

THE FAITH & BIBLE ISSUE • JULY 2024

SHUZIA

**AS IT IS IN
HEAVEN**

*bringing heaven
to earth*

**EVIL &
SUFFERING**

*understanding
the difficulty
in this world*

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**CHARTS ON
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**BRING BACK
QUIET TIME**

*refreshing in
God's Presence*

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**STANDING ON BUSINESS
FAITH WITH TIM**

Editor's note

Dear Readers,



As we step into the month of July, I am honored to present to you the Faith and Bible Issue of Shuzia Magazine. This edition delves into the depths of our spiritual journeys, offering insights and reflections that illuminate the power of faith and the wisdom of the Bible.

Our talented writers have poured their hearts into crafting content that will inspire, uplift, and deepen your understanding of faith. Their stories and reflections resonate with the timeless truths that guide us through life's challenges and triumphs.

I am deeply grateful to our dedicated team for their commitment to excellence, and to you, our cherished readers, for being a part of this journey. May this Faith and Bible Issue enrich your spirit and strengthen your faith.

Wishing you a July filled with grace and spiritual growth.

Warm regards,

  [piranhajack](#)



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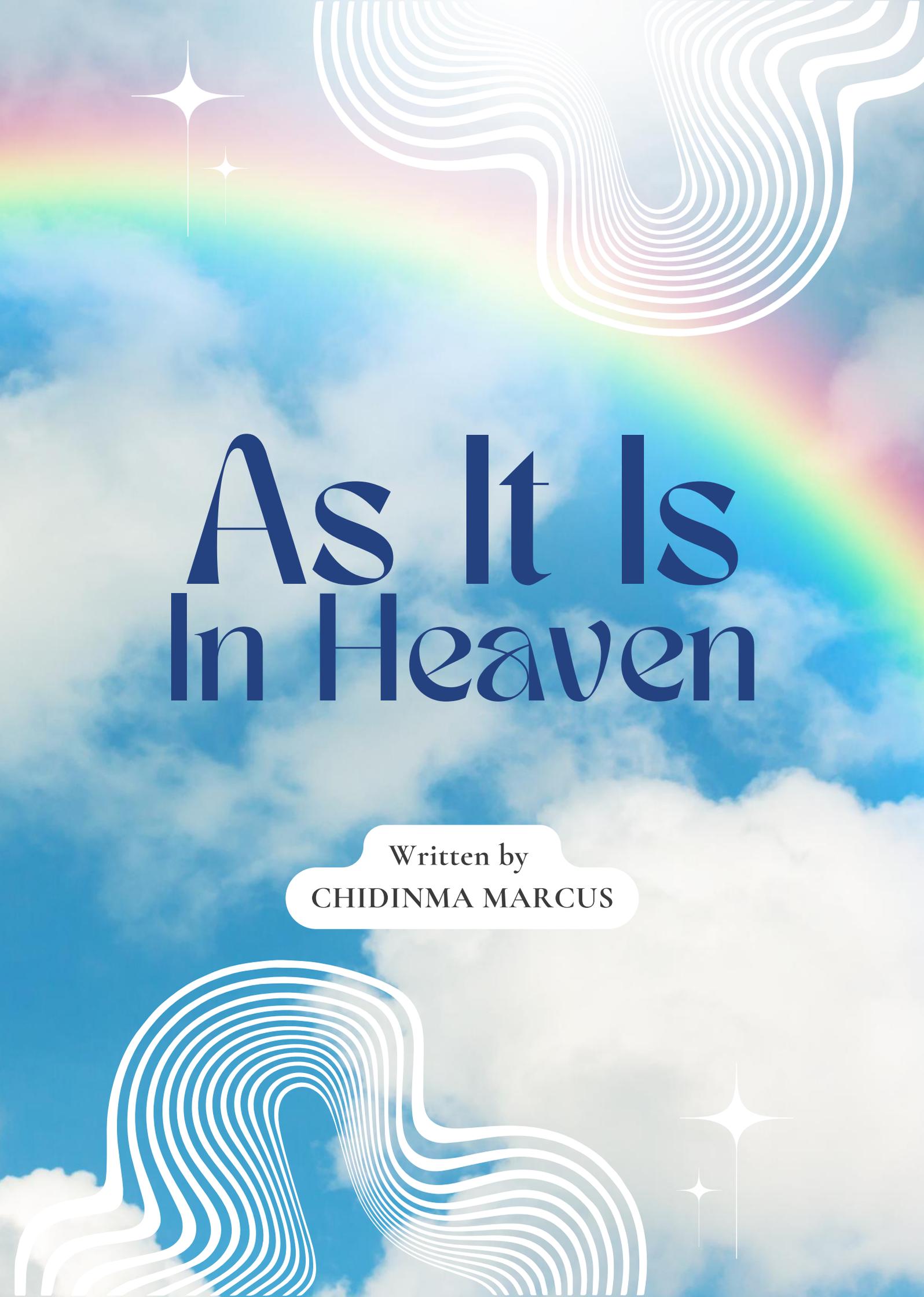
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GET JESUS

**SAY YES
TO HIM**



As It Is In Heaven

Written by
CHIDINMA MARCUS



Written by Chdinma Marcus

As It Is In Heaven

Do you know that God is not going to do anything in your world unless you invite him?

To give you an idea, when a father hands over the reins of his company to his son to be the CEO or President, he doesn't walk into the place to command the employees any longer.

The son is in charge. Therefore, he only speaks to the son when necessary and helps out if the son requires it. This analogy is very similar to our relationship with God on earth. It can be very overwhelming when you realize that God has made you the Light of the world (Matt 5:14), sent you as sheep amid wolves (Matthew 10:16), and consistently wants you ablaze (Matthew 5:16).

Nevertheless, if you remain in Him, there's a sure guarantee that this will be your story—Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world. (1st John 4:4).

However, you cannot overcome without fellowship. You cannot cause his will to be established in your world or sphere as it is in Heaven if you don't have a consistent daily relationship with the Father.

Therefore we must take hold of this opportunity the Lord has given; to first cultivate intimacy, nurture our faith, and experience his love—these are the very basics you must have before you can conquer the world.

Knowing this, it is essential that you grow in your prayer life. The five-minute daily or none-at-all-all prayer is not for the Christian. What we have with God is a relationship and relationships are built with communication. You can only recognize his voice when you've spent enough time with him and that's the only effective way to proclaim his Word to a dying world.

You can't say what you haven't heard. Worse, you can't be who He has called you to be—You won't have the confidence to heal the sick or cast out devils if you don't know the Father.

The amazing thing is, don't overthink it. You can start anytime. He is always listening. You don't have to begin with a long stretch because if you haven't been praying, you won't be able to maintain it as a daily lifestyle.

Therefore, initiate a 15-minute plan, and break it down into five minutes to build concentration. Let this happen in a single moment and not as scattered chunks throughout the day. Ensure, it continues daily for weeks without ceasing.

Naturally, because your spirit was created to relate with God, you will realize that there will be days when 15 minutes is no longer enough. You won't want to stop.

When this occurs, increase it to 30 minutes. In no time, you will be praying 4 hours and above effortlessly with ease. This consistent habit will nurture your faith. As you build intimacy, it will dawn on you that God is taking note of everything you are saying and there is always an answer when you pray.

Dear Christian, you won't need a Pastor to preach about faith. Your faith will arise as a result of the confidence you've built in his presence. Assertive, like David who spoke boldly to King Saul, "Your servant has killed both the lion and the bear; this uncircumcised Philistine will be like one of them because he has defied the armies of the living God." (1st Samuel 17:36).

Take note; moments like these will happen to you too, where no one will believe the mountain can be leveled except you and God. When those days come, it is a taboo to faint (Proverbs 24:10 MSG)

This development makes the father's love realistic. You won't be afraid to walk on the streets, sleep at night, or preach the gospel.

Certain scriptures won't be "too grand" to understand or comprehend. There will be no fear of death, persecution, and rejection from authorities because those who are with you are more than those who are with them! (2 Kings 6:16).

There will be no fear of death, persecution, and rejection from authorities because those who are with you are more than those who are with them! (2 Kings 6:16). Think of the boldness the apostles had! The members of the early church knew that if they came together to pray, nothing else could win. Recall this scenario; When they had prayed, their gathering place was shaken. They were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they boldly spoke the word of God. (Acts 4:31). This is what we will experience in our church communal gatherings if every one of us is passionate about prayer.

