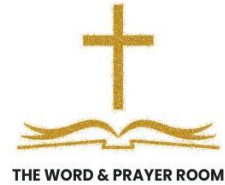


Lay Down Your Crown



Day 5: Are You a People Pleaser?

Because saying “yes” to everyone can mean saying “no” to God.

! Disclaimer: This message might make you say “Amen” or “Ouch.”

But truth is truth and sometimes the truth that hurts, is the same truth that heals.

Key Scripture: Galatians 1 : 10 (NIV)

“Am I now trying to win the approval of human beings, or of God? Or am I trying to please people? If I were still trying to please people, I would not be a servant of Christ.”

The Crown - What It Represents in This Story

The People Pleaser Crown is shiny, heavy, and deceptive. It looks holy, sounds humble, and feels righteous - but often, it hides exhaustion, resentment, and quiet disobedience. It’s the weight many carry in churches and ministries - especially in Black-led churches, where saying “no” can be interpreted as rebellion or spiritual immaturity.

Culturally, we’ve been taught that to love God is to say yes. Yes to every invitation. Yes to every ministry. Yes to every gap that needs filling. We equate commitment with calling, and sacrifice with submission. But what happens when that yes is outside of God’s will? What happens when “serving the Kingdom” means neglecting the King’s voice?

✨ My Personal Reflection on “Are You a People Pleaser?”

Over the years, I’ve seen this pattern everywhere - in small fellowships, large congregations, and ministry networks. It’s a quiet epidemic in the Body of Christ. We celebrate loyalty, but rarely challenge alignment. We reward presence over purpose and endurance over effectiveness. We talk about faithfulness in service but shy away from **fruitfulness in calling**. Because the moment you question fruit, it can sound like criticism and in many of our church cultures, that’s a line no one dares to cross.

We’ve mastered the art of being busy for God, without always being aligned with God. There are worship leaders who can sing beautifully but don’t truly understand a life of worship. They know how to lead songs, but not how to lead presence. You see, the anointing isn’t in the voice - it’s in the vessel.

You can fake talent, but you can't fake intimacy. A technically perfect performance can move emotions, but only a surrendered heart moves Heaven.

There are Preachers and Teachers who stand behind pulpits but haven't opened their Bibles since the last time they spoke. They love the platform but neglect the preparation. Preachers are called to proclaim the Word; teachers are called to explain it - both require revelation, not repetition. Preaching isn't performance; it's prophecy. Teaching isn't eloquence; it's explanation inspired by the Spirit. A preacher or teacher who doesn't feed on the Word can only recycle what once nourished them - they can't deliver fresh bread to the flock. And a congregation that keeps eating yesterday's manna will always hunger for more but grow in depth far less.

Then there are leaders and assistants who carry influence but lack discernment - who hold positions because of who they know, not because of what they carry. They've become gatekeepers instead of gardeners - protecting positions instead of cultivating people. And we see it. We sense it. We know when something isn't right. But we stay silent. Because in many of our churches, especially Black-led ones, we've confused confrontation with cruelty and correction with criticism. We don't want to offend. We don't want to seem judgmental. We tell ourselves it's not our place - that God will deal with it. But sometimes God is trying to deal with it through us.

And so, dysfunction becomes a routine part of church life. We tolerate misalignment because it's easier than addressing it. We accept mediocrity because "it's voluntary." We protect feelings, but sacrifice fruitfulness. We mistake peace for silence when it's really just avoidance. The tragedy is that many of the people serving out of place are not malicious - they're misguided. They're passionate but poorly positioned. And when we fail to challenge that, we don't protect them - we limit them. If someone is serving in a role God never called them to, we're not doing them a favour by keeping them there - we're denying them the joy of operating in their true anointing.

The People Pleaser Crown keeps us quiet - it convinces us that kindness is compromise, and that speaking truth in love will cause division. But avoidance doesn't preserve unity; it dilutes it. When we refuse to realign people in love, we create environments where the gifted become weary, the anointed become overlooked, and the uncalled become untouchable. And slowly, without even realising it, the church becomes driven by personality instead of purpose, comfort instead of conviction, and familiarity instead of faithfulness.

