

## Conceptual Metaphor: Faith as Access to a World of No Limit By Bishop David Oyedepo

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### Abstract

The use of metaphor in sermons has bridged the gap between physical experiences and abstract spiritual concepts. Bishop David Oyedepo skillfully employs metaphors to make complex theological ideas easier to understand, illustrating the important role of metaphors in religious communication and understanding spiritual experiences. This study therefore, applies Conceptual Metaphor Analysis approach as posited by Lakoff and Johnson (1980). In his sermon, he equates spiritual growth with agriculture, spiritual freedom with physical liberation, and spiritual penetration with physical entry. Faith is portrayed as a shield and trigger, emphasizing its protective and activating roles. Other metaphors include physical submission for spiritual surrender and physical washing for spiritual cleansing, highlighting faith's role in personal transformation and divine protection. The purpose of this study is multifaceted. Firstly, it aims to highlight and group the conceptual metaphors utilized by the preacher in his sermons. Additionally, the study tends to focus on the linguistic features of the conceptual metaphors identified. Finally, the study aims to find out the cultural and theological implications of the metaphors. This study adopts a descriptive research method with the aim of analyzing and explaining the use of metaphors in the sermon of Bishop David Olaniyi Oyedepo.

**Keywords:** Metaphors, Conceptual Metaphors, Spiritual Concepts, Religious Communication.

## 1.0 Introduction

Language is a crucial tool for human communication, enabling the expression of feelings, ideas, and emotions. Anibueze (2007) highlights language as a principal means of communication and a significant gift to humanity. Harley (2001) describes language as a sophisticated system of signs and rules that allows individuals to express thoughts precisely and share experiences, fostering social connections.

Language is also vital in religious contexts. Watts (2003) asserts that it is essential for expressing and practicing religious beliefs, facilitating interaction, worship, and the transmission of religious knowledge across generations. Juergensmeier (2005) emphasizes that religious language includes both everyday speech about faith and the language used in sacred texts, rituals, and prayers.

Metaphors play a key role in religious language, as Tracy (1978) argues, utilizing conceptual metaphor theory (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). This theory posits that metaphors are fundamental to understanding and communication. Conceptual metaphors involve mapping between a source domain and a target domain, such as in the metaphor "God as Father," where 'father' represents qualities

attributed to God, like care and protection. Soskice (1985) adds that metaphorical references are shaped by the speaker's intention, as seen in prayers that depict God as a protector.

This research, focusing on the sermon of Bishop David Oyedepo, aims to deepen our understanding of how these leaders use metaphors to convey central spiritual themes in the Nigerian Christian context. By identifying and classifying the metaphors in their sermons, the study provides insights into how they make complex theological concepts accessible to their diverse audiences. It also explores how linguistic features shape religious experiences. Furthermore, the research examines the cultural and theological implications of these metaphors, offering valuable perspectives on their effectiveness and impact in religious communication.

## 2.0 Conceptual Framework

### 2.1 Conceptual metaphor

Conceptual metaphors, also known as generative metaphors, are figurative comparisons where one idea or conceptual domain is understood in terms of another (Lakoff, 1980). In cognitive linguistics, conceptual metaphor refers to the cognitive process of linking or mapping concepts from

different domains. This process involves understanding one concept through the lens of another, as outlined by Lakoff and Johnson (1980). Unlike traditional views of metaphor, Lakoff argues that conceptual metaphor is a fundamental way of thinking that transcends language. It can be communicated through verbal expressions (e.g., "He's climbing the ladder of success") as well as non-verbal forms like art, music, and gestures.

In Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT), metaphor is understood as a cognitive mechanism reflected in language. Lakoff and Johnson's theory suggests that conceptual metaphors involve the interaction of two cognitive domains: the source domain and the target domain. The target domain is conceptualized using the structure of the source domain, with metaphorical mappings formed between them. In this model, the source domain offers the metaphorical language needed to make sense of the target domain. For instance, the source domain of a battle is frequently employed to describe the target domain of challenges in life. These conceptual metaphors are embedded within the language and shared cultural understanding.

