His all to the Father as we also commit our life to others. This we pray, in the Mighty Name of Jesus, we declare, we proclaim: God I am Yours. Forever, I'm Yours!

So, come, let's worship God.
And let's give our all to Him.
As we also give our all to others.
In Jesus' Name, we pray. Amen!





MERCY MINISTRIES

Cast all your anxiety on Him because he cares for you. --1 Peter 5: 6-7

HE CARES MISSION PART 3

Battling Giants, Armies on the Streets

JUDITH ENRIQUEZ works as an executive assistant of He Cares Mission.

She shares: “I basically do kinds of errands for Bro. Joe Dean, He Cares founder, and his wife Sis. Ardis. Like I take care of purchasing supplies, filing of legal documents, sending letters via email to donors, maintaining our social media accounts, and checking maintenance of the building. I also handle all the needs of our programs and services.”



Such gargantuan duties and responsibilities may already be God’s plan for Judith even way back ancient times. For her name has been part of ancient Bible stories.

The name *Judith* stems from Hebrew origins meaning *from Judea*.

Judea is Greek and Roman adaptation of *Judah*. And from the Bible, we know that Judah was a son of Jacob. Because Jacob struggled with an angel, God changed his name to *Israel* meaning *let God prevail*. And so, from Jacob, the succeeding generation of Jews have been called Israelites.

Judah was founder of the Kingdom of Judah, a most powerful kingdom later ruled by King David and King Solomon. And, most important to us, from their lineage would come the Messiah, our Lord Jesus, who was born in Bethlehem, a small town on the hills of Judea. Yes, located in present-day Middle East, Judea was part of the ancient kingdom of Israel.

The Jews were God’s chosen people, selected to be in covenant with Him, as we read in Deuteronomy 7:6: *For you (Israel) are a people holy to the Lord your God. The Lord your God has chosen you out of all the peoples on the face of the earth to be his people, his treasured possession.*

And from such grace, we have embraced this belief, this faith that we too are God’s chosen beloved.

God's Call

Judith may well say that she has been called to be among God's chosen servants.

Way back in the 1980s, Bro. Bo Sanchez, founder of our Light of Jesus Family, also founded a spin-off ministry, Catholic Alliance for Evangelization and Discipleship (CALLED). Yes, to evangelize— teach the Gospels, and spread God's call for people to be His disciples.

Judith's elder sister Edel answered that call. She joined CALLED. She also became a reader of *Kerygma*, the inspirational magazine published by the Shepherd's Voice Publications (SVP) also founded by Bro. Bo to reach hundreds more through media. There's a portion in the magazine informing readers they could write Bro. Bo. So, Edel wrote him and asked how she could love God more. Bro. Bo replied, giving her the schedule of the meetings of Daughters of Jerusalem (another ministry for women) in Cubao. She invited an officemate and together they attended the meeting. Then, they became regular members.

Edel encouraged Judith to join the group for the youth-- Youth Mission for Parishes and Communities (YMPACT) where she worked for three years.

Also, Edel suggested to Judith to serve as volunteer in SVP. And Judith did. Joining SVP was a wake-up call for Judith.

She says: "Although, I was attending Mass regularly, I didn't have a personal relationship with Jesus-- not until I attended the Light of Jesus *Crossroads* retreat for new members held at the Maryhills Retreat House in Antipolo in May 1993.

She adds: "That was the time I began my journey with the Lord in a personal way."

In 1999, she served as full-time administration staff for the LOJ Counselling Center.

In time, Judith got acquainted with Bro. Joe Dean (*right, in black shirt*) who invited her to join He Cares Mission. "I started as volunteer," she shares. "And in 2003, I decided to work fulltime."

Also, she began to attend The Feast held at the Bureau of Soils and Water Management (BSWM) office on Visayas Avenue, Quezon City led by Bro. Eng Si.



The Heroine

Through her name, we associate Judith not only with the ancient Israelites but also, specifically, with one of them.

We read the story in the *Book of Judith*.

Among Israel's heroines was Judith, a beautiful widow who lived in Bethulia, said to be a town near Jerusalem in Israel.

Although favored by God, Israel sinned against the Lord—their major transgression was idolatry, choosing to worship other gods.

The Lord was so angry with Israel, He stirred powerful kings aiming to expand their territories to conquer Israel. One of them was King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon (Mesopotamia in West Asia, now Iraq).

Nebuchadnezzar ruled from 605-562 BCE (Before the Common Era – or religious neutrality—not just Jewish nor Christian).

He ruled over the territories along the Tigris-Euphrates Rivers (today known as Iran, Iraq, Turkey, and Syria). When he was born, Babylon was under the rule of Assyria (located northern part of Mesopotamia). But in time, Nebuchadnezzar drove away the Assyrians and he became known as king of Assyria as well.

