



Are you on the way to Heaven?



† My Beloved Children, St. Bakhomios Youth

My hearty congratulations to you for the beginning of year 2011.

It is now the end of the previous year in our life, and the beginning of another new year. Who knows if we will be here the year after or not?. The life we live on earth is inside the frame of "The unknown"; but one fact we know is; in a moment our life will stop and according to our Christian faith, we know that we will stand before the throne of God the Almighty- the just judge. God will examine our deeds and determine if we will be entitled to Heaven or to be cast down to hell!! . I am sure that all of us would like to be in Heaven at the end. So; I found it is good to make "Reaching Heaven" to be the target for your 2011 youth Calendar. To help you on the way; I chose some parables of the Holy Bible that gives an understanding of steps on the way to Heaven. If you follow the message of each month; and take them as a serious action in your heart; with God's grace & your confession father guidance, & Fr. Tadros God willing you will achieve Heaven. Happy new year, God Bless you, Pray for me. † 01/01/2011

2011 YOUTH CALENDAR

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2011

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JANUARY

The Parable of the Sower



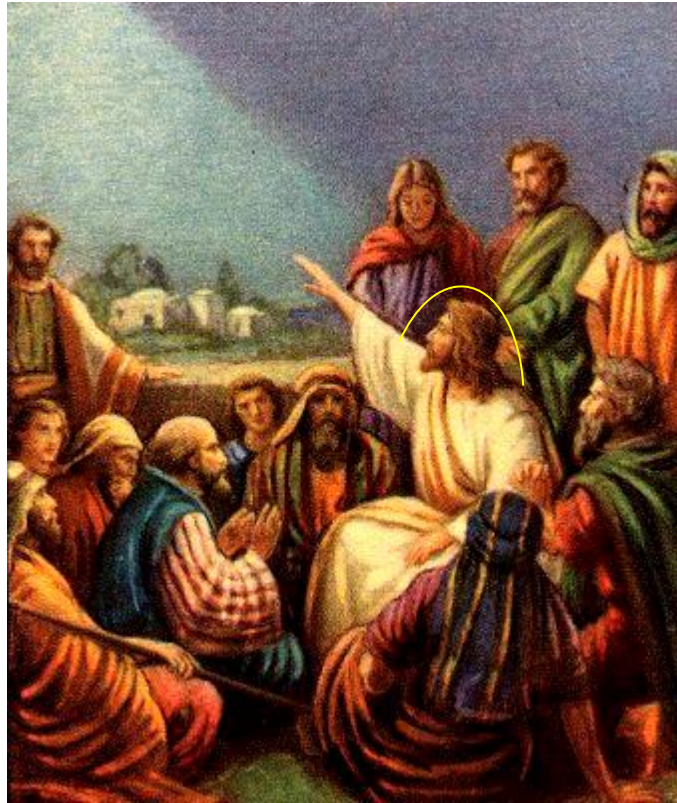
What type of soil are you? (Matt. 13:1-9; Mark 4:1-9)

And when a great multitude had gathered, and they had come to Him from every city, He spoke by a parable: "A sower went out to sow his seed. And as he sowed, some fell by the wayside; and it was trampled down, and the birds of the air devoured it. Some fell on rock; and as soon as it sprang up, it withered away because it lacked moisture. And some fell among thorns, and the thorns sprang up with it and choked it. But others fell on good ground, sprang up, and yielded a crop a hundredfold." When He had said these things He cried, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear!"

The Sower is our Lord Jesus Christ and He throws the seeds of His love and Commandments in our hearts. He created us all with equality and granted His salvation to us all. He always wants to support us in our struggle against sin. When the Lord mentioned the different types of land, it does not mean that He created a good human or a bad human but it means that He gave me free will to choose my way. It is in your hand to choose and determine your end. Will it be Heaven or hell?