These metaphors are systematic because there is a clear connection between the structure of the source

domain and the target domain. We generally comprehend these connections through shared cultural understanding. For example, in our society, if the source concept is "light," it is commonly associated with "knowledge" or "understanding." Since conceptual metaphors are grounded in collective cultural experience, they eventually become integrated into linguistic conventions. In religious settings, influential pastors often use conceptual metaphors in sermons to convey spiritual ideas to their congregations, who share the same cultural background, guiding them to interpret spiritual matters from a particular viewpoint, thereby shaping their understanding. Studies have been carried out on conceptual metaphors in sermons and other discourses. Arthur (2018) explored bodily metaphors in charismatic preaching in Ghana. His findings indicated that bodily movements during sermons are metaphorical, reflecting the preacher's interpretation of Scripture and cultural perspectives. These non-linguistic metaphors serve as conduits for communicating spiritual concepts and emotions, showing that charismatic preaching is deeply intertwined with cultural symbolism and literal interpretations of biblical texts. Nnamele and Kasim (2023) investigated religious metaphors in the tweets of Nigerian politician

Senator Dino Melaye, finding that the WAR metaphor was most frequently used. The study showed that metaphors are powerful tools for persuasion, used to evoke specific notions in followers and strengthen religious discourse.

Ezeifeke (2013) analyzed metaphors in Nigerian newspaper reports, finding that metaphors are used strategically to encode social meanings and sway public perceptions. The study called for awareness of the subtle effects of metaphors in media reporting, particularly in the context of ideological bias. Obied and Adia (2020) examined the use of metaphors in American sermons, comparing African American and white American preachers. The study found that African American preachers use more metaphors than their white counterparts, with 22 metaphors compared to 10. This difference suggests a higher reliance on metaphorical language to express ideology among African American preachers.

Muhammed (2014) focused on metaphors of natural phenomena in the Holy Quran, classifying them into five categories, including rain, mountains, wind, and light/darkness. The study assigned conceptual metaphors to each category, illustrating how these metaphors encapsulate key religious and cultural meanings. Patterson (2020) conducted a

critical metaphor analysis of jihadist magazines, revealing how metaphors like the journey metaphor are used to anchor messages to authoritative religious ideologies. The study highlighted the manipulation of pre-existing conceptualizations to embody jihadist principles.

**2.2 Sermon:** Sermon originates from Old French, meaning “speech” or “discourse,” and by around 1200, it was specifically linked to Christian preaching, referring to a discourse based on scripture (Online Etymology Dictionary, 2019). Today, the Oxford Dictionaries (2019) define a sermon as “a talk on a religious or moral subject, especially one given during a church service and based on a passage from the Bible.”

From a linguistic perspective, sermons are considered a "rhetorical religious genre of great significance" and are described as "text type sui generis" (Adam, 2017). The term "sui generis," meaning "unique" or "of its own kind," highlights the distinctiveness of sermons within rhetorical religious texts. Martin and Rose (2003) describe genres as “staged, goal-oriented social processes,” indicating that sermons are structured to achieve specific social objectives, primarily persuasion. Sermons aim to influence the audience’s

beliefs and behaviors, but they also serve educational and instructive purposes, providing knowledge and guidance on religious principles. As such, sermons are not only informative and persuasive but also multifaceted in their role within religious communication (Holíčková, 2009).

Preachers, who deliver sermons, typically require specific education and authorization from religious authorities, positioning them as influential figures within their congregations. This authority, coupled with the educational disparity between preachers and their audiences, gives sermons a powerful role in shaping religious understanding and practice.

### **2.3 The Role of Metaphorical Language in Religious Discourse**

Lakoff and Johnson (1980) were pioneering linguists who argued that metaphorical language is crucial in any language or culture. They claimed that metaphors are not just physical descriptions but reflect the linguistic and social behaviors of the culture where they are used. For instance, the concept of acquiring knowledge is often metaphorized as writing on a blank slate, while religious followers' hearts are depicted as vessels to be filled with spiritual

teachings. Such metaphors reflect cultural practices and beliefs.

Kittay (1987) contended that metaphors have cognitive value by reinterpreting existing knowledge, making complex ideas more understandable through familiar cultural contexts. Metaphors help resolve ambiguities by connecting new experiences with known domains, making them cognitively indispensable. Soskice (1985) argued that religious language involves metaphorical understanding rather than literal theology. Metaphors create new perspectives and enhance comprehension, especially for abstract concepts. For example, the metaphor "God is a father" conveys specific beliefs about God's nature, such as care and provision.

