

THE FAMILY ISSUE • JUNE 2024

# SHUZIA



## HOW TO END AN AFFAIR

*and still keep  
your marriage*

## CAN WE MEET YOUR CRUSH?

*a guide on talking  
to your child about  
relationships*

**#1**  
**CHARTS ON**  
**SHUZIA.COM**

## MY HUSBAND'S WIFE

*a retelling of the  
story of Rachael*

FAMILY VS CAREER  
**TOLU MICHAELS**

SHUZIA.COM



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1 JUNE 2024

# Editor's note



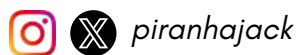
Dear Cherished Readers,

As the warmth of June envelops us, it brings me immense pleasure to introduce the Family Issue of Shuzia Magazine. This edition is a heartfelt celebration of the bonds that unite us, explored through the deeply moving and inspiring articles crafted by our talented writers.

Family is the cornerstone of our existence, providing us with support, love, and a sense of belonging. Our writers have skillfully portrayed the multifaceted nature of family, weaving tales that resonate with the experiences we all share.

Within the pages of this special issue, you will find a collection of narratives that delve into the essence of family. Each piece offers a glimpse into the myriad ways in which family shapes our lives and our hearts. May the articles within this Family Issue inspire you, evoke cherished memories, and remind you of the profound impact that family has on our lives.

In His Love,  
Jackson Macharia,  
Editor-In-Chief



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JESUS

*loves you*

GET JESUS


SAY YES  
TO HIM



*Happy*  
**Father's Day!**

@myshuzia





**UNLINKING  
CHILDHOOD  
TRAUMA**

---

**BY  
VICTOR OLAITAN**



# Unlinking Childhood Trauma

Written by Victor Olaitan

The ghosts of the past do haunt the present (and I assure you, this is true). I have had to wake up in the middle of the night in a sweat, my chest heaving from nightmares, a remnant of my childhood days still haunting me. The last time I had one, I asked the Holy Spirit why I had to relive such painful memories when they no longer bothered my waking moments.

Childhood trauma is very real. Millions of children around the world are being exposed to traumatic experiences such as excessive corporal punishments, sexual abuse, verbal abuse, emotional abuse, and other forms of abuse. And there are millions of adults whose childhood experiences still have psychological effects on their lives.

I grew up with a father who took the Bible passage "Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child, but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him [Proverbs 22:15 KJV]" quite literally. He doesn't fail to punish infractions and he is not patient to explain himself. He believes you are old enough to know what is right. Not doing the right thing to him means you are being deliberately rebellious.

As an adult, after I left home, I grew up thinking this was just a rite of passage.

That children need to be beaten to an inch of their lives before they can be obedient, respectful, hardworking, and compliant. I knew I was in trouble when occasionally I had that dream of being that little boy again, receiving lashes for every slight infraction.

If the past still plagues you as an adult, what should you do? How should you go about your healing process?

- **Learn forgiveness first:** To forgive is to let go of all the offenses that are troubling your spirit and weighing you down. Offenses are emotional pieces of baggage we carry around with us. They affect us alone and not the offender. Offenders May not even know that they have committed any offenses. They will be sleeping soundly while you are plagued with nightmares from the things they did towards you.
- **Writing and journaling:** For people who do not know how to talk about their emotions, one of the most effective therapeutic activities is to write out what you feel. You let it out and let the paper bear the burdens
- **Find someone to talk to:** In the kingdom of God, we are a community.

- We bear one another's burden and help each other overcome situations like trauma. Learn to socialize and not stand alone. Of course, talk to people you can trust to be discreet.
- Arts and music therapy: Immersing yourself in arts, literature, and music does wonders for psychology. Music has a calming effect, and literature and arts get your mind positively engaged to appreciate the beauty of the creator.
- 

Find good Christian music and immerse yourself in the melodies.

**Spiritual activities:** You can engage in Christian activities like praying, fasting, meditating on the word of God, etc. These activities help to overcome the situation by helping you forgive the offender and love them instead.

**Therapy:** There are trained professionals, and therapists, who can help you overcome trauma. Some people don't believe in therapy sessions. They believe they can deal with all situations. But many die without giving themselves the chance to live. Get help.