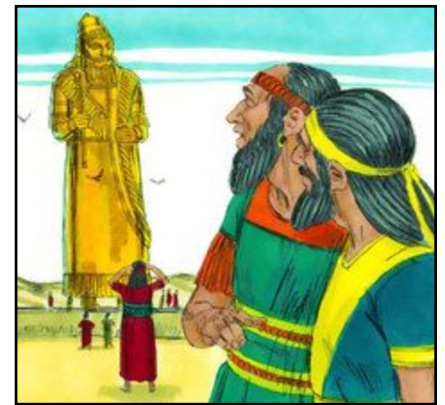
Nebuchadnezzar built a golden statue of himself and demanded that politicians worship his image (Daniel 3:1,5). He sent his army to destroy nations who refused to follow his decree.

At right, image of the golden statue of King Nebuchadnezzar with Jews Meshach, Shadrach, and Abednego refusing to bow before the statue. The king had them thrown into a fiery furnace but they were not burned. The king saw a fourth man walking with them in the flames-- said to be like the Son of God. Photo by BibleArtLibrary on Getty Images.—from freebibleimages.org

Yes, one nation which refused to follow Nebuchadnezzar was Israel where the Jews worshipped just one God, Yahweh.

Nebuchadnezzar's army, led by its general, Holofernes, set out to conquer Israel's prime city, Jerusalem. To the Jews, this must be, bottom line, sacrilegious as Jerusalem was their holy city, the seat of their Temple.

On their way to Jerusalem, Holofernes' warriors were about to rampage through Bethulia, Judith's town. Terrified, the leaders decided to surrender to Holofernes if God does not save them in five days.



The Winner

Judith, a pious woman, thought that was such a blasphemous demand on God.

She told the leaders: *“Nay, my brethren, provoke not the Lord our God to anger. 15 For if he will not help us within these five days, he hath power to defend us when he will, even every day, or to destroy us before our enemies. 16 Do not bind the counsels of the Lord our God: for God is not as man, that he may be threatened; neither is he as the son of man, that he should be wavering. 17 Therefore let us wait for salvation of him, and call upon him to help us, and he will hear our voice, if it please him. (Judith 8:15-17).*



With such a fervent faith, Judith took matters into her own hands—or her charm. With a maid, she hied off to the camp of Holofernes, pretending to side with him.

Knowing beautiful Judith supported him, Holofernes must have said, “Cheers!” raising a glass or more of wine, got drunk-- and while he was down and out, Judith beheaded him!

Judith instructed her maid to put Holofernes’ head in a basket so, as they walked out, no one in the camp knew what just happened to their general. Judith then arrived in Bethulia, holding Holofernes’ head by his hair, brandishing the head in front of everyone!

Seeing that his army had no more leader, the Jews gathered enough courage to attack Holofernes’s men, delaying if not totally frustrating their plan to conquer Jerusalem.

Judith thus was hailed her nation’s heroine.

Judith showed to the people—and to this day, to us-- that the weak can overcome the strong, the underdog can win— if we have complete trust in God. That through Him we can do the impossible like David defeated Goliath, like Judith subdued Holofernes and his army.



A Different Battle

Judith of He Cares has a different battle.

She is single and practically alone as her parents already passed away. She has two siblings, already in their 50s and already have a family of their own.

“My greatest blessing is He Cares has become my family,” she says. “I also met a lot of good people who have become my friends. They are helping me in my journey with the Lord.”

Yes, Judith needs an army of her own to support her in her mission to minister to street children. *Above, Judith (in blue shirt and denims) with the children.*

That is the army we know as He Cares Mission—out to battle poverty.

Poverty is the giant, the ferocious army that wayward children battle with on our streets. They need, maybe not one beauty brave enough to behead a drunkard. But one with courage, emboldened by deep trust in God to be able to bring those kids to a home where they will be cared for.

Judith has been blessed with faith to serve in such a home—in He Cares where she is assuring the children that yes, God truly cares for them.



FAMILY

Thank You!

The Feast Family, now organized as the Feast Mercy Ministries, is a spin-off ministry of the Light of Jesus Family founded by Bro. Bo Sanchez. Earlier named as Kerygma Family, The Feast Family is a unique online, non-physical, borderless, international community of friends who support each other's personal growth.

Partner beneficiaries of the Feast Mercy Ministries flourish because of your generous support.

Thank you for being with us. We pray that you find your daily source of inspiration from the resources that we send to you. We pray too that you may consider giving to The Feast Mercy Ministries. No gift is too small.