Barbour (1974) viewed metaphors as dynamic tools that evoke feelings and shape perceptions. Gerhart and Russell (2004) noted that religious metaphors, like "life-after-death," contrast life's positive aspects with death's negative ones to create new meanings. Huber (1973) suggested that human language's capacity can expand to encompass the infinite or absolute through metaphor. McFague (1982) and Soskice (1985) explored metaphorical theology, with Soskice focusing on metaphors as linguistic tools and McFague

viewing them as foundational to thought. McFague's theory of models describes dominant, detailed metaphors used systematically in religious language, like "God is a Father," which helps interpret various experiences and beliefs.

Metaphorical language highlights divine qualities, such as God being a "father" in Christianity and Judaism, and "light" in Islam. These metaphors emphasize attributes like power and providence. Metaphors thus play a crucial role in religious discourse, offering vivid representations and reflecting ideological and theological dimensions.

### 3.0 Theoretical Framework

Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT), developed by George Lakoff and Mark Johnson in *Metaphors We Live By* (1980), offers a profound insight into how metaphors are integral to human thought and communication. Contrary to viewing metaphors as mere embellishments, CMT posits that they are fundamental to our cognitive processes, shaping how we think, reason, and understand abstract concepts. According to CMT, metaphors map knowledge from a familiar, concrete domain (the source domain) to an abstract, less tangible domain (the target domain). This mapping helps individuals grasp complex ideas

by relating them to more familiar experiences.

For example, in the metaphor "**Time is Money**," money represents the source domain, offering a concrete, familiar concept associated with measurable value and transactions. The target domain, time, is abstract and involves scheduling and management. Another type, **ontological metaphors**, conceptualize abstract concepts as physical entities. For instance, "**The mind is a machine**" treats mental processes as mechanical functions, while "**Emotions are liquids**" uses physical containment to explain emotional experiences.

**Structural metaphors** provide frameworks for understanding one domain through another. "**Arguments are wars**," for instance, frames arguments in terms of combat, influencing how people engage in debates with terms like "**attacking**" or "**defending**." Similarly, "**Theories are buildings**" views theories as constructs that can be "**built**" or "**demolished**." Lastly, **orientational metaphors** use spatial orientation to conceptualize abstract ideas. "**Happy is up**" associates positive emotions with upward movement, while "**Sad is down**" links negative emotions with downward movement. These metaphors structure our

understanding of abstract concepts through spatial and directional associations.

**4. 0 Methodology**

This study employs a descriptive research design to analyze the use of metaphors in Bishop David Oyedepo sermon on Faith as Access to a World of No Limit. The analysis is grounded in Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) as proposed by Lakoff and Johnson (1980), which views metaphors as cognitive tools that shape thought by mapping knowledge from familiar source domains to less tangible target domains. This theoretical framework facilitates a deeper understanding of how metaphors are employed to convey abstract religious concepts in the sermon. The study involves identifying and categorizing metaphors within the sermon text, examining their linguistic features such as syntax, semantics, pragmatics, and phonology. Specifically, the analysis includes the examination of metaphorical expressions to reveal their syntactic structures, the semantic relationships between source and target domains, and the pragmatic functions they serve in religious communication. By applying CMT and incorporating linguistic features, the research aims to uncover how metaphors elucidate and reinforce the sermon's messages, offering

insights into the cognitive, cultural, and linguistic processes underlying religious discourse.

**4. 0 Data Analysis**

This section focuses on analyzing the conceptual metaphors used in the sermon of Bishop David Oyedepo on Faith as Access to a World of No Limit by identifying the sermon and explaining the linguistic features, and cultural and theological implications.

**4.1 The table below shows an overview of the metaphors used in the sermon.**

Physical Concept	Spiritual Concept
Agriculture	Spiritual Growth
Physical Progress	Spiritual Advancement
Physical Liberation	Spiritual Freedom
Physical Entry	Spiritual Penetration
Physical Handover	Spiritual Empowerment
Physical Distribution	Spiritual Dissemination
Physical Integration	Spiritual Inclusion
Physical Peace	Spiritual Rest
Shield	Faith
Physical Foundation	Spiritual Integrity