So, how can you protect your Child from trauma as a Christian? Here, I list a few ways:

A child should fear the rod, not the parent: There should be something to fear, not the father or mother, but the rod. If there is nothing to fear, then the children would be disobedient and you would have failed as a parent. Use the rod, but only when necessary, not out of anger or malice, not for punishment but for correction.

Take time to patiently mentor your child: There are times to patiently explain things, even showing what they need to do by example. Children learn by copying what others do, especially grown-ups.

Do what you want them to do, they will follow suit. A parent who doesn't read shouldn't expect his/her child to be a reader. Be patient with them.

**A child should be shown love:** Children know and respond positively when they are shown much love. Showing them love means you don't break their trust, you don't openly disgrace them, you let them know you care (verbally and through actions) and you don't deflate their self-esteem by comparing them to others. Let them know how wonderful they are and encourage them.

**Mind your language:** Children repeat what they hear. And the words that make up their vocabulary will determine how they think.

Do you want them to think healthy thoughts? Let them hear the words of grace, wisdom, and respect from your lips.

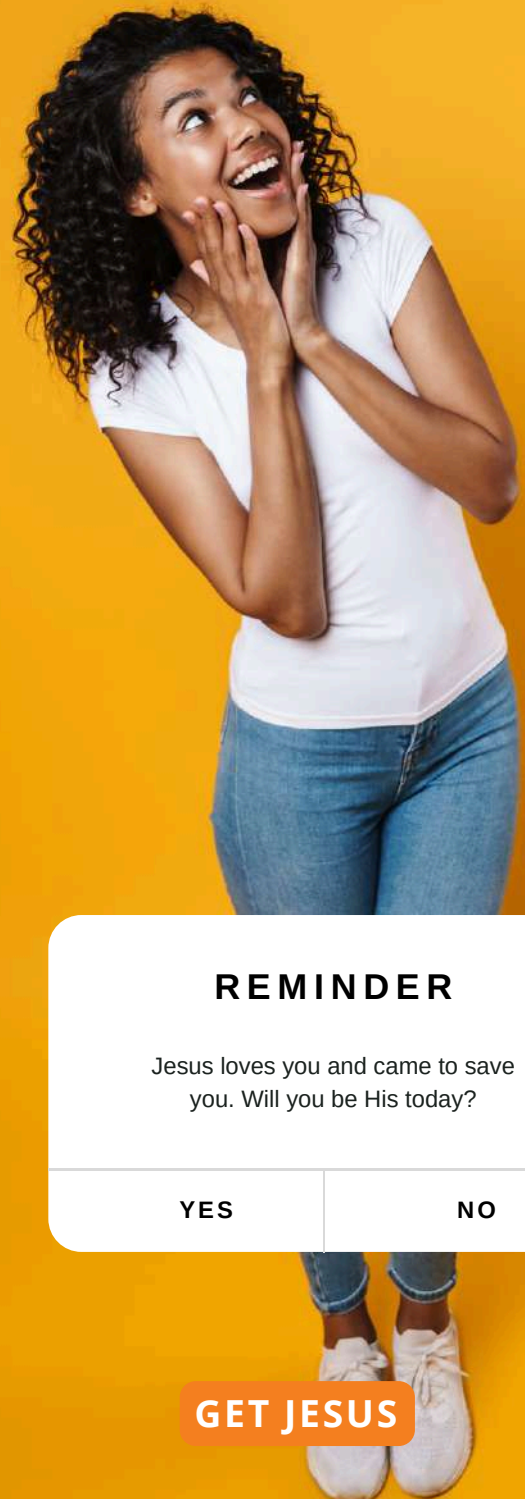
Teach them the way of the Lord: The saving grace I have is that my parents taught me the way of the Lord. From my childhood days, I learned to fear God and respect people. My dad taught me to read the Bible every day and to see the truth. That made all the difference.

Conclusively, for those who have experienced childhood trauma, the best therapist I can recommend is the Holy Spirit.

It is safe to say our parents thought they were training us the best way they could; they did not know any better. As we turn to the Holy Spirit, we are helped to forgive these offenses and heal from the memories.