FEBRUARY



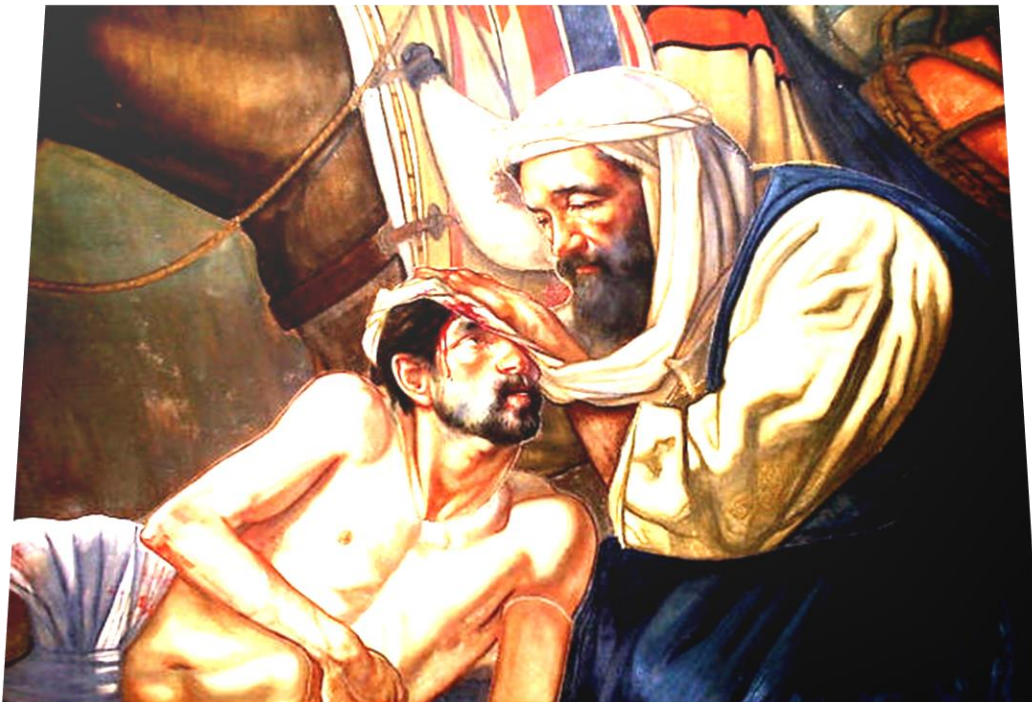
The New Life (Luke 5:36)

"Then He spoke a parable to them: "No one puts a piece from a new garment on an old one; otherwise the new makes a tear, and also the piece that was taken out of the new does not match the old. And no one puts new wine into old wineskins; or else the new wine will burst the wineskins and be spilled, and the wineskins will be ruined. But new wine must be put into new wineskins, and both are preserved. And no one, having drunk old wine, immediately desires new; for he says, "The old is better."

Putting a piece from a new garment on an old one or putting new wine in old wineskins means when I become a true Christian with baptism or repentance and confession and I still have my old habits and life, not wanting to let go of them. It cannot work to have a true life with our Lord Jesus Christ while keeping your same habits and old sinful ways. The Lord with all His love is encouraging you to change to grant you His kingdom of Heaven but it gets back to you if you want it or not.



MARCH



As much as you can do good, do good (Matt. 22:34-40; Mark 12:28-34)

"And behold, a certain lawyer stood up and tested Him, saying, "Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" He said to him, "What is written in the law? What is your reading of it?" So he answered and said, "'You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind,' and "your neighbor as yourself.'" And He said to him, "You have answered rightly; do this and you will live." But he, wanting to justify himself, said to Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?"

Then Jesus answered and said: "A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, who stripped him of his clothing, wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead.

Now by chance a certain priest came down that road. And when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. Likewise a Levite, when he arrived at the place, came and looked, and passed by on the other side. But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was. And when he saw him, he had compassion. So he went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine; and he set him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. On the next day, when he departed, he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said to him, "Take care of him; and whatever more you spend, when I come again, I will repay you.'" So which of these three do you think was neighbor to him who fell among the thieves?" And he said, "He who showed mercy on him." Then Jesus said to him, "Go and do likewise."