Physical Concept	Spiritual Concept
Physical Change	Spiritual Transformation
Physical Favor	Divine Favor
Physical Acceleration	Divine Speed
Trigger	Faith
Physical Leadership	Spiritual Authority
Pulling Force	Faith
Binding Force	Faith
Physical Penetration	Spiritual Transformation
Physical Broadcast	Spiritual Reach
Physical Submission	Spiritual Surrender
Physical Foundation	Spiritual Integrity
Physical Visibility	Spiritual Recognition
Physical Grafting	Faith
Physical Weapon	Spiritual Power
Physical Longevity	Spiritual Longevity
Physical Birth	Spiritual Rebirth
Physical Washing	Spiritual Cleansing
Physical Covering	Spiritual Protection

## 4.2 Discussion

The table illustrates the metaphors in the sermon of Bishop David Oyedepo. The metaphor "Spiritual Growth as Agriculture" uses temporal clauses ("when you come," "until," "you shall make") and comparative structures ("in the first five years," "in the second five years") to parallel spiritual growth with farming. Semantically, terms like "plant," "trees," "eating," "expression," and "explosion" link growth to positive outcomes, emphasizing productive faith. Pragmatically, it promotes patience, reflecting agricultural cycles. Phonologically, the /ɪk/ sound in "expression" and "explosion" stresses growth stages, while morphologically, gerunds and suffixes highlight the transition to actual growth. Culturally and theologically, it shows spiritual growth as gradual, requiring patience and leading to eventual abundance.

Similarly, "Spiritual Advancement as Physical Progress" uses repetitive structures like "changing position" and "jumping levels" to emphasize continuous growth. Phonologically, the /f/ and /l/ sounds reinforce movement, while semantically, these terms symbolize dynamic spiritual progress. Pragmatically, it suggests effortless advancement through faith. Morphologically,



gerunds highlight ongoing progress. Culturally and theologically, it reflects the belief that faith leads to transformative, stress-free spiritual growth, akin to physical progress. Furthermore, "Spiritual Freedom as Physical Liberation" emphasizes divine intervention ending servitude and suffering. Imperative syntax like "Somebody's slavery is ending tonight" and repeated phrases create urgency. Phonologically, repeated sounds in "slavery" and "sickness" stress the shift from affliction to freedom. Semantically, terms like "release" suggest relief, while pragmatically, vivid imagery and testimonials strengthen faith in liberation. Morphologically, the suffix "ness" in "sickness," and "ry" in "slavery" show the problems. Culturally and theologically, it reflects belief in an active God who transforms spiritual promises into physical realities through Christ's sacrifice, offering freedom from suffering.

Moreover, "Spiritual Penetration as Physical Entry" uses parallel structures like "The spirit entered" and "Something was fired" with conditional clauses such as "When the heart is opened" to highlight the voluntary and transformative nature of spiritual entry. Phonologically, repeated /d/ sounds in "entered" and "fired" emphasize impact. Semantically, words like "entered" and "fired"

suggest access and transformation. Morphologically, the verb forms "entered" and "fired" indicate completed actions. Pragmatically, it underscores non-coercive entry, as in "it doesn't force its way in." Culturally and theologically, it suggests that spiritual penetration, like physical entry, requires openness and results in profound transformation. In addition, "Spiritual Empowerment as Physical Handover" utilizes syntax through direct speech "I heard the Lord saying to me" and declarative sentences to convey the transfer of divine authority "The baton has been passed over to you". Phonologically, the repetitive /t/ sounds in "baton" and "took" reinforce the sense of a decisive transfer. Semantically, the metaphor connects "passed over" with the act of receiving power or responsibility. Pragmatically, it underscores the acceptance of this empowerment, as shown in the concise response, "I took it." Morphologically, words with suffix "-over" in "handover" and "-ed" in "passed" highlight the transfer process. Culturally and theologically, it implies that spiritual empowerment involves a clear, deliberate transfer of divine authority.