The Holy Spirit has helped me tremendously in overcoming trauma. And seeing my childhood experiences, I have made a promise that my children will be born into an environment where love reigns, holding us firm in Christ.

Be determined that your children will not pass through the same traumatic experience you did. Make your plans to protect them. Seek the best way you can raise your child to fear God and respect people.

**REMINDER**

Jesus loves you and came to save you. Will you be His today?

**YES****NO****GET JESUS**

TALK  
OUT  
LINGS

TO ASK  
FOR HELP

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TO TALK  
ABOUT  
FEELINGS

TO ASK  
FOR HELP

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TO NOT  
BE OKAY

# MEN NEED TO KNOW IT'S OKAY

TO CRY



@MAISIESGHOST

TO GO TO  
THERAPY



TO NEED  
SUPPORT

TO BE  
VULNERABLE

GO TO  
RAPY

TO N  
SUPP

TO BE  
VULNERABLE



# CAN WE MEET YOUR CRUSH?

*A guide for parents on having nurturing talks with their children about relationships.*



Written by  
**EDGAR ONYANGO**

Hey there!

It is time to open up a conversation about something at the core of our lives, and the lives of every teenager: Relationships. Yes, we are delving deeper into the world of attractions, crushes, dating dos, and don'ts, and the butterflies that come with it. Can we meet your crush? When is the right time? Can we have a conversation about this area?

Picture this: your teenager comes home with stars in their eyes, all glowing and excited, talking about their "someone special". As a parent, older sibling, or relative, it is natural to have a million and one questions in your head.

When do we talk about dating? What do we talk about in dating? How do we guide them? What about the dreaded 'sex talk'? You are probably thinking, "In my day, this was a taboo to talk about". How and where do I start? Start here.

First off, let us break it down: why should we even care about dating? Beyond the mushy stuff, it is about self-discovery. Dating helps teens and youth understand their own values, learn about boundaries, and practice communication skills. It is like a crash course in human connection.

A connection that should lead to marriage, in line with God's principles and design. This conversation is a good platform to impart wisdom that can give reference to personal values and experience.

To the more juicy part, the "how-to" of dating. There is no one-shoe-fits-all in the how-to of dating but here, we look at the guiding steps, especially in this season and time.

We live in an interesting time of communication, where we can connect exclusively behind the screens.

As a parent seeking to encourage their teenagers to be more open in their communication about their dating life, the place of face-to-face communication as a pillar cannot be overstated. Encourage your kids to be honest, respectful, and open in their interactions.

Teach them the importance of setting boundaries and recognizing red flags in relationships. The dating phase is a precedence for marriage and the future. Remind them of the need for formidable foundations and that there is no need to rush into anything!

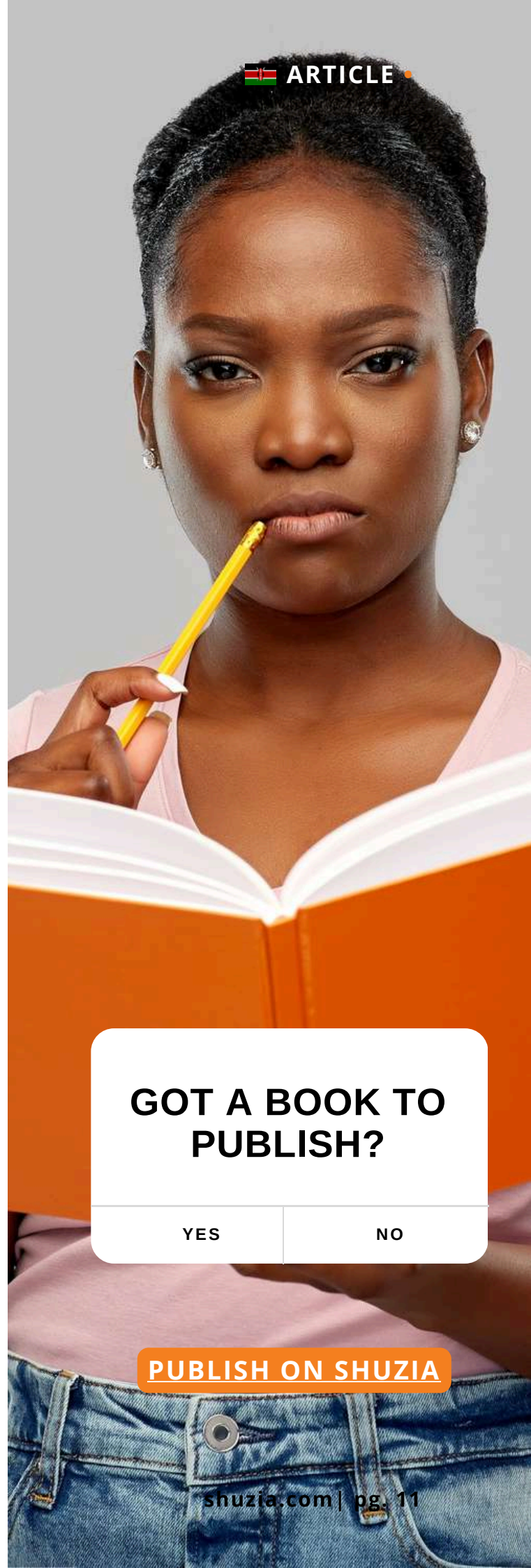
Nonetheless, when is the right time to start all this?