It's time to tell the truth in love - not to embarrass, but to empower. Not to expose people, but to elevate them into the place God actually called them to. We cannot keep confusing commitment with calling. It's possible to serve faithfully in the wrong role and still miss the mark. When the wrong people are in the right positions, everyone suffers - the team, the vision, and ultimately, the testimony of the church. So, the question remains: ***Are we protecting people from pain - or protecting ourselves from confrontation?*** Because when God calls for alignment, silence is not grace - it's disobedience.



So, What Did I Learn From This?

I'm learning that laying down your crown sometimes means stepping back from what looks good to pursue what's truly God. True service is not about being visible; it's about being viable. You can't sustain what you were never assigned. When we fill roles we're not called to, we rob both ourselves and others of divine alignment. And when we elevate effort over excellence, we teach the next generation that God should be grateful for anything - when in truth, we should be giving Him our everything. God never asked for perfection. But He does ask for purpose, obedience, and integrity.



Why We Struggle to Lay It Down

Because in church culture - especially in Black-led spaces - saying no can feel like betrayal. We fear being labelled proud, lazy, or unspiritual. We fear losing belonging. So, we perform our faith instead of practising obedience. We confuse busyness for fruitfulness and activity for anointing. And often, because most ministry roles are voluntary, we convince ourselves that the Kingdom can operate on minimum effort. But Heaven's standard never lowers because we're unpaid. We give our best - not because we're rewarded, but because God is worthy.



Scripture Focus: Galatians 1 : 10 (NIV)

"Am I now trying to win the approval of human beings, or of God? Or am I trying to please people? If I were still trying to please people, I would not be a servant of Christ."

- **“Am I now trying to win the approval of human beings...”** Approval is intoxicating. It makes us feel accepted and secure - but it’s a temporary comfort with eternal consequences. The more we crave it, the less room we leave for conviction.
- **“...or of God?”** This is the dividing line between performance and purpose. Pleasing people will always require compromise. Pleasing God will always require courage. You can’t do both and keep your peace.
- **“Or am I trying to please people?”** The Apostle Paul knew what it meant to be misunderstood, criticised, and even rejected. But he also knew the danger of confusing acceptance with assignment. When people’s opinions become the loudest voice in the room, obedience fades into the background.
- **“If I were still trying to please people...”** The word still is powerful - it means Paul used to live that way. Like many of us, he once needed approval to feel useful. But transformation came when he stopped seeking validation and started seeking vision.
- **“...I would not be a servant of Christ.”** True servanthood leaves no room for divided loyalty. You cannot wear both crowns - the crown of approval and the crown of obedience.

To serve Christ is to surrender the right to be liked, applauded, or universally understood. It’s not easy but it’s liberating. Because when you stop living for people’s approval, you finally make room to live for God’s pleasure.



Conclusion: The Cost of Saying “Yes” Too Much

There comes a point when constant yeses start to drain more than they build. You can’t pour from an empty vessel, and you can’t discern clearly when your obedience is drowned out by obligation. We’ve made “faithfulness” a badge of honour - but sometimes, faithfulness to people’s expectations quietly replaces faithfulness to God’s instruction. And here’s the truth few want to admit: You can be gifted, passionate, and loyal - and still be out of alignment. Because calling is not about activity; it’s about assignment. Saying “yes” to everything doesn’t make you more spiritual - it often makes you more stretched, more silent, and eventually, more stuck.

But here’s the hope: Every misaligned yes can become a redeemed moment if you’re willing to stop, listen, and realign. God never wastes obedience - even when

it begins in misunderstanding. So, as we close this chapter and prepare to go deeper, ask yourself one honest question: “Who am I really trying to please - God or people?” Because until we answer that truthfully, we’ll keep confusing loyalty for love and pressure for purpose. It’s time to stop performing faith — and start walking in alignment.

✨ Stay tuned for tomorrow’s continuation - Day 6 (Part 2): Practical Applications, Declarations, and Prayers. We’ll go deeper into how to realign your service, restore your focus, and rebuild your boundaries with grace and excellence.