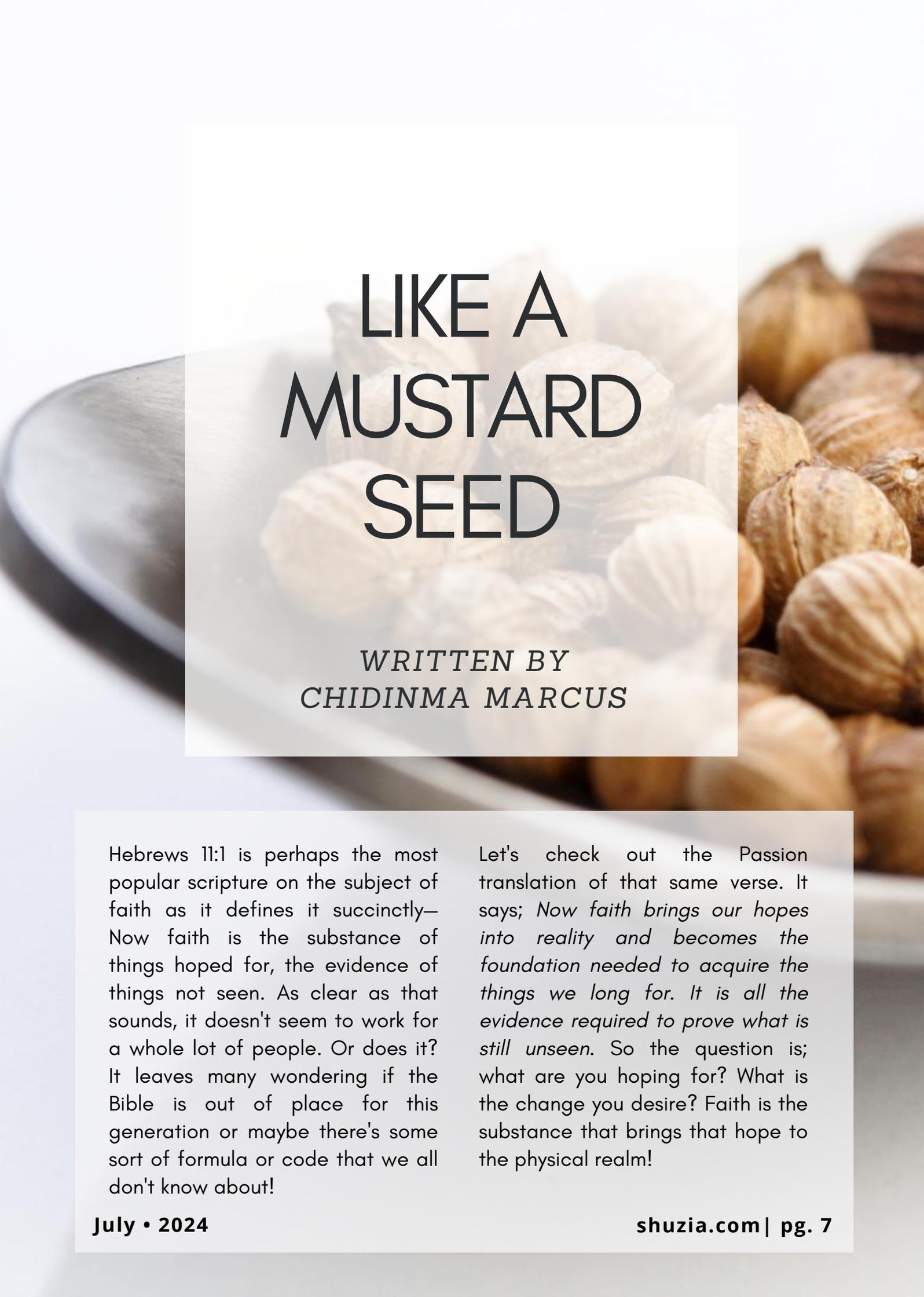
To sum it all up, God is love and we have come into an intimate experience with him because all that Jesus now is, so are we in this world (1st John 4:16-18 TPT). Therefore, believe these truths and dominate your world as it is in Heaven.





Now may the Lord of peace
Himself give you peace
always in every way.

2 Thessalonians 3:16



LIKE A MUSTARD SEED

WRITTEN BY
CHIDINMA MARCUS

Hebrews 11:1 is perhaps the most popular scripture on the subject of faith as it defines it succinctly— Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. As clear as that sounds, it doesn't seem to work for a whole lot of people. Or does it? It leaves many wondering if the Bible is out of place for this generation or maybe there's some sort of formula or code that we all don't know about!

Let's check out the Passion translation of that same verse. It says; *Now faith brings our hopes into reality and becomes the foundation needed to acquire the things we long for. It is all the evidence required to prove what is still unseen.* So the question is; what are you hoping for? What is the change you desire? Faith is the substance that brings that hope to the physical realm!

Now, there is a school of thought which states that anyone can achieve their dreams with enough courage and persistence, so we don't necessarily need faith in the Word to be "successful". It is true. There are people around the world who don't believe in God that have accomplished their dreams.

They propagate the use of affirmations and self-assurance. That works because it is a principle! *"As long as the earth endures, seedtime and harvest... will never cease."* (Genesis 8:22) "The tongue has the power of life and death, and those who love it will eat its fruit" (Proverbs 18:21).

However, when you want to effect supernatural results—accomplishments that's beyond human reasoning, like the crumbling walls of Jericho due to the shouts of men, maybe a loved one is dying and you need a miracle, at that moment you require faith in God's Word.

When the disciples came to Jesus after they couldn't cast out the demon, the Lord said to them, "Because you have so little faith. Truly I tell you, if you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you." (Matt 17:20)

It is quite troubling for some Christians, after they have prayed and fasted, declared the Word and nothing seems to change. *"What happened? I had faith. I really had faith that God would do it!"* Peter had faith that he could walk on water if the Lord told him to come. And He did! Until he observed the waves!! Notice that it wasn't God that kept him on the water, it was Peter's job!

Let's use that account in Matthew 14 to dissect the principles of faith. To begin, you must have a specific desire.

What exactly do you want? Peter told the Lord, "Lord, if it's you...tell me to come to you on the water." It was specific. He knew what he wanted and the Lord said, "Come." Then Peter got down out of the boat, walked on the water and came toward Jesus.

The next principle is that you should not doubt! You must know the Lord that you serve. He is a BIG GOD!! He said, "...I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like me. I make known the end from the beginning, from ancient times, what is still to come. I say: My purpose will stand, and I will do all that I please." (Isaiah 46:9-10). When you come to him, you must believe that he exists and he rewards those who earnestly seek him. (Hebrews 11:6).

In Peter's case, the Lord Jesus expected that Peter would focus on his Word and power because He created the waves and the seas, so no matter how much they tumble and roar, it's not supposed to be Peter's business! HIS GAZE WAS MEANT TO BE ON JESUS!!

You must understand that this world is not controlled by God, because God has decided to dominate this world through man.

But you have an enemy, the devil, who is out to make sure you don't get your inheritance!

The moment you decide to have faith in the Word, the devil comes after you to test it! If he can do the same to Jesus, don't think that he will let you be just because you are born again!!

When he came to Jesus, how did the Master respond? The Word! That's why you need to pump yourself with Scriptures. If you fall to pieces in a crisis, there wasn't much to you in the first place (Proverbs 24:10).

When you find yourself faltering, get to the Word. What does the Bible say about your situation? Meditate on it until you are armed and fortified! That's the way to grow your faith. You can change anything! The Bible isn't a lie!

Therefore, when you pray, don't change your confession. Imagine for a moment that you are a father, and your child comes to ask you for something, and after you told him you will settle it, just outside the door, you hear the child grumbling, *"Will daddy really give me? Does he love me enough? I didn't polish his shoes this morning!"* How will you feel? How much more God! (Matthew 7:11)

A much overlooked principle of faith is; there's always your part to play. dull of hearing.

If you prayed for an exam, start studying—you will understand and ace the course. If your loved one has cancer, give the person messages of faith to listen to and keep confessing that he or she is healed! The Bible confirms it!

Whatever it is that you want, affirm it in the now! Faith isn't hope. Hope states "I will have it tomorrow." Faith says, "It is my reality now. I know I have it because the Word of God said so." The fig tree didn't shrivel physically after Jesus spoke the Word, but it sure did!

As a parting statement, dear Christian, if we are going the Bible way, let's go all the way! Inion, faith is the language!!

drink.