It is the age-old question with no easy answer. Every home and family is different. If your teen seems ready to dip their toes into the dating pool, offer your support and guidance.

And if they're not quite there yet, that's okay too. Remind them that there is no pressure and that you are always there to talk when they are ready. Be open. Do not just tell them to be, show them how. Talk about yourself, your mistakes, your achievements, and your journey. Embracing these conversations with an open heart and a listening ear can cultivate a culture of trust and understanding that bridges the gap between generations.

So, can we meet your crush? It is not a question about snooping and being nosey- it is about responsibility and forging a deeper parent-child connection. It is about showing support for the kids in the twists and turns of their journey of love. It is about offering guidance and support on a way that they should follow and the expectations therein. It is about laying the foundation for healthy relationships that will last a lifetime. It is about being open in these conversations and more.

Let us keep the conversation flowing, families. Because when it comes to matters of the heart, a little guidance goes a long way.



**GOT A BOOK TO PUBLISH?**

YES

NO

**PUBLISH ON SHUZIA**

Life without God is  
like a broken  
pencil....

**IT'S POINTLESS**

*Get Jesus*



# drink.

FROM GOD'S WORD  
WITH CHRISTIAN BOOKS

explore



# YOUNG IN THE Lord

*by Praise Abraham*

A SHORT STORY

"When will you be back, son?" Eunice asked as she straightened the collar of Timothy's tunic. Timothy towered over her by half an inch but that didn't stop her from fussing over her only son, never mind that he was almost twenty-one.

"We've been over this a million times, Mom," Timothy said, dramatically rolling his eyes.

"I'll stay in Ephesus for as long as the Lord wants me to. You don't have to worry about me. Apostle Paul is a very perceptive man and he treats me like a son."

"Well, I can't help but feel nervous. You'll spend weeks at sea and I know you suffer seasickness. Just like your father." Her voice turned sober.

Understanding seeped into Timothy's eyes. He tipped up her downcast chin. "Mom, don't despair. I know God will hear your heartfelt intercession for his soul. At least it is a good thing he doesn't stop you from pursuing your faith."

Eunice sighed as she turned to check the oven. As she opened the oven door, the delicious smell of freshly baked cookies wafted through the air, into Timothy's nostrils.

"That's because he is too busy traveling the world, overseeing his winery business.

He thinks Jesus is just another one of the countless gods they worship in Greece. How ridiculous!"

"I seriously still cannot understand how you got married to him," Timothy muttered as he picked a hot cookie from the tray and began munching on it.

Eunice placed a hand on her hip and looked at Timothy, her gaze serious. "Your father is a hardworking man and I admire him. Yahweh is helping me love him even more every day.

Although I made a rash decision in marrying him, I know Yahweh's grace has us covered. I was naive then, madly in love with the handsome brute who defended me when some sons of Belial tried to molest me.