The Lord said that he/she who gives you a cup of water in my Name, his/her reward is waiting for you in heaven and St. James the apostle said in his letter, "he who knows to do good and does not do it, it is a sin for him/her". Concerning doing good from the heart, people are different; some avoid doing any good to others, some do it being forced, some do it for a pretence, some do it just to get it out of their way, some escape it etc... True true Christian volunteers wholeheartedly to do good wherever and whenever they can. The top Christians will not wait for anyone to ask them to do but they do good automatically when they see the need for it and they do it to anyone regardless if they know the person or not, if the person is good to them or not. Keep in your mind that whenever you do any good, is kept for you in heaven and better not to wait for its reward on earth.



APRIL



Don't be misled (Luke 6:39)

And He spoke a parable to them: "Can the blind lead the blind? Will they not both fall into the ditch? A disciple is not above his teacher, but everyone who is perfectly trained will be like his teacher. And why do you look at the speck in your brother's eye, but do not perceive the plank in your own eye? Or how can you say to your brother, "Brother, let me remove the speck that is in your eye," when you yourself do not see the plank that is in your own eye? Hypocrite! First remove the plank from your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck that is in your brother's eye.

I have seen in life, especially nowadays a lot of good people lose their way because they are following bad examples or hanging around bad groups. It is a pity for you to be a child of our Lord God and Saviour Jesus Christ through baptism and to have the Holy Spirit inside you through confirmation and unite to our Lord through Holy Communion and lose your way and your heavenly inheritance, being misled by the wrong people. In this case you make yourself a blind lead by a blind. My son/daughter, examine those whom you hang around with or those you follow, are they in Christ our Lord or not before you go into a relationship with that person or continue the relationship.



MAY



Naked I came out of my mothers' womb and naked I will go out of the world. (Matt. 12:13)

"Then one from the crowd said to Him, "Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me." But He said to him, "Man, who made Me a judge or an arbitrator over you?" And He said to them, "Take heed and beware of covetousness, for one's life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses." Then He spoke a parable to them, saying: "The ground of a certain rich man yielded plentifully. And he thought within himself, saying, "What shall I do, since I have no room to store my crops?" So he said, "I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build greater, and there I will store all my crops and my goods. And I will say to my soul, "Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years; take your ease; eat, drink, and be merry."' But God said to him, "Fool! This night your soul will be required of you; then whose will those things be which you have provided?" So is he who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God."

You cannot look up and down at the same time. You cannot be on the way to heaven while you are putting all your care in earthly matters and possessions. If you are seeking the Kingdom of heaven in reality, free yourself step by step from the earth, which you will have to leave at a certain time. You do not know regardless you like it or not.

My beloved son/daughter, if you want heaven, put your eye on heaven; the 4 golden verses advising you to learn them off by heart are in Col 3:1-4



Don't Puff up (Luke 14:7)

So He told a parable to those who were invited, when He noted how they chose the best places, saying to them:

"When you are invited by anyone to a wedding feast, do not sit down in the best place, lest one more honorable than you be invited by him; and he who invited you and him come and say to you, 'Give place to this man,' and then you begin with shame to take the lowest place. But when you are invited, go and sit down in the lowest place, so that when he who invited you comes he may say to you, 'Friend, go up higher.' Then you will have glory in the presence of those who sit at the table with you. For whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted."

Our grandfather Adam and grandmother Eve had fallen from the Paradise by the terrible sin of pride initiated by the devil. Our Lord Jesus Christ to save us, humbled himself and came to us from Heaven to earth. Our holy fathers taught us that when pride went up to heaven, it dropped the heavenlies down (the devils); and when humility came down to earth (Our incarnate God and Saviour Jesus Christ) He lifted up the earthlies to heaven (us the humans).

My beloved son/daughter, remember that our Lord to Whom has all perfection, said to us "learn from Me for I am gentle and humble in heart"



JULY



The Value of the Repentant Heart

Also He spoke this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others:

"Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, 'God, I thank You that I am not like other men--extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this tax collector. I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I possess.' And the tax collector, standing afar off, would not so much as raise his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, 'God, be merciful to me a sinner!' I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted."

In this parable, the tax collector who was counted in the category of sinners and adulterers; just he asked the Lord to have mercy upon him, the Lord accepted him. The right thief on the cross who was crucified because of his criminal life, just he confessed the Lord and asked to be accepted, was promised paradise on the spot. It is the greatest love and mercy of our Lord to grant us the sacrament of repentance and confession.