FROM GOD'S WORD
WITH CHRISTIAN BOOKS

explore



THE LOCAL — CHURCH —



WRITTEN BY LOVE IMAHE

Before you read further, the answer is yes. Yes, Christians should commit themselves fully to a particular church. Their local church. Of course, this does not mean we cannot attend or appreciate (or even give to) other genuine, Christian denominations (we are all one body). However, the concept of being part of one local church is important for your identification with the body of Christ. Let me explain.

First, let us see what the scripture says about the local church. Yes, the word, "church" was first used in the New Testament, but it has its roots in the Old Testament scriptures.

In the book of Acts 7:37-38, the children of Israel were called the "church in the wilderness." I'll save you the trouble of opening your Bible: Acts 7:37-38: "This is that Moses, which said unto the children of Israel, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear. (v38) This is he, that was in the church in the wilderness with the angel which spake to him in the mount Sina, and with our fathers: who received the lively oracles to give unto u" Now, what is the word "church" and why were Old Testament saints called a "church"? The word, "church" has its roots in the Greek word, 'Eklessia', which is a combination of 'Ek', which

means l(out), and 'Kaleo', which means (called). Therefore, we can say that the word, "Eklessia" means "called out" or "the called-out ones."

Don't let me lose you. Follow me slowly. Now you understand why the Old Testament saints were called a church. God had called the children of Israel out of Egypt and into Canaan, where Egypt represented sin and death and Canaan represented salvation.

So, being called out of Egypt to Canaan was a foreshadowing of being called out of sin into salvation.

It doesn't end there. Note that God did not call them out to stand-alone. He called them out and then, set them in tribes and families when they got to Canaan. That tells us something. It tells us that when God calls us to Himself, He sets us in families (Psalms 68:6a - "God setteth the solitary in families...").

The Local Church is God's family for the saved man.

You have been saved, born again into the (general) family of God. But how we know you're in the family is by being in a tribe/family that we can see - your local church. You can't say you're a member of the body of Christ without being a member of an assembly because your local church is the physical location for the eternal work that is being done in your spirit.

Yes, you are a citizen, but what state are you from? Yes, you are in the family of Christ, but what tribe do you belong to? Another reason you should belong to a local church is that the local church is the place where you're made mature and fit for every good work (Ephesians 4:9-12). God has designed that we are rightly groomed for the work of ministry and the local church is responsible for your training.

The local church is also God's platform where you carry out your service. To serve God is to serve in the local church. God wants you to commit yourself to a local church that will enable you to serve his work and his will. Where are you known? What body of saints are you edifying (on a regular basis) with your gifts? You cannot be here today, there tomorrow. Even if you are connected to all Christian bodies or denominations, it is important to stay rooted in ONE church, where you can be identified as a bona-fide member. Where your services can be accounted for.

Paul greeted different groups of church communities in his letters, both major churches in cities (Rome, Corinth, Colosse, etc), and the churches in people's homes - the house of Prisca and Aquilla, in the house of Nympha, in the house of Philemon.

These were instrumental players in the advancement of the gospel in their cities because they were attached to a church.

You cannot serve God in isolation. This is beyond "forsaking the assembly of brethren." It is important to your service to God.

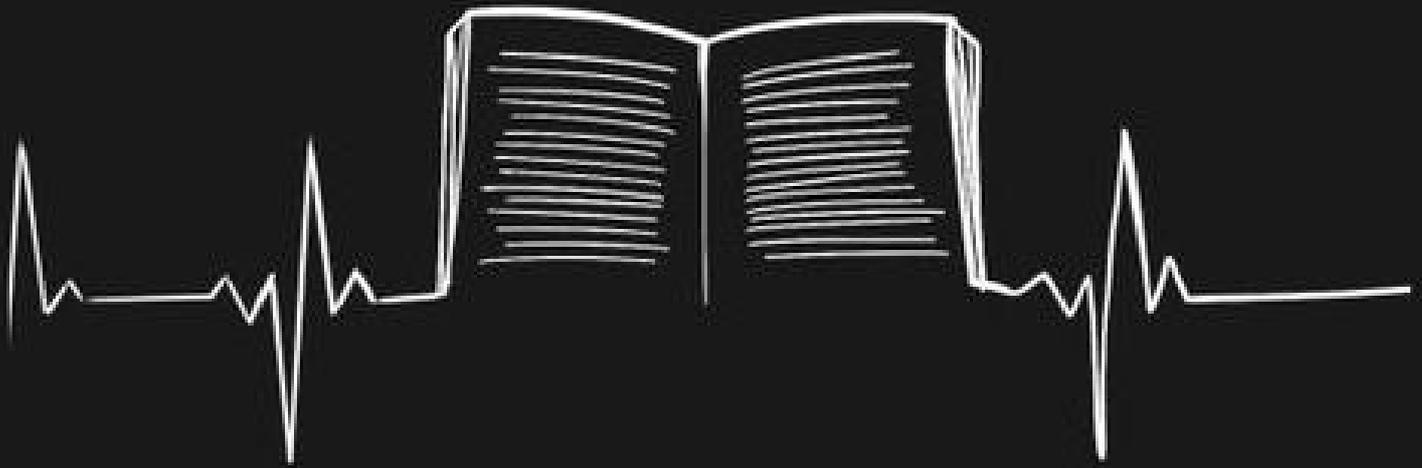
It is important for sharpening, and for contributing substantially to the advancement of the kingdom of God. Lastly, your choice of a local church must not be emotional.

It must be because you have found a place where you can be adequately trained for the work of ministry. Where you have found a family. Where you can serve Jesus and take instructions

The Struggle ...



is REAL!



For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

HEBREWS 4:12-13



EVIL AND SUFFERING

WRITTEN BY CHIDINMA **AMANNA**

Before we start,

How can a loving and just God coexist with the pervasive presence of evil and suffering in our world? Then, what do you understand about the nature of God? How do you see God? What are your expectations of His character? Do you see God as a sheep or a lion?

Remember that God is a being of order and principles, bound by the very laws He created. This binding, as Psalm 138:2b suggests, is not due to weakness but reflects His compassionate nature. Also, remember that man's heart is desperately wicked and constantly searches for indulgence, indulgence in emotions, pain, greed, passions, and even justice.

The Blame Game

We are all aware that sin and death came into this world because of the disobedience of Adam and Eve (Genesis 3). When they ate from the tree of good and evil, they brought sin into the perfect world God created. We tag the disobedience of Adam and Eve as the original sin that disrupted harmony and introduced suffering, pain, and death. Then, the fruit did not just open their eyes to their nakedness, it opened their consciousness to good and bad —not just thoughts but actions too. We can say that is where the act of man's evil

originated because we are all children of Adam and Eve. Also, as any responsible father, there was punishment attached to this disobedience and one of them was that man would struggle, Gen 3:17-19. But let's not forget that God immediately set in motion His plan for redemption (2 Timothy 1:9), showcasing His love and justice from the beginning.

Every Story Needs a Villain

The devil is our perennial antagonist, who tempts and deceives (1 Peter 5:8), making us question God's goodness and prompting us to judge Him through our limited understanding of love and power. He tempted Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 3:1-6). The devil ensnares man to judge the sovereign father with our limited understanding of love and power. Therefore, we focus on our struggles and question why God has not saved us when God has given us all we need to overcome evil.

However, the villain's presence does not diminish God's goodness. Instead, it underscores the ongoing struggle between good and evil. God equips us to confront the devil with His Word and Spirit (Ephesians 6:10-18).

What Do You Understand About Justice?

Justice means that sin cannot be ignored; it must be addressed. God's love and justice converge in the

person of Jesus Christ, who bore our punishment and justified us before God (Romans 3:25-26). Justice is a fundamental aspect of God's character; God is just and fair (Deuteronomy 32:4).

Look at this from perspective, our God is not just a lamb who saves and forgives us; He is also the Lion and King who demands honor, obedience, and loyalty. He is a King who has crafted the structures of creation and has made everything for His pleasure (Revelation 4:11). Though He answers to no one, He has made plans that man should receive glory higher than angels (Hebrews 2:6-7). For that to happen, man has to carry His nature, and that begins with believing in His Son.

Bloody Hope

Our hope is rooted in Jesus' sacrifice, prophesied in Isaiah 53, which underscores the profound love God has for humanity (John 3:16). His death and resurrection provide a pathway to eternal life, free from the clutches of evil and suffering. He is the Word that became flesh. He fought the villain and won, experienced struggles, and persevered. He did all this before you existed because God foresaw you would need His love, Jesus' sacrifice was from the very beginning (Revelation 13:8).