I ignored Yahweh's injunction not to be unequally yoked with Gentiles. Now I know better. Either way, I wouldn't have had you, my sweet child, if I didn't marry your father."

Timothy shrugged. "I didn't mean to open old wounds, Mom. You know how grateful I am to God that you are my mother. I'm glad that despite the rumors others spread about you, you were still able to train me up in the Lord's way, taking me to the temple every week and teaching me the Torah till I could recite it even in my sleep."

Eunice gave him a wry grin. "Well, you didn't seem too enthusiastic about it while you were a child."

Timothy scratched the back of his neck, sheepishly grinning.

"Forgive me Mother, but you must understand how hard it is to be brought up properly when the enticing lure of this reckless age is all around."

"Talking about reckless living, have you heard from Tirzah recently?" Eunice asked after a pause, her voice laced with concern.

Timothy's face blanched and he almost choked on the last crumbs of cookies that he was eating. He grabbed the cup and emptied it in a single gulp.

"Tirzah? She's alive. Meaning there's still hope for her," Timothy's eyes glistened as bittersweet memories of his childhood friend filled his mind.

"Any updates about her decision to delve into pursuing the gentile gods?" Eunice's face looked pained as she spoke.

"None. The last I saw of her was weeks ago and you needed to see how she openly derided me as I preached in the Main Square. I fear she has gone too deep into her idolatry and is now possessed by devils."

"It's such a pity. Her downward spiral began when her parents divorced. It's obvious she's embittered against Yahweh." Eunice paused and took Timothy's hands. "Take your advice, son. Keep praying for Tirzah and guard your own heart. Even the very elect can be deceived."

Timothy nodded grimly and waved his hand as though to disperse the cloud of gloom that had descended on the kitchen. He muttered something under his breath, an injunction from Apostle Paul to beware of youthful lusts.

"I have to be on my way. My regards to Grandma Lois. Send her my love when she comes visiting again for the Feast of Booths. Tell her I miss her special Knish recipe. And tell her not to worry about her knees too much. I don't want her constantly whining about her arthritis when I get back."

Eunice chuckled and clasped her hand behind her back. "Timothy, trust me, the only thing she'll be whining about is how she doesn't want you ending up an old bachelor like Apostle Paul."

"Mom!" Timothy said, his face reddening.

"I'm just saying," Eunice said with a sly smile. "Hurry along now. You don't want the ship to depart before you get to the dock."

Timothy placed a peck on her forehead and slung his backpack across his shoulders.

"I'll write you a letter once I arrive safely at Ephesus."

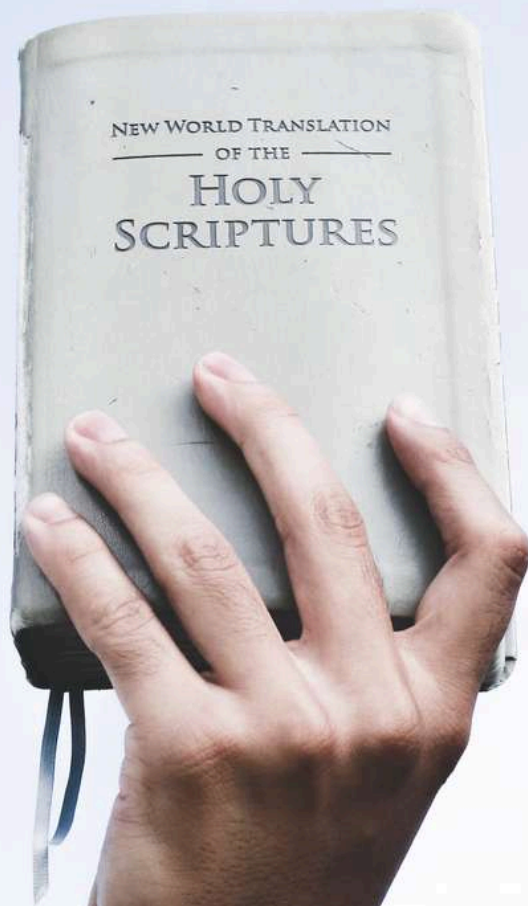
"Write often. I will miss you terribly." Eunice straightened. "I hope you didn't forget to take all of Paul's scrolls and the tunic he lent you."