My beloved son/daughter, do you benefit from this great sacrament with a sincere and honest heart and real action with regular practice or not? I hope you are



AUGUST



Are you Keen to make the Effort? (Matt. 22:1-14)

Now when one of those who sat at the table with Him heard these things, he said to Him, "Blessed is he who shall eat bread in the kingdom of God!" Then He said to him, "A certain man gave a great supper

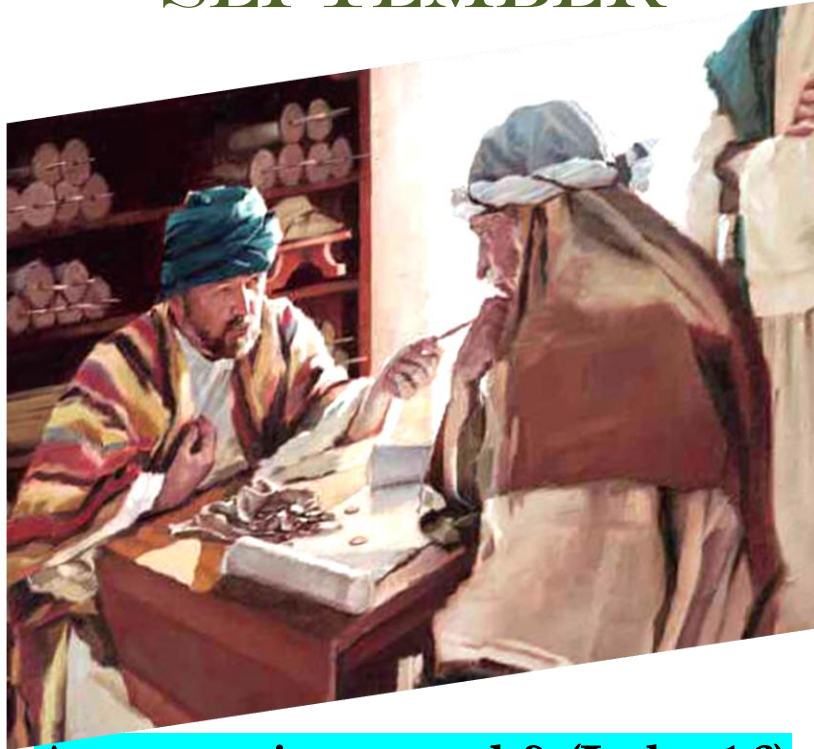
and invited many, and sent his servant at supper time to say to those who were invited, "Come, for all things are now ready." But they all with one accord began to make excuses. The first said to him, "I have bought a piece of ground, and I must go and see it. I ask you to have me excused." And another said, "I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I am going to test them. I ask you to have me excused." Still another said, "I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come." So that servant came and reported these things to his master. Then the master of the house, being angry, said to his servant, "Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in here the poor and the maimed and the lame and the blind." And the servant said, "Master, it is done as you commanded, and still there is room." Then the master said to the servant, "Go out

into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled. For I say to you that none of those men who were invited shall taste my supper."

The king prepared his dinner but those who were invited did not enjoy it because of their silly mind. Our Lord is preparing the greatest dinner to us every day, His Body and Blood on the altar; do we go to eat the Bread of life or are we very easily for any silly thing busy ourselves from having the Lord's supper?" "My beloved son/daughter in fatherly love I advise that you never postpone having Holy Communion for any reason; simply because we are not sure if we will be still be alive for the next holy mass to come or not; please refer to Jn6:53-58.