It is good for me
that I have been
afflicted; that I
might learn thy
statutes.

PSALM 119:71



Romans 5:3-5 tells us that suffering produces perseverance, character, and hope. This hope is not daydreaming; it is a confident expectation based on the reality of Jesus' death and resurrection, that we too shall experience glory.

The Trust Problem

Trusting God amid evil and suffering can be challenging. Proverbs 3:5-6 encourages us to trust in the Lord with all our hearts and lean not on our understanding. Human free will makes this difficult, as we often choose what we understand and can control. For instance, the Israelites made a golden calf in the desert, choosing a familiar idol from Egypt over trusting God (Exodus 32).

This tendency to rely on the familiar rather than the divine adds to our struggle. However, James 1:2-6 reminds us to consider trials as opportunities for growth in faith, assuring us that God grants wisdom generously to those who ask. Remember, God's ways are higher than ours (Isaiah 55:8-9), and He works all things together for good for those who love Him (Romans 8:28).

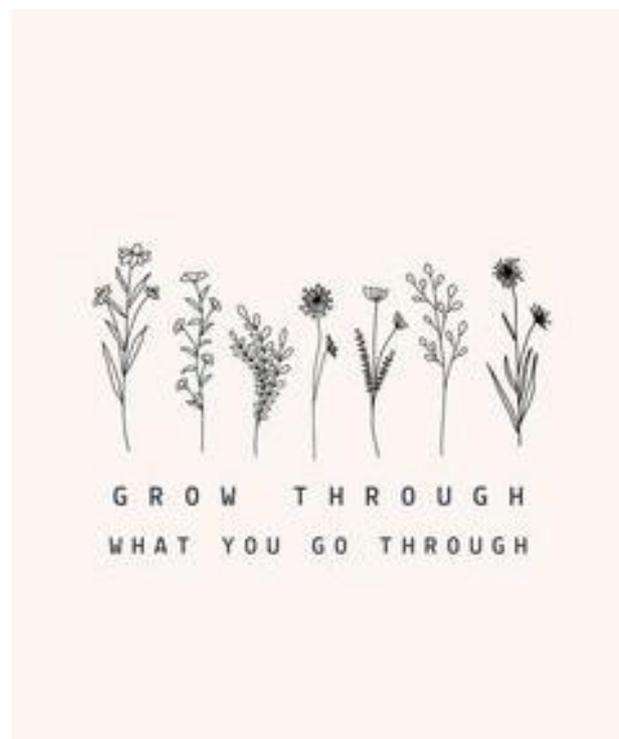
Understanding God's goodness means trusting His mercy and justice, even when we do not fully understand His plans.

Conclusion

Evil and suffering are part of our world, but they do not have the final say. God, in His wisdom and love, has provided a way for us to overcome through Jesus Christ.

By understanding the nature of God, acknowledging the role of the devil, recognizing our fallen nature, and holding onto the hope we have in Christ, we can reconcile the existence of evil and suffering with our faith in a loving and just God.

So, in your journey through life's hardships, remember the words of Jesus, "In this world, you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world" (John 16:33). Trust in Him, for He is with you always, even to the end of the age (Matthew 28:20).



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In His Likeness

WRITTEN BY FABIAN OMINI

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"Intimacy with God is the primary goal of the Christian life."

- Oswald Chambers

To be like someone, to be in His likeness is more than having physically identical features. The creation story bears a record in Genesis that "God made man in his image and likeness".

While the 'image' here, from its root word shows a derivation from a greater source, like a shadow, a replica, or a representation of a mirrored form; 'likeness' shows a similarity of intrinsic value. This intrinsic value is worthy of discussion, as it is what distinguishes us from all the other people who do not follow this Way.

What character shows a non-Christian that I am anything like Jesus? What characteristic nature of mine shows that I am heading towards becoming like Jesus in any way? Man lost access to the 'likeness' component of our creation at the fall of Adam, and Jesus gave it back to us at his death and rising, when His Spirit came to live in our hearts at the Pentecost.

Before any of us welcomed Jesus into our hearts to make a home in us, all of us were mere pieces of flesh wrapped up together, showing his image. We lacked the distinctive factor - the Holy Spirit, who would be needed to impart the life of Jesus to us.

The Holy Spirit was and is the only person who can bring us into this likeness, who can restore us to what the Father originally had in mind to do, which was to create a being in union with him.

The man fell, and a merciful God chased this man through crooked paths and scathed roads for generations: a God who loves His own. So here we see the character of God on full display "who for the joy set before him, endured the cross, and despised the shame" to chase down a rebellious creation whom he knows may eventually not follow Him as we see in present times.

"All I want is to know Christ."

- Paul, To the Philippian Church

A person's character shows the state of his mind and the strength of his convictions. The way he acts and carries out his activities is proof of what he holds in his mind. The scripture says "As a man thinks in his heart, so is he". What is manifest before the eyes of people is our character, and this character being portrayed shows who we are as individuals.

If I am gluttonous, it means the food has exalted itself to a very high position in my heart and has displaced my original King. If I am lustful, it means I cannot divorce

women in my daily affairs, and Jesus begs me to take control again. And what of money? So subtle, always so slimy as to steal its way to first place. I don't know if there is any better description of what growing in intimacy means other than letting the singular object of our desire rise through the ranks of our hearts to sit as ruler - ruler of all.

To contemplate the idea of enjoying God, knowledge is paramount. If I get to know the person who risked everything to save me from the terror to come, it would enable me to have a richer fellowship with him.

The more I strive to know him: by talking to him, listening to people talk about him, reading the letters he wrote to me, or reading what others have written about him, investing my time in pursuit of this holy God who holds my filth with pride in his eyes, helps me take him higher in position in my heart.

As I think of him ponder, and meditate, soon I see only him and the idols keep being blurred out of the picture. For his scent and aura to rub off on me, I need to sit with him, and sometimes in my desperation, I would need to hold him close to me, closer than my skin, so that I may express the fruit of His Spirit that personifies his essence.

I can't gain this intimacy, or grow in

his likeness, other than by sitting still before him, anticipating his every word in quiet obedience - obedience that cannot be found wanting.

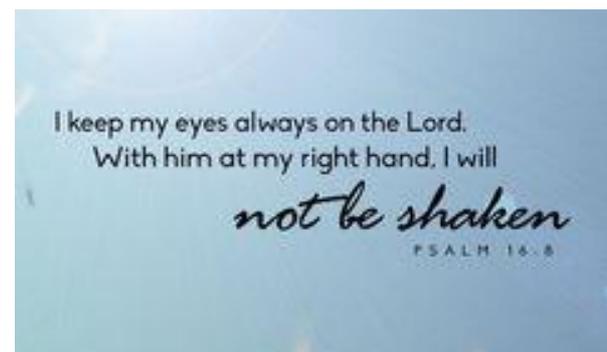
I dare to say that the ultimate goal of Christianity is to grow in the likeness of God. I have faltered, many of us have faltered in this regard, as we all consciously or unconsciously tend to want to be like some man or an image society has skillfully designed in our heads. Idolatry is our major hindrance to intimacy.

This idea of split devotion between different entities would soon become our biggest undoing in our attempt to crown Jesus as King over our hearts.

King David prayed this, and so should we all: "Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting". Amen.

"You cannot be a slave of two masters; you will hate one and love the other; you will be loyal to one and despise the other."

- *Jesus of Nazareth.*



1 Corinthians 16:13

**"Be on your
guard; stand
firm in the
faith; *be
courageous;
be strong.*"**

1 Corinthians 16:13



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GOD'S PLAN.

Isaiah 60:22

**When the time is
right, I the Lord will
make it happen**

BY PRAISE ABRAHAM

BRINGING BACK

QUIET TIME



Many Christians are familiar with the term 'Quiet Time', at least to some extent. It is one of the basic foundational concepts a new believer is introduced to after the salvation experience, isn't it?

Well, it is quite unfortunate that many believers do not know, practice, or fully grasp the essence of this vital piece of their Christian walk. In this piece, I will be taking you on a tour to wet your appetite for your Quiet Time!

Before we delve in too deep, you might be asking, "What is this whole quiet time saga about?" Simply put, quiet time is when you get to spend time alone with God, away from the eyes and noise of the world. It has been given different pseudonyms over the years by different God-chasers, the most common being '(morning) devotion time', for obvious reasons.