"They're safely tucked into my bundle. How could I forget the scrolls when I diligently poured over them each night? I can't wait to meet Paul again so I can discuss the scriptures with him. Thanks, Mom. I love you. Shabbat Shalom." Timothy took off, his mother escorting him to the gate.

"May Yahweh be with you, my son," Eunice whispered as she watched his outline fade into the crowded street of Lystra.

# ONLY 5%

OF CHRISTIANS READ THEIR BIBLE.



**DON'T BE PART OF THE 95%**



**THE**  
**“THEY/THEM”**  
**CONUNDRUM**

WRITTEN BY CHIDINMA **MARCUS**

What can a mum do when her teenage son announces that he is gay? What will a dad say that will enable his little girl to listen when she breaks the news over dinner that she wants to transition to a male child? How can parents these days handle this surging wave of immorality yet, still show love to their kids without compromising Bible standards?

It's devastating. What's worse, guardians are finding it hard to speak up and express themselves, especially if their words are perceived as crude, old-fashioned, or more extreme, referred to as "hate speeches."

Most parents in an effort not to "lose" their kids, succumb to their desires and yield to worldly standards. After all, the law is in their favor.

The Bible says that in later times, some will depart from the faith by devoting themselves to deceitful spirits and the teachings of demons (1 Timothy 4:1).

To begin with, you must make a firm resolution. Whose side are you on? Remember Peter and the other apostles? Their decision was not in agreement with the doctrines of their generation but they firmly declared, "We must obey God rather than men." (Acts 5:29)

A strong opinion of the LGBTQ+ Community is that "Christian doctrines are centered on love.

Therefore we should love and not hate." Is it hatred if we inform a child that there's a ditch ahead rather than letting him/her walk blindly?

While the Lord Jesus was an epitome of Love himself, it was clear that he didn't condone any act of unrighteousness when he made whips and chased errant Jews out of the temple (John 2:15-17). He called the Pharisees blind guides, fools, hypocrites, serpents, and a generation of vipers (Matt 23:16, Matt 23:17, Luke 11:44, Matt 23:33). The Lord's purpose for hanging out with sinners (John 2:15-17) was to save the lost and not because he was in support of their actions. (Luke 10:19) Just like him, love the man, hate the evil deed.

You must also understand that there are spiritual implications to these ungodly acts of immorality. The devil and his cohorts influence unknowing believers to act contrary to God's word. Victims can only be delivered from this spell by coming into the light of the knowledge of God's word.

Check the scriptures. Adam gave his authority to the devil when he sinned against God in the Garden of Eden. Since then, anyone who is not born again or yielded to the Spirit of God can be used by evil forces to perpetuate darkness.

Therefore, let no man deceive you that God is in support of the acts of debauchery that you see today.

Now that we have established these truths, what can you do if your child suddenly shows up unannounced bearing terrible tidings? Don't shout. Don't scream. Don't react negatively. Reply that you would discuss more about it, retreat into your room, and pray.

The Bible says that if you pray according to the will of God, you will have the answers that you seek (1 John 5:14-15). What is the Will of God today? Pray according to the Word in the Name of Jesus! Therefore whatsoever you desire that is in line with the Bible principles, if you pray in the Name of Jesus, you will have what you ask.

To use a weapon effectively, you must understand how powerful it is. That Name, Jesus, is higher than all governments or any leadership ladder this world of darkness could confer on any man! No demon can stand that name! Pray. It will work. (Philippians 2:9-11)

Also, allow zero fear! Refuse to accept the negative pictures the devil sends your way. This is why you must be armed with scriptures to counter any opposing word (2 Corinthians 10:5).

Declare by faith only. Speak to the mountain and before you, it will level down completely (Mark 11:23).

The question is, do you believe? How ready are you to make the much-needed change? You might need to go on prolonged weeks of fasting and worship where your heart is completely submissive to God.

While you are doing these things listed above, your child doesn't have to know. Keep relating with your son or daughter like before, providing food and all necessities. It is hard if you lean on your strength but if you invite the Holy Ghost, you will always know how to respond in every situation.