Similarly, "Spiritual Dissemination as Physical Distribution" employs declarative syntax, such as "He took the spirit

that was upon Moses and gave unto the seventy elders," to emphasize the spread of spiritual power. Phonologically, repeated /m/ sounds in "mantle," "million," and "Moses" create rhythm, highlighting expansive distribution. Semantically, "mantle" and "spirit" indicate divine power transfer, with "gave unto the seventy elders" showing broader dissemination. Pragmatically, it illustrates the transmittability of spiritual power. Culturally and theologically, it suggests that spiritual dissemination, like physical distribution, involves extending divine authority to many. Additionally, "Spiritual Inclusion as Physical Integration" is expressed through the declarative phrase "No one will be left out," emphasizing universal participation. Phonologically, repeated /l/ sounds in "left" and "level" stress integration. Semantically, "change of level" indicates significant spiritual advancement, while "God's agenda" suggests a divine plan for inclusion. Pragmatically, it highlights the universal scope of God's plan. Morphologically, the suffix "-ion" in "inclusion" denotes the active process of incorporating everyone. Culturally and theologically, it reflects that spiritual inclusion, like physical integration, ensures universal participation in divine progress and transformation.

Moreover, "Spiritual Rest as Physical Peace" uses declarative and imperative sentences, such as "undeniable rest" and "be still," to emphasize tranquility. Phonologically, repeated /r/ sounds in "rest" and "pressure" stress calming effects. Semantically, terms like "zero anxiety" and "supernatural manifestation" denote deep peace and divine intervention. Pragmatically, it shows faith as the key to achieving spiritual rest. Morphologically, prefixes and suffixes in phrases like "undeniable rest," "unshakable peace," and "manifestation" highlight tranquility and its outcomes. Culturally and theologically, it implies that true rest comes from divine peace and steadfast faith, offering calm despite circumstances.

Also, "Faith as a Shield" employs declarative and exclamatory sentences with parallelism in phrases like "something you hold, and you know" to emphasize faith's tangible, active nature. Phonologically, the repetition of sounds in "shield of faith" and the alliteration /f/ in "faith" and "feats" enhance the rhythm. Semantically, terms like "subdued kingdoms" and "shield" depict faith as a powerful, protective force. Pragmatically, it encourages using faith as a defense against challenges. Morphologically, the suffix and inflection in words like

"accomplishment" and "quenched" highlight faith's effectiveness and authority. Culturally and theologically, it shows faith as an active, empowering tool that provides divine protection and helps overcome obstacles, reflecting deep trust in God's power. Also, "Spiritual Integrity as Physical Foundation" is shown through imperative and declarative sentences like "You have no part or lot with God," stressing the importance of integrity. Phonologically, repeated phrases such as "heart is not right" reinforce this need. Semantically, terms like "right heart" and "principles of faith" link spiritual purity to effective faith. Pragmatically, it emphasizes that faith's power depends on moral purity. Morphologically, words like "deception" with the suffix "ion" highlight how ethical failings impact faith. Culturally and theologically, it underscores that spiritual integrity is essential for genuine faith, much like a physical foundation is crucial for a building.

Similarly, "Spiritual Transformation as Physical Change" uses declarative sentences like "I will take the heart of stone away" to illustrate transformation. Phonologically, the repeated use of "heart" and contrasts like "heart of stone" versus "heart of flesh" highlight

the shift. Semantically, "heart of stone" and "heart of flesh" indicate deep internal changes, while "brand new person" implies a complete overhaul. Morphologically, term like "transformation" uses suffix "ation" to signify the change needed. Pragmatically, it shows that spiritual transformation leads to significant inner change. Culturally and theologically, it reflects the divine power that alters one's core nature, manifesting in changes in behavior and character. Moreover, "Divine Favour as Physical Favour" uses imperative syntax like "I will give this people favour" and repetitive phrases such as "good hand of my God" to emphasize the abundance of divine favour. Phonologically, alliteration in "favour" and "flies" aids memorability. Semantically, "favour" denotes preferential treatment and blessings. Pragmatically, it suggests faith leads to divine favour and success. Morphologically, terms like "unleashes" highlight the impact of divine gifts. Culturally and theologically, it portrays physical favour as a symbol of deeper spiritual blessings, reflecting God's enhancement of believers' lives.

Additionally, "Divine Speed as Physical Acceleration" highlights how divine intervention quickly transforms situations. Syntax such

as "The hand of God unleashes supernatural speed" and phrases like "will fast-forward" stress urgency. Phonologically, the /s/ sound in "supernatural speed" emphasizes rapid change. Semantically, terms like "fast-forward" and "jumping levels" imply sudden advancements. Pragmatically, it promotes faith in divine power for swift success. Morphologically, "fast-forward" underscores sudden change. Culturally and theologically, it suggests that God's intervention surpasses natural limits for dramatic changes. In the same vein, "Faith as Trigger" is conveyed through repetitive declarative sentences like "Faith provokes," highlighting the cause-and-effect link between faith and divine action. The alliteration /p/ in "provokes" and "provokes favour" adds rhythmic impact, while words like "hand of God" and "divine intervention" emphasize faith's powerful outcomes. Pragmatically, the sermon portrays faith as an active force that triggers divine response, culturally and theologically reinforcing faith's role as a catalyst for God's intervention and blessings.