From several testimonies of fellow believers as well as my personal experience, I have come to understand that your quiet time is when you can be real, raw, and naked before Jesus. It is not the time for pious King-James-English-perfect prayers.

It is a time for laughing, crying, dancing, listening, and gisting with Jesus. I have seen a great deception in my generation. We are too conscious of public activities for Jesus rather than intimacy with Him.

The truth remains that the extent of your time of fellowship with God is what determines how far you will go and how highly God will rate you. Matt.6.6 "But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly." (KJV)

So, how do we bring back Quiet Time?

Think of it as sneaking out in the middle of the night to have a secret getaway with your lover. Yeah, like a spontaneous adventure where you cannot predict the course each new day will bring.

Use of Devotionals: Right or Wrong? This sounds like a sort of validation-seeking question. The Holy Spirit should primarily lead whatever you do during your quiet time.

The question sounds like the debate on what Bible version is the best or if listening to audio sermons is right or wrong. I would like to emphasize that you should do what best suits you per season.

As a baby Christian, I started out using daily devotionals and they were very helpful to guide me.

However, as I slowly matured in Christ, I found that it was more interesting and adventurous to dive straight into the Word of God. Bringing in a form of discipline structure (Bible plans) has been super helpful and enabled me to be able to finish reading the whole Bible several times over. You can try a similar learning curve.

Time and Location? Routine and consistency are key in cultivating a sweet relationship with God. It makes you look more purposeful about this love relationship with God you are building.

When I newly was born again, I was so hungry for God (and I still am) that I dedicated 3:00 am even though I was a secondary school student preparing for the ultimate final exams. In addition, since I was staying in my family house then, I chose to dedicate a particular red cushion chair in my room to be for my quiet time.

Though I shared this room with my sister, there was this unspoken respect we both accorded that sacred space. Oh, how many beautiful encounters I enjoyed kneeling by that chair!

Now that I am currently in the university, where I usually change hostels every session, I have learned to quickly adapt by finding a 'me and Jesus' corner to always go to. It is just as gospel minister GUC's song says, "I'll make room for two. You and I, Jesus."

Perhaps you are worried about other things like your long list of pending requests. During your quiet time, I will implore you to set that aside.

The truth is, as God is building your love more and more for Him, most of these matters will naturally be settled without you necessarily having to ask Him for them.

Moreover, in the instances where intercession and warfare are needed, you will already be so attuned to God's heart and voice that you can easily pick the frequency of his beckoning.

Have you skipped your quiet time for days, weeks, or months on end? Well, I can relate because I have also been in that boat too many times. There is a universal law in operation that causes this. In physics, it's called the law of inertia. The longer you stay away, the more difficult it will be to come. But I have found that when you wade past the gnawing sense of guilt (which isn't actually because God is angry at you—He is always waiting with arms wide open—but because the devil is jealous and angry that you have replaced the spot he lost forever), it is always a beautiful reunion.

See your quiet time as your safe haven, a time that you eagerly look forward to. See it as a slice of your life that you cannot go a day without. Do your quiet time each day and you will be so thankful for it.

vol•un•teer

/ˌvɒlənˈtɪr/

agent of change



VOLUNTEER AT SHUZIA

JEDIDIAH ADEOLA

THE SEED AND THE SOWER



“And when much people were gathered together, and were come to him out of every city, he spake by a parable: A sower went out to sow his seed: and as he sowed, some fell by the wayside; and it was trodden down, and the fowls of the air devoured it. And some fell upon a rock; and as soon as it was sprung up, it withered away, because it lacked moisture. And some fell among thorns, and the thorns sprang up with it, and choked it. And others fell on good ground and sprang up, and bare fruit a hundredfold.

And when he had said these things, he cried, He that hath ears to hear, let him hear. And his disciples asked him, saying, What might this parable be? And he said, Unto you, it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God: but to others in parables; that seeing they might not see, and hearing they might not understand.

“Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God. Those by the way side are they that hear; then cometh the devil, and taketh away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved.

They on the rock are they, which, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, which for a while believe, and in time of temptation fall away. And that which fell among thorns are they, which, when they have heard,

go forth, and are choked with cares and riches and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to perfection. But that on the good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience.” Luke 8:11-1.

In the lush lands of the Old Oyo Empire, a diligent farmer named Demola worked tirelessly to cultivate his crops. One particular day, it was as though the Lord had decided to speak to him. While preparing the soil for planting, he pondered the wisdom of the ages. As he sowed his seeds, he remembered the words of the wise men.

Demola planted four types of seeds: maize, yam, cassava, and egusi. As he worked, he realized that each seed taught him valuable principles. The maize seed represented the word that fell on good soil, yielding a bountiful harvest.

Demola learned that when he received wise counsel with an open heart, it would flourish and bring abundance to his life. The yam seed symbolized the word that fell on rocky soil, withering under the scorching sun.

Demola understood that when he received wisdom but failed to nurture it, it would wither away, leaving him barren and unfruitful. The cassava seed represented the word choked by

thorns, struggling to reach its full potential. Demola saw that when he allowed the cares of the world to suffocate the wisdom he received, it would hinder his growth and progress.

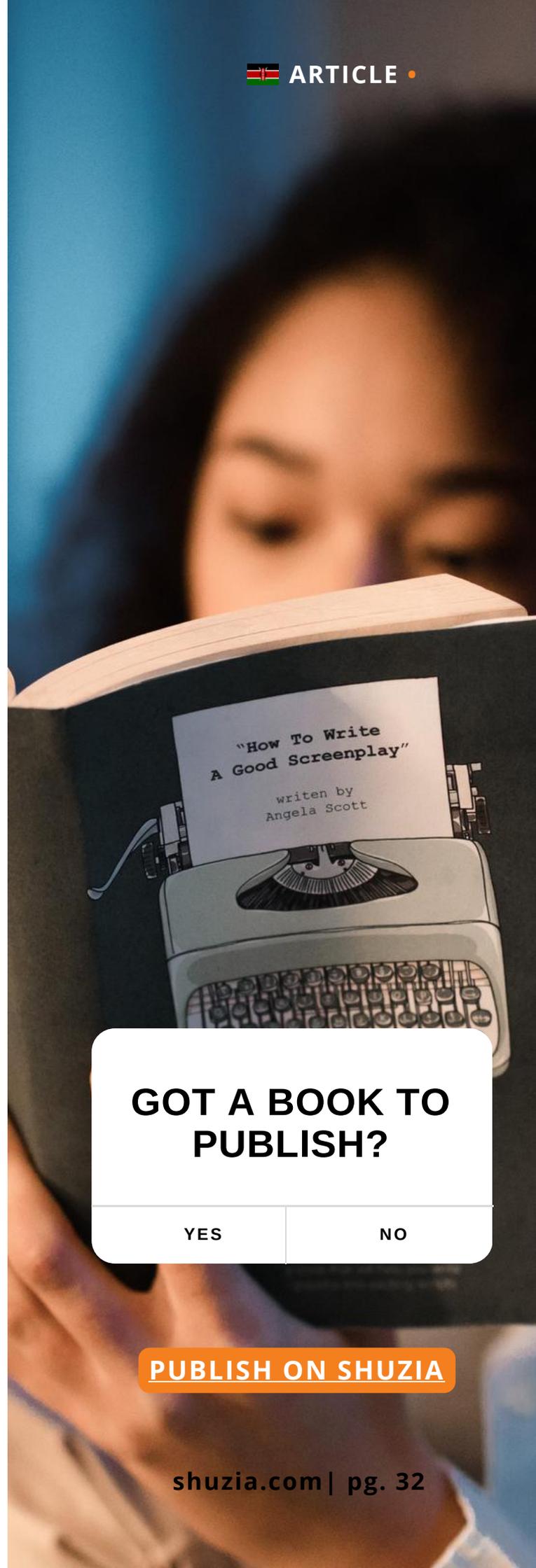
The egusi seed, which fell on good soil but was devoured by birds, taught Demola that even when he received wisdom, it could be snatched away by the distractions of life if he did not guard it carefully.

As Demola tended to his crops, he applied these principles to his life. He nurtured the wisdom he received, protected it from the thorns of distraction, and guarded it from the birds of procrastination.

And so, his life flourished like a bountiful harvest, a testament to the power of the seed - the word of God.