If your child hasn't said anything related to this, begin to do the same—pray in the Name of Jesus, fast, and declare words of faith.

Our Father created the entire world with words. You are just like him, that's why you are born again.

Stand Firm. Fix your eyes on the Lord. It will happen exactly how you want it.




# WRITE FOR **FREE**

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**LET THE WORLD READ  
YOUR MASTERPIECE**



**GO TO  
SHUZIA**

A night sky with a bright starburst on the left and a nebula on the right.

A miracle is God  
doing only what  
God can do.

RONALD DUNN



father   
TO CHILD

Written by Love Imahe

When I was younger, I didn't like the morning devotion in my house. One, because my parents were always waking me ridiculously early for it – like, would God be pissed if we did our prayers after dawn?! – and two, because it was always the same songs, over and over again, EVERY morning.

Nobody needed to lead worship. Once my father started clapping his hands, everybody knew to start the chorus, "Good morning, Jesus, good morning, Lord..." Each morning, I went through the routine physically, my mouth moving and my hands clapping, but I was usually tuned out, most times fighting sleep, waiting for it to end.

Then came the evening devotions. These were shorter; because it was usually after everyone had eaten and were all ready to go to bed, so I didn't mind as much. Then there was the compulsory Sunday service (unless you had chickenpox, probably), and mandatory weekly services that my parents dragged us to. I guess if I wanted to avoid that last bit, I shouldn't have joined the choir. Now, it wasn't just my parents, but also my pastor on my neck to mark attendance.

As soon as I got into the university, I celebrated my freedom from stifling house rules and decided I could pray anytime I wanted.

I didn't go to church every Sunday and missed weekly services when I could.

But when I woke up in the morning, there was a beckoning within me to say something to God. A good morning. A hello. Anything. Years of training to wake up with Thanksgiving had ingrained it in my brain, and even my body demanded it of me. But I would ignore the promptings and go about my day, or say something half-felt and rushed.

It didn't take long for this lifestyle to catch up with me. For one, there was a palpable emptiness I felt and I didn't need a soothsayer to tell me I needed to know God for myself. I realized that I had essentially been under a covering while in my parent's house, and while they were still alive, it was my turn to sustain that covering now that I was on my own. I knew what I had to do, thanks to my parents' intentional discipleship. I knew how to go to God. My mouth, my hands, my mind, still knew the motions. I only had to believe.

My parents weren't present the day I submitted my life to Christ, but they led me there. They provided the blueprint I used to find my way to grace.

Modern society is a product of familial upbringing and indoctrination.

We're all a product (one way or the other) of our backgrounds. There's no denying that where and how we grew up has an influence on us in some way. After all, the family is the smallest unit of society.

That's why when someone says, "I grew up in a Christian home," we nod our heads because all becomes clear immediately. It explains a lot about an individual when they mention where they're from.

For us as believers, that kind of upbringing even influences how and when we become born again, what church we attend, and the way we worship God. It forms certain mindsets in us that color the lenses of how we see the world, for good or bad. And if we've been trained well, we know how to relate to the world without going against our faith. We know what trends to reject, and what a child of God can emulate.

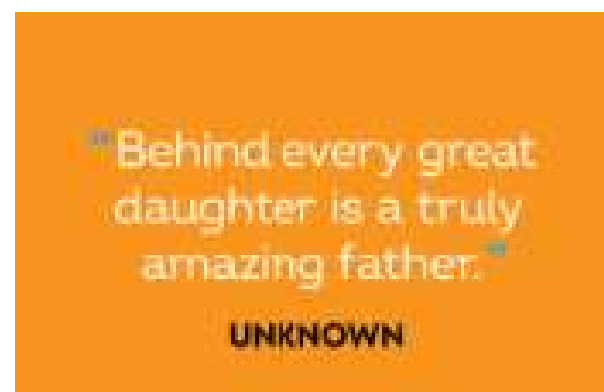
So, does passing on and inheriting our parents' faith still apply to our modern societies? Yes. It starts with intentional discipleship from our parents - those seemingly mundane routines that we've grown to take for granted. Instilling that over and over in a child until it becomes part and parcel of their mental process. In this, the scripture in Proverbs 22:6 holds: "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it."