SEPTEMBER



Are you wise enough? (Luke 16)

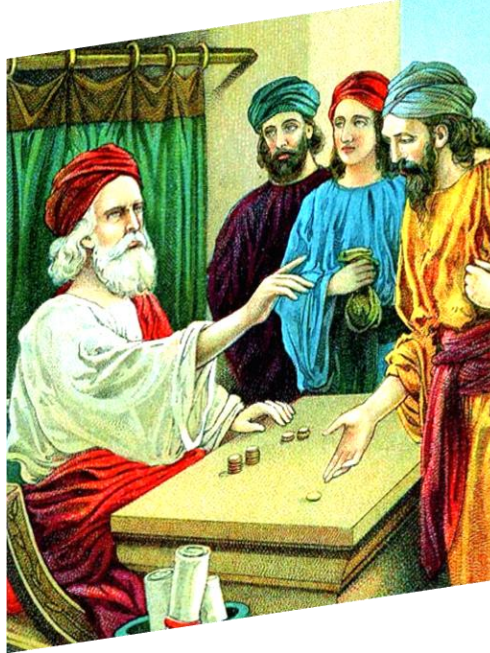
He also said to His disciples: "There was a certain rich man who had a steward, and an accusation was brought to him that this man was wasting his goods. So he called him and said to him, "What is this I hear about you? Give an account of your stewardship, for you can no longer be steward.' Then the steward said within himself, "What shall I do? For my master is taking the stewardship away from me. I cannot dig; I am ashamed to beg. have resolved what to do, that when I am put out of the stewardship, they may receive me into their houses.' So he called every one of his master's debtors to him, and said to the first, "How much do you owe my master?' And he said, "A hundred measures of oil.' So he said to him, "Take your bill, and sit down quickly and write fifty.' Then he said to another, "And how much do you owe?' So he said,"A hundred measures of wheat.' And he said to him, "Take your bill, and write eighty.' So the master commended the unjust steward because he had dealt shrewdly. For the sons of this world are more shrewd in their generation than the sons of light.

We are granted life, we are granted time and different abilities. The Lord gave all this to us that we enjoy a good life on earth and also use all these abilities wisely to prepare for our heavenly inheritance. How unwise will we be if we do all things just for earthly achievements for this temporary and short life and forget about the eternal life.

I pray that God gives us all alertness to consider the purpose of our life on earth and set the correct goal.



OCTOBER



Be Faithful (Matt. 25:14-30)

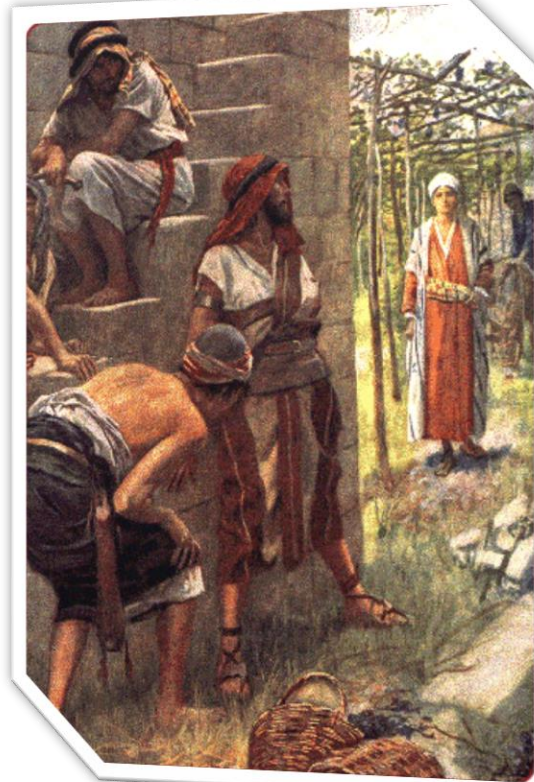
Now as they heard these things, He spoke another parable, because He was near Jerusalem and because they thought the kingdom of God would appear immediately. Therefore He said: "A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom and to return. So he called ten of his servants, delivered to them ten minas, and said to them, "Do business till I come.' But his citizens hated him, and sent a delegation after him, saying, "We will not have this man to reign over us." And so it was that when he returned, having received the kingdom, he then commanded these servants, to whom he had given the money, to be called to him, that he might know how much every man had gained by trading. Then came the first, saying, "Master, your mina has earned ten minas.' And he said to him, "Well done, good servant; because you were faithful in a very little, have authority over ten cities.' And the second came, saying, "Master, your mina has earned five minas.' Likewise he said to him, "You also be over five cities. 'Then another came, saying, "Master, here is your mina, which I have kept put away in a handkerchief. For I feared you, because you are an austere man. You collect what you did not deposit, and reap what you did not sow. 'And he said to him, "Out of your own mouth I will judge you, you wicked servant. You knew that I was an austere man, collecting what I did not deposit and reaping what I did not sow. Why then did you not put my money in the bank, that at my coming I might have collected it with interest?" And he said to those who stood by, "Take the mina from him, and give it to him who has ten minas.' (But they said to him, "Master, he has ten minas.')" For I say to you, that to everyone who has will be given; and from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him. But bring here those enemies of mine, who did not want me to reign over them, and slay them before me.'"