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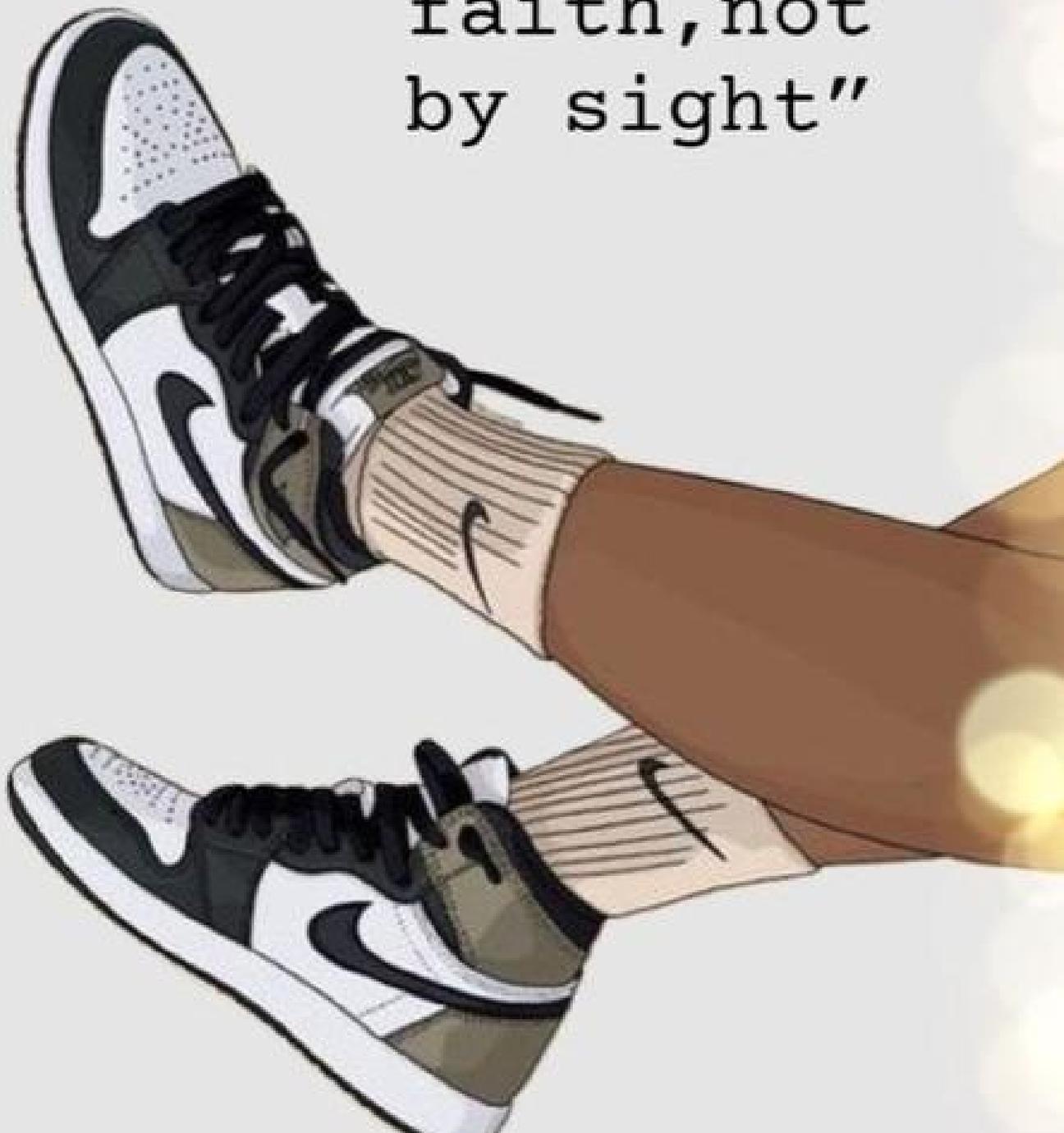


read.

AMAZING
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“For we
walk by
faith, not
by sight”



A man with a beard and dreadlocks is shown from the chest up, wearing a dark polo shirt. He is pointing his right index finger to his temple with a serious, questioning expression. The background is a glowing blue circuit board with various components and traces. Some components are labeled with numbers like '512', 'E01', and '106 201'.

YOU ARE WITHOUT EXCUSE!

WRITTEN BY
CHIDINMA MARCUS

A sporty teenager stands afar, chattering with a group of friends. Random choruses of goodbyes fill the air as they exit the bleachers. With a wide grin, he plops himself on a bench, plugs in his earphones and sways to the "beat". Some feet away, Julie decides he might as well be the 16th person for her daily salvation bucket list.

She ambles closer and taps him with a bright smile, he is reluctant but allows her to make some comments about his music. He packs his bag when she starts talking about Jesus. "Do you believe in God?" She asks further. "Nope for several reasons. The dude doesn't exist." He replies and skedaddles out of her sight.

Daily, men and women, boys and girls are finding reasons to conclude there is no God. With the perpetual increase in crime and abuse, wars, hunger and poverty, people wearily question... "Is there really a God? Does he exist? If he does...is he just up there to watch us struggle, probably laughing at our losses and working out ways to punish us when we get away with some things?"

Unfortunately, these questions are not readily answered within the immediate circles of individuals thirsty for knowledge.

'Therefore, tons of people around the globe make theories with reference to the world's meaning. At the end, they fall far from the faith or continue on as Christians merely dawdling through religious days without the power or display of God's glory.

Romans 1:20, the Passion Translation states, "Opposition to truth cannot be excused on the basis of ignorance, because from the creation of the world, the invisible qualities of God's nature have been made visible, such as his eternal power and transcendence. He has made his wonderful attributes easily perceived, for seeing the visible makes us understand the invisible. So then, this leaves everyone without excuse.

Hence, even if you choose not to believe the words of the Bible or choose to walk out of your Christian faith and embrace a lifestyle of independence from spiritual activities, you cannot deny that God is real because the order and aptness of nature hollers the truth.

Let's begin with you. Shall we? Your body is a complex house of systems, functioning simultaneously without you having to do anything. Within seconds, you see a picture, and your brain processes what you see, giving you an instant answer or deliberation. Concurrently, you are breathing in oxygen, blood is being

pumped around your body and your tummy is working on some meal you savored minutes ago.

Each of those organs, when studied in detail, is the same for billions of people all over the world. This preciseness doesn't just end with the human race, you can see the same thing replicating itself in wild life, from the sturdy trees to large elephants and even the tiniest ant.

Logically speaking, can all these things exist without an intelligent being or well thought out plan? There is simply nothing that you want to produce that came to be as a result of an explosion and atoms suddenly finding reasons to collide! Why didn't it happen before then? And why are we still here? It takes billions of years, right? Lol!

The big bang theory which rules out the possibility of creation by a Monarch is not only laughable but downright ridiculous! When you read through the postulations, it summarizes three things; there was chaos, a ball of light and then, some laws came to being.

Steven Weinberg, a physicist and foremost advocate of this said, "The universe had an origin that went one way, from the undefined to something that we can specify, a fireball of nucleons and light." Isn't this summed up in these three verses; Genesis 1:1-3 TPT, When God created the heavens

and the earth, the earth was completely formless and empty, with nothing but darkness draped over the deep. God's Spirit hovered over the face of the waters. And then God announced, "Let there be light," and light burst forth! They can't tell you the end of the earth, but God knows and it is documented in his Word too.

In addition, because we are like him, none of us is without talent or uniqueness or the ability to create and invent. Where does this wisdom come from? The Bible clearly explains it in Genesis 1:26; Then God said, "Let us make a man and a woman in our image to be like us... As a result, you can reason and understand things. This also shows why animals can't function at the same level because they were not created in the image of the Almighty.

In rebellion, you might close this E-zine and state that you don't believe anything you can't see or hear or touch. However, this is not an excuse either because the world in itself is designed in such a way that we accept things we cannot vouch for.

Everything started with faith, so we all function by faith. When you get into the Uber for a ride, you don't ask the driver if he has a license or not. You just believe that he is capable! Same thing occurs when you walk into your home, you don't stop for a moment to reason if the foundation is firm. Your

trust is so high that you believe “they” constructed it well enough.

What happens at the pharmacy? You don't ask the man at the counter if he knows what he is doing, you readily gulp down the drug the instant you are given. What if? Just what if?

Time and time again, we have seen cases where things took a different turn. There are a lot of crashes in the news, yet people still board airplanes.

If you find it easy to regard random strangers that you absolutely have no clue what they were up to a minute ago, then it isn't hard to place confidence in a God who keeps the earth at a perfect distance from the sun so that we are neither freezing nor burnt up.

YOU ARE WITHOUT EXCUSE, OH UNBELIEVER.