Similarly, "Spiritual Authority as Physical Leadership" uses declarative syntax like "You believe also in His prophet" to emphasize prophetic faith's role in personal progress. Phonologically,

alliteration in "prosper" and "progress" reinforces growth, while semantically, terms like "change levels" highlight faith's transformative power. Pragmatically, the sermon stresses the need to heed prophets for divine intervention, with references to Lazarus. Morphologically, terms like "manifestation" and "supernatural" reflect spiritual leadership's power. Culturally and theologically, it underscores prophetic guidance as essential for spiritual growth and overcoming barriers. In addition, "Faith as Pulling Force" is conveyed through assertive syntax like "faith draws on the raw power of God," emphasizing faith's active role in transformation. Phonologically, repetition in "faith draws" and "power of God" adds rhythm and strength, while semantically, terms like "tapping" and "draws" highlight faith's dynamic nature. Pragmatically, it suggests faith unlocks divine power for breakthroughs, and morphologically, words like "tapped" emphasize active engagement. Culturally and theologically, it reflects the belief in faith's ability to harness God's power for miraculous change.

Again, "Faith as Binding Force" is expressed through assertive syntax like "faith commits God to confirm His word," emphasizing faith's binding nature.

Phonologically, repetition of "confirm" and "faith" reinforces certainty, while semantically, words like "integrity" and "confirm" highlight God's trustworthiness. Pragmatically, it suggests faith ensures God's fulfillment of His promises, and morphologically, terms like "commits" and "integrity" stress faith's binding power. Culturally and theologically, it underscores faith as a force that guarantees divine promises, reflecting God's unchanging nature. Likewise "Spiritual Transformation as Physical Penetration" is conveyed through imperative syntax like "hear ye the word of the Lord," commanding attention to deep spiritual influence. Phonologically, the /s/ sound in "seeping" and "Jesus" emphasizes the subtle impact of the divine word. Semantically, "seeping" suggests a thorough, transformative effect, while pragmatically, it highlights the profound reach of divine words. Morphologically, "seeping" indicates gradual spiritual change. Culturally and theologically, it reflects the belief in divine words penetrating and transforming both the physical and spiritual realms.

Moreover, "Spiritual Reach as Physical Broadcast" uses declarative syntax like "you will be broadcast," emphasizing the shift from local to global impact. Phonologically, repetition of

"broadcast" and "nations" stresses divine reach's expansiveness. Semantically, "broadcast" suggests wide dissemination, aligning with spiritual reach. Pragmatically, it implies spiritual messages can achieve global visibility. Morphologically, "broadcast" highlights the broad impact of divine messages. Culturally and theologically, it suggests spiritual messages are meant to transcend boundaries, showcasing God's power to achieve global influence, like news on television. Additionally, "Spiritual Surrender as Physical Submission" is shown through imperative syntax like "Lay flat on this floor" and "I will take over," demonstrating yielding control. Phonological repetition of "lay" and "floor" highlights the depth of submission. Semantically, "lay flat" and "take over" symbolize complete relinquishment of control. Pragmatically, it suggests that such submission leads to divine intervention and success, as seen with Covenant University. Morphologically, "raw instruction" and "humble themselves" emphasize the process of true submission. Culturally and theologically, it aligns with humility and obedience as pathways to divine favor, illustrating that spiritual surrender leads to miraculous outcomes and transformative success.

