

OUR ACHIEVEMENTS AND FAILURES IN 2018: WHAT IS THE WAY FORWARD?

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We must first of all thank God before paying serious attention and before then it is proper to have the definitions of some key words like achievements, failures and forward according to Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, International Students edition.

Achievement: a thing that has been done successfully especially using their own effort and skill.

Failure: lack of success in doing or achieving; all my efforts ended in failure.

Forward: haste to meet up ones expectation.

Introduction

The topic is in two ways and it is the wisdom of God that will decide according to **James 1:5** - *If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him.* The question that comes, shall I speak on behalf of the church concerning physical achievements and failures in 2018 and the way forward? Or should I address the issue as a person, since salvation is personal? Because of this mind set I will be using the spiritual mind of understanding as individual to as well search for individuals achievements and failures and their way forward. After getting this understanding in 2018, the way forward will not be hidden for the wise either negatively or positively. **Matthew 6:24** – *No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and ^[a]mammon.*

You are going to understand where achievements and failures come from – **Matthew 19:16-22** – ¹⁶*Now behold, one came and said to Him, "Good^[a] Teacher, what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?"* ¹⁷*So He said to him, ^[b]"Why do you call Me good? ^[c]No one is good but One, that is, God. But if you want to enter into life, keep the commandments."* ¹⁸*He said to Him, "Which ones?"* Jesus said, *"You shall not murder,' 'You shall not commit adultery,' 'You shall not steal,' 'You shall not bear false witness,'* ¹⁹*'Honor your father and your mother,' and, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'* ²⁰*The young man said to Him, "All these things I have kept ^[d]from my youth. What do I still lack?"* ²¹*Jesus said to him, "If you want to be perfect, go, sell what you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me."* ²²*But when the young man heard that*

saying, he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions. My dear brethren, this is where achievements and failures come to the rich who are also in the world today who will also fail to obey Christ instructions.

Another issue of achievement and failure is that of the rich fool – **Luke 12:13 – 21** – ¹³ Then one from the crowd said to Him, “Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me.” ¹⁴ But He said to him, “Man, who made Me a judge or an arbitrator over you?” ¹⁵ And He said to them, “Take heed and beware of ^[a]covetousness, for one’s life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses.” ¹⁶ Then He spoke a parable to them, saying: “The ground of a certain rich man yielded plentifully. ¹⁷ And he thought within himself, saying, ‘What shall I do, since I have no room to store my crops?’ ¹⁸ 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. ¹⁹ 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.”’ ²⁰ 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?’ ²¹ “So is he who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.” It is clear that individuals make up the church and the understanding from the two issues above will make you know where you have failed or where you shall fail and the way forward as from now on.

Let us remember the topic as a church collectively: Our achievements and failures in 2018: what is the way forward? We are also going to consider some churches with achievements and failures and their way forward:

Prayerfully, we are going to understand the message sent to the churches to enable us all as a church know our achievements and failure in 2018 and the way forward – **Revelation 1:17-20** – ¹⁷ And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead. But He laid His right hand on me, saying ^[a]to me, “Do not be afraid; I am the First and the Last. ¹⁸ I am He who lives, and was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore. Amen. And I have the keys of ^[b]Hades and of Death. ¹⁹ ^[c]Write the things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which will take place after this. ²⁰ The ^[d]mystery of the seven stars which you saw in My right hand, and the seven golden lampstands: The seven stars are the ^[e]angels of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands ^[f]which you saw are the seven churches.

Among the churches were **the loveless church** – **Revelation 2:1-7** – “To the ^[a]angel of the church of Ephesus write, ‘These things says He who holds the seven stars in His right hand, who walks in the midst of the seven golden lampstands: ² “I know your works, your labor, your ^[b]patience, and that you cannot ^[c]bear those who are evil. And you have tested those who say they are apostles and are not, and have found them liars; ³ and you have persevered and have patience, and have labored for My name’s sake and have not become weary. ⁴ Nevertheless I have this against you, that you have left your first love. ⁵ Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent and do the first works, or else I will come to you quickly and remove your lampstand from its place—unless you repent. ⁶ But this you have, that you hate the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate. ⁷ “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes I will give to eat from the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God.”’

The Persecuted Church – **Revelation 2:8-11** – ⁸ “And to the ^[a]angel of the church in Smyrna write, ‘These things says the First and the Last, who was dead, and came to life: ⁹ “I know your works, tribulation, and poverty (but you are rich); and I know the blasphemy of those

who say they are Jews and are not, but are a [b]synagogue of Satan. ¹⁰ Do not fear any of those things which you are about to suffer. Indeed, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and you will have tribulation ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life. ¹¹ "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. He who overcomes shall not be hurt by the second death."

The Compromising Church – Revelation 2:12-17 – ¹² "And to the [a]angel of the church in Pergamos write, "These things says He who has the sharp two-edged sword: ¹³ "I know your works, and where you dwell, where Satan's throne is. And you hold fast to My name, and did not deny My faith even in the days in which Antipas was My faithful martyr, who was killed among you, where Satan dwells. ¹⁴ But I have a few things against you, because you have there those who hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balak to put a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols, and to commit sexual immorality. ¹⁵ Thus you also have those who hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, [b]which thing I hate. ¹⁶ Repent, or else I will come to you quickly and will fight against them with the sword of My mouth. ¹⁷ "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes I will give some of the hidden manna to eat. And I will give him a white stone, and on the stone a new name written which no one knows except him who receives it."