In this parable the Lord mentioned the minas given to us. Each one of us is given minas to work with such as: your health, your work/study, your own self or your family etc...; and most importantly your salvation. The Lord will question me on all of these at the last day and accordingly, He will either reward me or punish me. Sometimes we think we still have a long time ahead to work with our minas and enjoy life for the time being. The fact is that even if we are living a bit long and worked hard, at the end of life, it will not be like someone who worked hard all his/her life. It is like a bank account, the longer you work hard and save, the more is what is given back to you. My beloved children; every single moment in life is counted and it is of value and will make difference in your heavenly reward.

Do not waste your time; enough is what had passed and start as soon as you can.



NOVEMBER



Can you really get away with it? (Matt. 21:33-46; Mark 12:1-12)

Then He began to tell the people this parable: "A certain man planted a vineyard, leased it to vinedressers, and went into a far country for a long time. Now at vintage-time he sent a servant to the vinedressers, that they might give him some of the fruit of the vineyard. But the vinedressers beat him and sent him away empty-handed. Again he sent another servant; and they beat him also, treated him shamefully, and sent him away empty-handed. And again he sent a third; and they wounded him also and cast him out. "Then the owner of the vineyard said, "What shall I do? I will send my beloved son. Probably they will respect him when they see him.' But when the vinedressers saw him, they reasoned among themselves, saying, "This is the heir. Come; let us kill him, that the inheritance may be ours.' So they cast him out of the vineyard and killed him. Therefore what will the owner of the vineyard do to them? He will come and destroy those vinedressers and give the vineyard to others." And when they heard it they said, "Certainly not!" Then He looked at them and said, "What then is this that is written: "The stone which the builders rejected Has become the chief cornerstone"? Whoever falls on that stone will be broken; but on whomever it falls, it will grind him to powder." And the chief priests and the scribes that very hour sought to lay hands on Him, but they feared the people--for they knew He had spoken this parable against them.

I have seen in life many people get away with things, succeed and achieve for the time being and they think that they are out of judgment and they can continue the way they are. The end of those wicked vinedressers teaches us that no matter how you exalt yourself and think that you are capable, do not forget that God is there in heaven watching over everything, keeping a record and will render to each one according to his/her deeds. God might be patient but it does not mean that He does not see and keeps everything in record. Please refer to Malachi 3:16 and Rom 2:4-7 to help you understand this concept.



DECEMBER



Do you have enough fruits? (Matt. 13:31,32; Mark 4:30-32)

Then He said, "What is the kingdom of God like? And to what shall I compare it? It is like a mustard seed, which a man took and put in his garden; and it grew and became a large tree, and the birds of the air nested in its branches."

How beautiful is this parable of the mustard seed. I'll highlight it from two angles: 1. No matter how young or a small position in the Church you have, you still can do a lot of good things to the service, the Church and others. Start with the little thing you can do, do it with sincerity and honest heart, God will bless it to become like this big tree of great benefit to everyone. The Lord said that every tree that does not give fruit will be cut down and thrown in fire. 2. At any age or status, do your best to make sure that you are a good tree, having the fruits of the Holy Spirit within yourself and to be a good example to others, showing the light of your Lord that you can have your inheritance in heaven.

My beloved children this is the last month of this year I hope that you follow the spiritual benefits of the past 11 months, you by now have reached to be a good fruitful tree of benefit to yourself and others. God bless your life, looking forward to meet in the new year if God allows us to..