Furthermore, "Spiritual Recognition as Physical Visibility" is conveyed through imperative syntax like "honor will be locating you" and "you will soon be located," highlighting the emergence of recognition. Phonologically, the /l/ sound in "locating" and "located" underscores the certainty of recognition. Semantically, terms like "honor" and "global solution provider" suggest that spiritual merit leads to significant, widespread success. Pragmatically, it implies that spiritual favor results in noticeable success and honor. Morphologically, suffixes in "globally" and "solution provider" emphasize the broad impact of recognition. Culturally and theologically, it aligns with the belief that spiritual achievements lead to public acclaim and visible success. In addition, "Faith as Physical Grafting" uses imperative syntax like "you are grafted in" and "begin to function at the frequency of God," highlighting faith's transformative power. Phonologically, repetition in "grafted" and "root" emphasizes deep connection. Semantically, "grafted" implies integration with divine power. Pragmatically, it underscores faith's role in empowering believers to achieve the impossible by aligning with God's power. Morphologically, "grafted" suggests spiritual integration. Culturally and

theologically, it illustrates how faith integrates believers into divine grace, enabling them to achieve extraordinary results.

Moreover, "Spiritual Power as Physical Weapon" uses imperative syntax like "open your mouth" and "release your tongue," emphasizing the force of spoken faith. Phonologically, the /s/ sound in "say" and "speak" adds rhythm and emphasis. Semantically, "tongue-fired faith" links spiritual power to physical outcomes, suggesting that spoken faith acts as a powerful force. Pragmatically, it implies that declaring faith will manifest, stressing the importance of vocalizing beliefs. Morphologically, "faith-fired" and "prophetic" highlight the impact of words spoken in faith. Culturally and theologically, it underscores that speaking faith-filled words is a powerful means of overcoming challenges and achieving spiritual victories, reflecting the belief that declarations can lead to divine intervention and transformation. Additionally, "Spiritual Longevity as Physical Longevity" uses assertive syntax like "it is not possible for me to die young" to emphasize divine promises of long life. Phonologically, repetition in "die young" underscores the assurance of longevity. Semantically, phrases like "filled his days" link spiritual promises to extended life. Pragmatically, it suggests that spiritual beliefs

protect against premature death. Morphologically, terms like "numbered by God" and "tarried" highlight divine authority and temporal certainty. Culturally and theologically, it frames spiritual faith as ensuring both spiritual well-being and physical longevity.

In addition, "Spiritual Rebirth as Physical Birth" uses imperative and declarative sentences like "Stand to your feet" and "Whoever is born of God overcomes by faith" to highlight the significance of spiritual rebirth. Phonologically, repetition in phrases like "born again" stresses the call to renewal. Semantically, "born of God" connects spiritual rebirth with physical birth, implying a complete transformation. Pragmatically, it emphasizes the need for spiritual rebirth to harness faith's power and overcome challenges. Morphologically, terms like "overcome" reflect the victorious nature of spiritual renewal. Culturally and theologically, it frames spiritual salvation as a transformative new beginning, similar to physical birth. Similarly, "Spiritual Cleansing as Physical Washing" uses directive syntax like "Wash me with your blood" to stress purification. Phonologically, repetition of "wash" and "blood" reinforces the cleansing theme. Semantically, these terms link physical actions to spiritual concepts, illustrating

the cleansing of sins. Pragmatically, it conveys that this spiritual act leads to complete forgiveness and restoration. Morphologically, terms like "justified" and "restored" emphasize the transformative impact on the believer's relationship with God. Culturally and theologically, it reflects Christian redemption and forgiveness, with "washing with blood" symbolizing Jesus' sacrifice for cleansing sins and internal transformation.

Finally, "Spiritual Protection as Physical Covering" uses imperative syntax like "I cover each one of you with the blood of Jesus" to highlight ongoing protection. Phonologically, repetition of "cover" and "blood" emphasizes the protective imagery. Semantically, terms like "covered" and "preserve" signify spiritual safeguarding. Pragmatically, it assures divine security and preservation through faith. Morphologically, "covered" suggests lasting protection. Culturally and theologically, it parallels physical coverings as symbols of safety, reflecting the belief in Jesus' blood as a divine safeguard ensuring protection and eternal security.

#### **4.5 Conclusion**

Bishop Oyedepo's message utilizes metaphor to simplify and

clarify abstract spiritual ideas for his congregation, making them easier to grasp. Themes like faith, spiritual growth, divine power, and transformation are consistently explored using vivid, everyday imagery. This sophisticated use of metaphors in his teachings not only makes deep theological concepts more accessible but also encourages a deeper emotional and intellectual connection with the spiritual message. His adept use of figurative language acts as an effective tool in teaching, connecting the divine with everyday life, and enhancing the impact and memorability of sermons, especially within the framework of African Pentecostal preaching.

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