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Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

For by it the elders obtained a good report.

Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.

HEB 11:1-3

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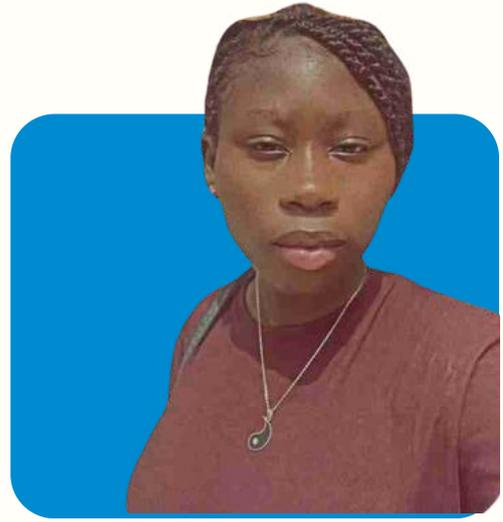


I can do all things
through Christ who
strengthens me.

Philippians 4:13

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Shuzia Creative Spotlight



**Oluwatobiloba
Awonuga (Teelaw)**

As a content writer specializing in short stories, poetry, and essays, I find joy in weaving narratives that captivate, inspire, and connect with readers. Writing is not just a profession for me; it's a passion—a journey of discovery, expression, and connection. Let's connect...

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On Faith : Standing on Business!

Six years ago, I was in a place where I was questioning if God really existed. To be honest, it was from a place of “if you are God, prove yourself.” I didn’t know what to do and where to turn. What is that thing that happens to you when you have tried all available means to solve a problem and it lingers and then there is this ultimate almost final resort of turning to God because we have used all our physical wits.

This tells me that man ultimately finds God even when they do not want to. I have had many people ask pertinent questions about the existence of God and to be honest, some of these questions were valid, at least from the human point of view.

If there is God, why is there so much suffering in the world? Why is God not intervening in the wars that are killing people he created? So many questions that you’d think only need a straightforward answer.

Faith is not logical. At least, most times. But there is an underlying satisfaction that comes with believing in an unseen God. In the scriptures, the beatitudes specifically, believing in God that you have not seen is a miracle and there is a blessing to it.

THINK TANK

WITH TIMOTHY OJO



While our faith may seem illogical, there are several pointers in the bible that proves over and over the essence of our faith. Christianity is defensible. It is not a religion as people often classify it as; it is a way of life. A way of life that is governed by the principles of the scriptures.

In my little years on earth, I have had to trust God wholeheartedly and God came through. Now, while sometimes, I still have doubts if it was truly God, I have had confirmations as if God was trying to tell me that, yes, I did that.

Again, this may seem like doubting is grievous but as humans, even believers, there are doubts that arise because first of all, we are wired to be logical and to see empirically. This is why, even though our faith can be shaken, we must stand on business.

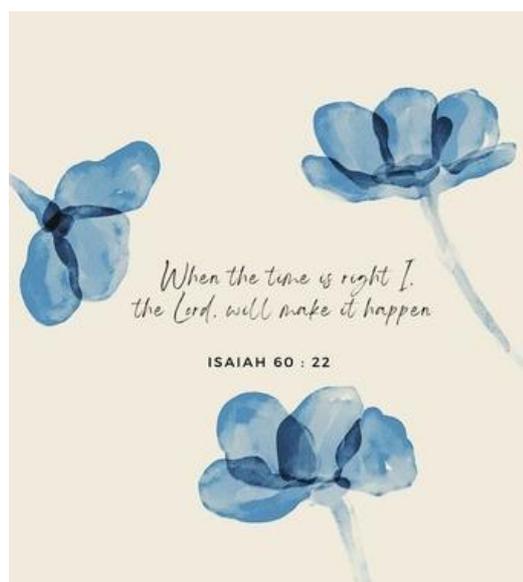
Why should we? Well, because we have seen too much of God's hairs in our life to have doubts. Sometimes, we need to look at how we survived past incidences miraculously and bring them to the fore. This way, our minds are constantly fixed on God even when it looks impossible.

As for me, I wholly rely on God. I literally cannot do without him and even when it feels like I have lost connection with him, I find my way back. It is pointless doing life without God

"But some people don't believe in God and they are doing fine," that's what you think. You have no idea what their minds are battling! You only see what they want you to see.

God is good. He is always good. And if you have been having wavering faith, well, here is your pointer that God has been there for you before, why are you distrusting him now?

Till I come your way again, you better don't fall God's hand.





Be these.
Matthew 5:13-16

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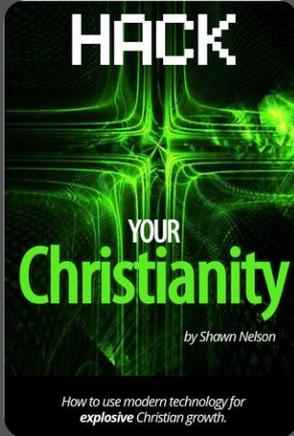
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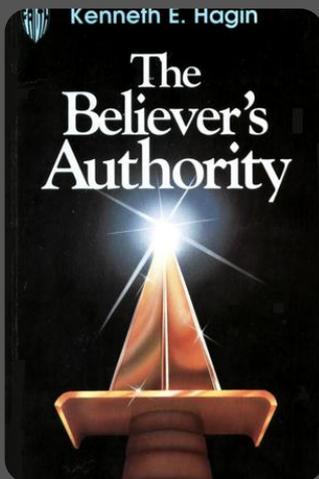
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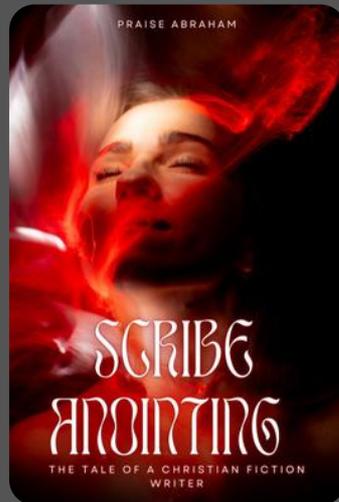
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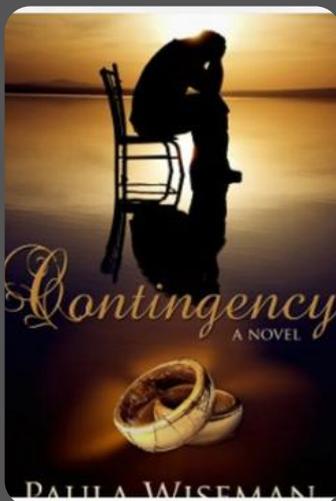
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Sufficient Grace!

My journey in Christ has been purely impacted by grace. I've been in tempting and trying situations and God's grace has been sufficient for me. Last year, I went through a heartbreak, and I was struggling with letting go. God took over one evening when I told Him I wanted my focus on Him and not on my feelings. I'm grateful for the strength God's unending grace provides me. Without grace, there's not much to live for. The world is a turbulent place, but you can find peace in Jesus.

Grace Found Me!

How else can I explain what God has done for me? I was a sinner lost in sin and guilt, but He came for me. What made my case critical was that I was the definition of the scriptures that says, 'having the form of godliness yet denying the power thereof.' People couldn't help me because I had the form of "I have it all figured out" but I was wallowing in sin deep in my heart. Glory to God for our Lord Jesus Christ because Grace found me when I met Him.

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Grace At Work!

I used to believe that you have to work for every single thing you get or will get in life. Growing up as a Christian saved at an early age, I didn't immediately recognize how God's grace was shaping my life. Over the years, I began to see how opportunities and blessings seemed to come my way especially in ways I didn't deserve or couldn't have gotten on my own.

Looking back, I see countless instances of God's grace, moments where His love and favour shone through for me, even when I felt unworthy.

I just want to tell someone here that God doesn't abandon His own. Sometimes, we get so caught up in our struggles that we stop seeing His hand at work. If we shift our focus, we'll start to see the beautiful ways God has been gracious to us.