Thank you very much in advance for your gift. Our prayer is that God will continue to reward you as you give.

FOR EXISTING DONORS:

Thank you for the Love. Your monthly donation helps us continue extending support to our Light of Jesus spin-off organizations, including our partner beneficiaries. Your gift will sustain our operations and, we hope, help us reach out to the persons our Lord has called us to make disciples and give them renewed hope.

Be a Feast Family member. Write or call us. Now.

Email Address: jocelyn@kerygmfamily.com

Website: <https://kerygmfamily.com> Telephone Numbers: 8725-9999/
Fax 725-1230

Our Partner Beneficiaries

Jeremiah 33 Foundation is a shelter for minor girls particularly victims of sexual abuse.



Grace To Be Born is a halfway home for pregnant women in crisis.



He Cares Mission provides shelter and pastoral care for street children.



Pag-asa ng Pamilya Foundation grants scholarships to indigent students.



Jesus Christ Cares for Cancer provides financial assistance and pastoral care for indigent cancer patients.



The Light of Jesus Pastoral Care Center ministers to those who are emotionally and spiritually wounded.



H.A.I.L. MARY is acronym for Healthcare Assistance for Indigents and Lepers of Mary, adopting the Blessed Mother as the patroness of its mission to eradicate leprosy in Abra within 8–10 years.



The Light of Jesus Disaster Recovery Ministry provides evacuation assistance, relief goods, financial aid, and other needs of calamity victims.

The Light of Jesus Prison Ministry brings Jesus to the Correctional Institution for Women to give them hope for a new life of dignity.



Anawim Lay Missions Foundation provides a home for poor elderly who have been abandoned by their family and have nowhere else to go.

CHOOSE HOW YOU WANT TO GIVE

1. Donate ONLINE (through credit card) Go to www.kerygmfamily.com and click 'DONATE' box Paypal I US Donations.

2. Pick Up from Your House or Office (Metro Manila Only) Cash or Checks Address Checks to Shepherd's Voice Radio and Television Foundation Inc. and call Joy at (+632) 725 -9999 loc 112 or text (+63) 922-828-9890 and we'll pick them up from your home or office.

3. Mail 12 Post-Dated Checks to Our Office for US and CANADA: Address Checks to Kerygma Family, 848 Rainbow Blvd # 1937, Las Vegas, NV 89107. For Other Countries/Philippines: Address Check to Shepherd's Voice Radio and Television Foundation Inc. and mail (registered mail) to Shepherd's Voice, 60 Chicago St., Cubao, Quezon City, Philippines 1109

4. Directly Deposit to Our Bank Accounts. Deposit to Shepherd's Voice Account in any branch of these banks:

Account name: Shepherd's Voice Radio and Television Foundation Inc.

BPI: Savings Account no: 0123-4849-67 Cubao Aurora Branch

Banco de Oro Savings Account no: 003970019804 General Araneta, Cubao

Branch Banco de Oro - Savings Account no. 000160506123 SM Cubao Branch

PNB - Current Account no. 108410089566 SSS branch

Metrobank-Savings Account no. 265-3-26509112-2 e Rodriguez Branch

Allied Bank Savings Account no. 3160-12345-1 E Rodriguez Branch

Union Bank Savings Account no. 00-206-000940-1 Tektite Branch

Note: Text, Fax, or email us your name, date and amount of deposit, and the branch of the bank where you deposited your donation, or fax the deposit slip to us.

Email us at support@kerygmfamily.com or text us at (63) 922-828-9890/ (63) 998-968-4416 or Fax to (+632) 725-1230



FAMILY ONLINE NEWSMAGAZINE

***The Feast Family* online newsmagazine is produced
by the Shepherd's Voice Radio and Television Foundation,
which is also our partner beneficiary, with editorial services
by the Light of Jesus Family Library Ministry.**

Founder: Bo Sanchez

Mercy Ministries Chairman
Hermie Morelos

Editor-in-Chief
Cynthia U. Santiago

Chief Photographer
Edmundo L. Santiago

**Feast International
Region Head**
Vic Español

Reporter-Writer
Cybill P. Bayto

Multimedia Staff
Ronaldo Antonio U. Santiago
Dylan Anthony A. Santiago

Media Ministries Head
Randy Borromeo

Contributors
The Feast Builders

Finance Officer
Rowena Cequeña

Publication Consultant
Chelle S. Crisanto

Human Resources Manager
Erika Ventura



For comments, article contributions, write or call us:
Email Address: lojlibrary2819@gmail.com
Landline phone numbers: 8725-9999, Fax 725-1230
Mobile phone: 0998-953-0657

Go and make disciples of all men.
— Matthew 28:19