The Corrupt Church – Revelation 2:18-29 – ¹⁸ "And to the [a]angel of the church in Thyatira write, "These things says the Son of God, who has eyes like a flame of fire, and His feet like fine brass: ¹⁹ "I know your works, love, [b]service, faith, and your [c]patience; and as for your works, the last are more than the first. ²⁰ Nevertheless I have [d]a few things against you, because you allow [e]that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, [f]to teach and seduce My servants to commit sexual immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols. ²¹ And I gave her time to [a]repent of her sexual immorality, and she did not repent. ²² Indeed I will cast her into a sickbed, and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent of [h]their deeds. ²³ I will kill her children with death, and all the churches shall know that I am He who searches [i] the minds and hearts. And I will give to each one of you according to your works. ²⁴ "Now to you I say, [j]and to the rest in Thyatira, as many as do not have this doctrine, who have not known the depths of Satan, as they say, I [k]will put on you no other burden. ²⁵ But hold fast what you have till I come. ²⁶ And he who overcomes, and keeps My works until the end, to him I will give power over the nations— ²⁷ 'He shall rule them with a rod of iron; They shall be dashed to pieces like the potter's vessels'—as I also have received from My Father; ²⁸ and I will give him the morning star. ²⁹ "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches."

The Dead Church – Revelation 3:1-6 – "And to the [a]angel of the church in Sardis write, "These things says He who has the seven Spirits of God and the seven stars: "I know your works, that you have a name that you are alive, but you are dead. ² Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die, for I have not found your works perfect before [b]God. ³ Remember therefore how you have received and heard; hold fast and repent. Therefore if you will not watch, I will come upon you as a thief, and you will not know what hour I will come upon you. ⁴ [c]You have a few names [d]even in Sardis who have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with Me in white, for they are worthy. ⁵ He who overcomes shall be clothed in white garments, and I will not blot out his name from the Book of Life; but I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels. ⁶ "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches."

The Faithful Church – Revelation 3:7-13 – ⁷ “And to the [a]angel of the church in Philadelphia write, ‘These things says He who is holy, He who is true, ‘He who has the key of David, He who opens and no one shuts, and shuts and no one opens’: ⁸ “I know your works. See, I have set before you an open door, [b]and no one can shut it; for you have a little strength, have kept My word, and have not denied My name. ⁹ Indeed I will make those of the synagogue of Satan, who say they are Jews and are not, but lie—indeed I will make them come and worship before your feet, and to know that I have loved you. ¹⁰ Because you have kept [c]My command to persevere, I also will keep you from the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth. ¹¹ [d]Behold, I am coming quickly! Hold fast what you have, that no one may take your crown. ¹² He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall go out no more. I will write on him the name of My God and the name of the city of My God, the New Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from My God. And I will write on him My new name. ¹³ “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.” ‘ Lastly,

The Lukewarm Church – Revelation 3:14-22 – ¹⁴ “And to the [a]angel of the church [b]of the Laodiceans write, ‘These things says the Amen, the Faithful and True Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God: ¹⁵ “I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were cold or hot. ¹⁶ So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither [c]cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth. ¹⁷ Because you say, ‘I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing’—and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked— ¹⁸ I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich; and white garments, that you may be clothed, that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see. ¹⁹ As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten.[d] Therefore be [e]zealous and repent. ²⁰ Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me. ²¹ To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne.²² “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.” ‘ ”

Now that we have gotten clear understanding of both humans and as a church, it is now we can consider our achievements and failures in 2018 and the way forward. Our achievements starts from the day we became Christians – **Acts 11:26**.

Our achievements as a local congregation depends on Christ's directive – **Matthew 28:18-20** – ¹⁸ And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. ¹⁹ Go [a]therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” [b]Amen.

The facts remain that evangelism, edification and benevolence is for all either collectively as a church or individually as a person. As a local congregation also, we have programme of activities on weekly basis – Sundays (9:00am), praying, singing, teaching, sermon, collection and the Lord's Supper. What matters here is time keeping and observing of the doctrine and teaching according to **Acts 2:42**. Tuesday – sisters class (5pm to 6pm) and brothers class (5pm to 6pm) every Wednesday. Friday – singing class or practice (5pm to 6pm). Every Saturday – evangelism (10am to 1pm) while sisters does the cleaning of the

meeting hall the same day. Fasting and prayer on every first Saturday of the month while all night prayer on every last Friday of the month. Zonal house fellowship weekly, morning devotion every day from 6:30am to 7:20am which you may not know. It is an achievement for the church to have elders and deacons collectively and with the programmes above for individuals immediately after your baptism.

Conclusion

I am happy Grey congregation is not a loveless church, compromising church, corrupt church, dead church, lukewarm church but persecuted and faithful church since the overseers are there, very vigilant – **1 Peter 5:8-11**. On the parts of individuals, everybody should consider his/her way forward towards sincere repentance in the following ways: (1) late coming to activities of the church (2) failures in attending all the activities (3) sisters sweeping on Saturdays to pay attention to their responsibilities.

The purpose of this teaching is to enable us all observe our weak points and correct each other with love toward sincere repentance. *He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches, He who overcomes shall not be hurt by the second death.*

May God help us all to overcome the world with the word of God through Jesus Christ – Amen.