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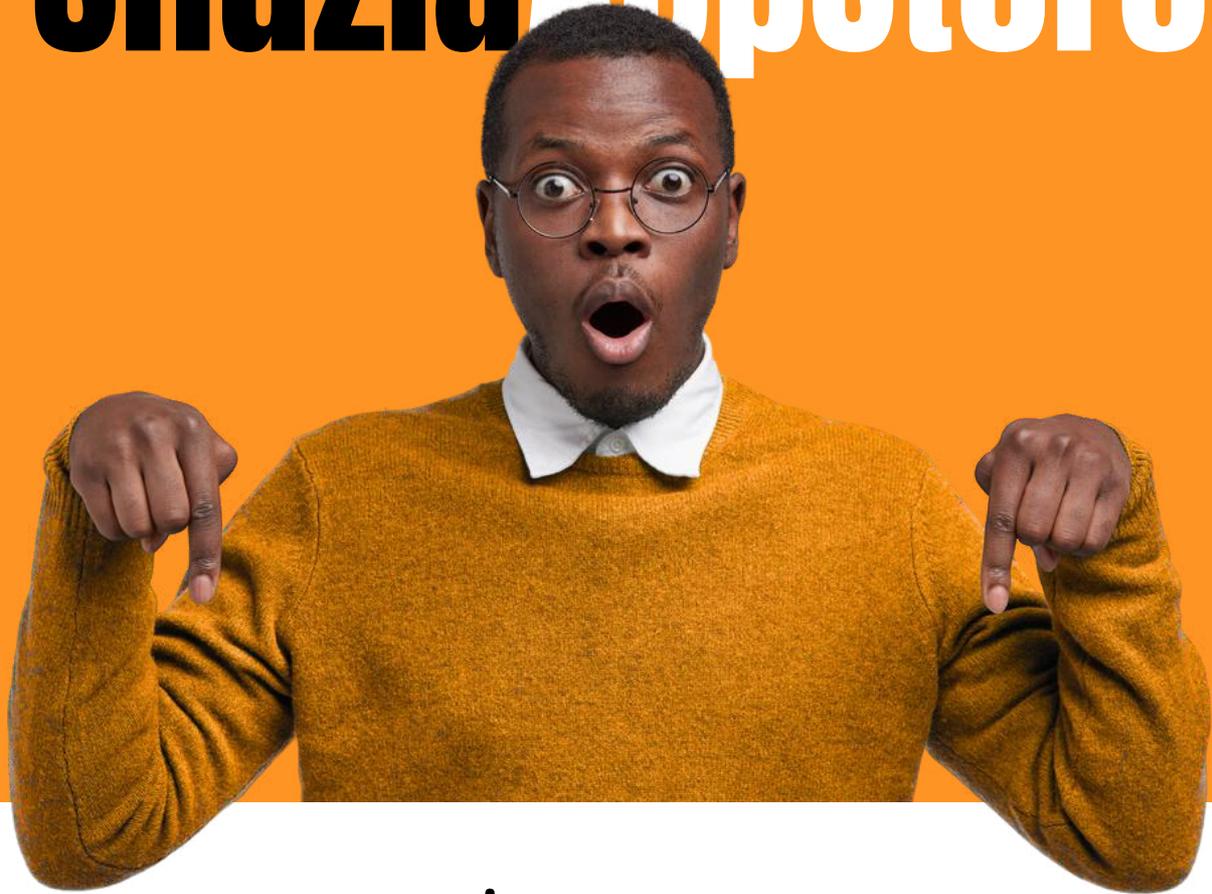
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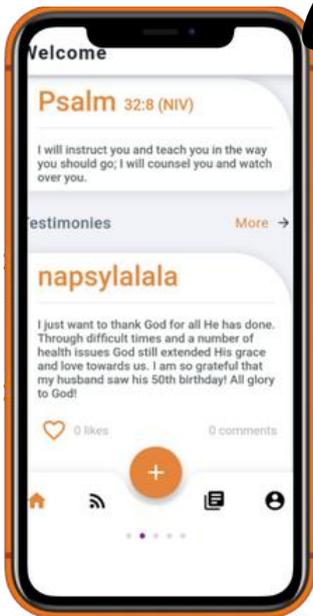
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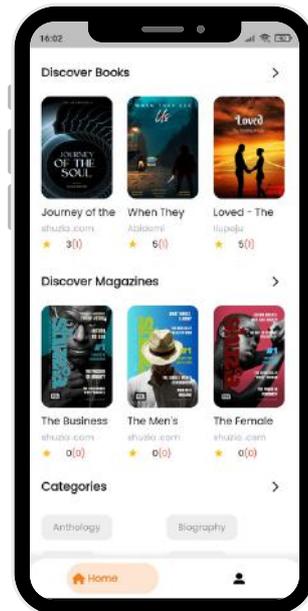


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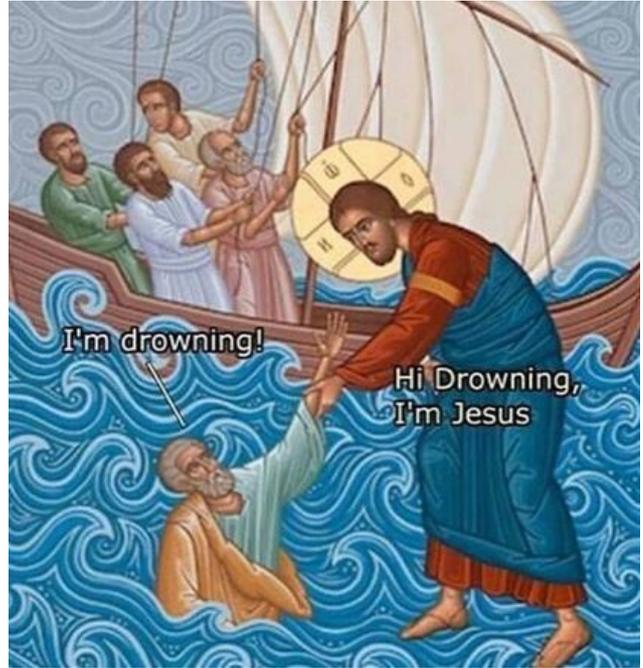
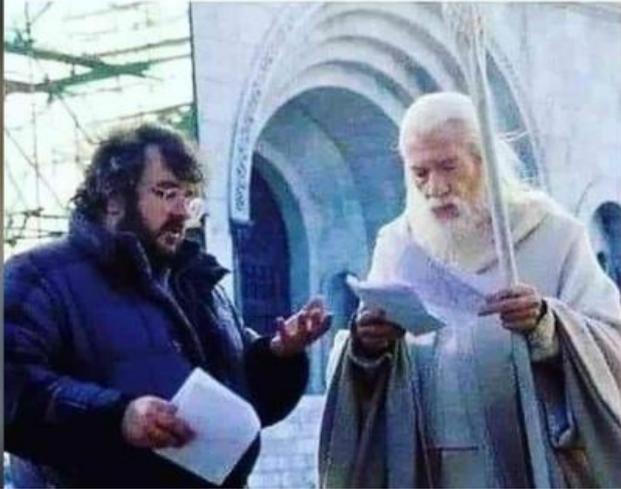
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**MEMES
& MORE**

Me showing God my memes and explaining how I was trying to save Humanity



"I don't believe in God because i can't see God"



Not going to church because of the "hypocrites" is like



not going to the gym because of "out of shape people"

^Copy my work, just don't make it obvious^



**Me patiently waiting
for Jesus to come back**



You're holding it together but then the
worship team goes back into the chorus



when you go to a new
church for the first time



Christian family member dies

**Secular friend: "it's so sad
that we'll never get
to see them again"**

Christians:



Death: Reaches out for Jesus

Jesus:



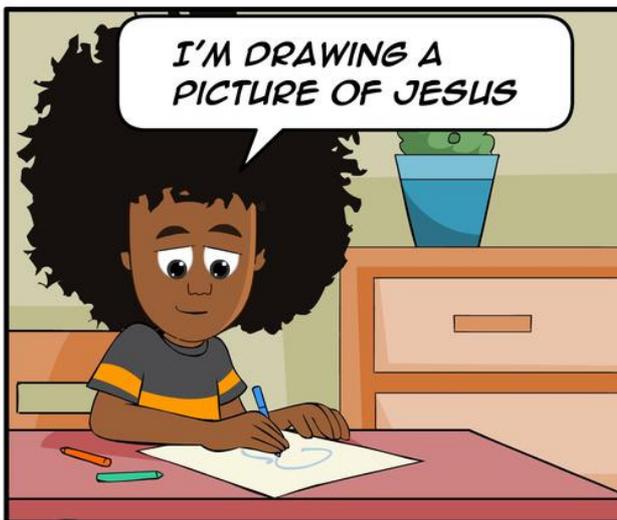
Me: "I am so sorry for sinning, Lord"

God: "so you'll stop?"

Me:



TAG & HASH





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