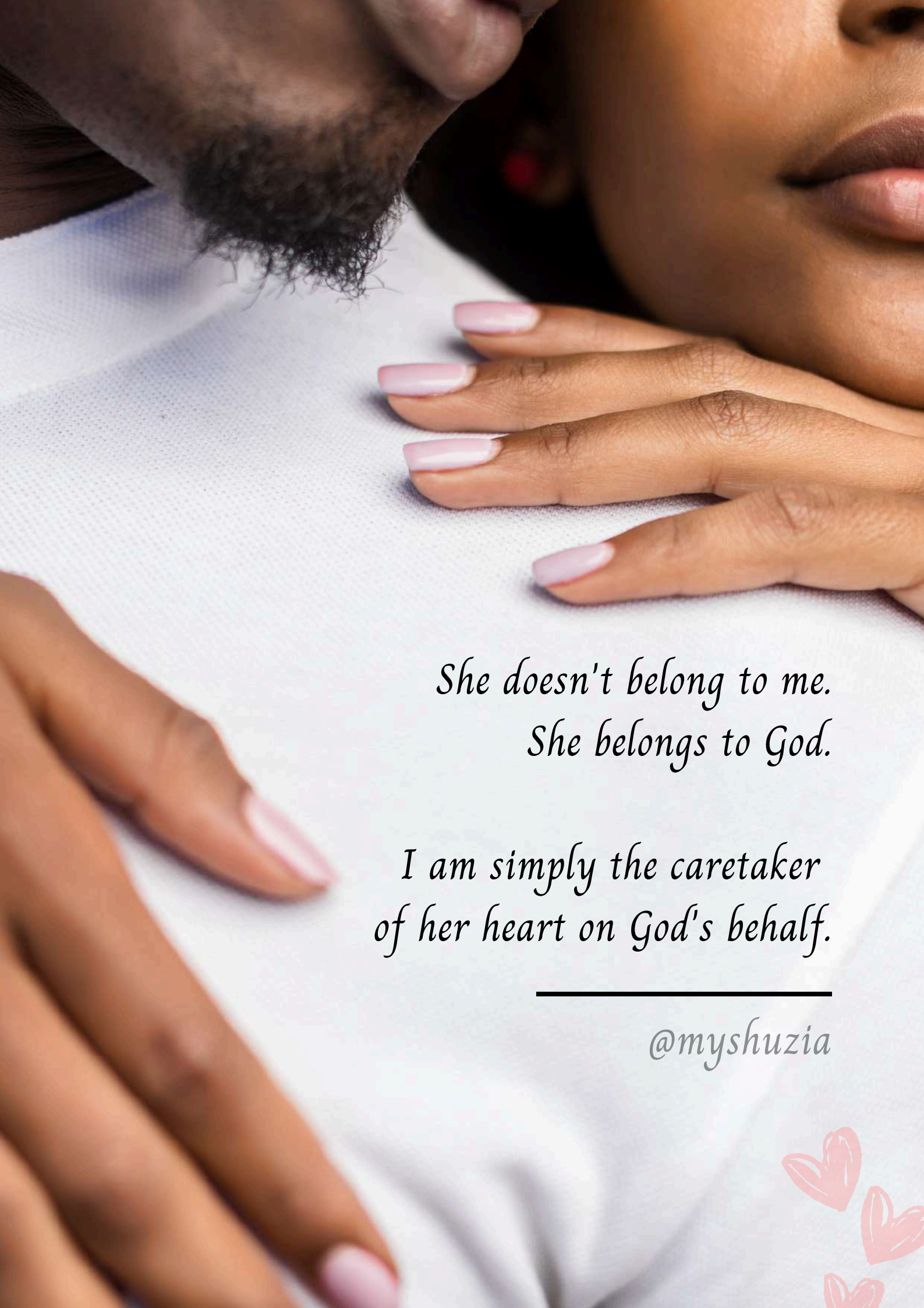
What that means is, that parents can trust their training and spiritual investment in a child even as they grow and go out into the world. The child may stray, but there is a high possibility that he may return.

There is such a thing as "the faith of our fathers". Faith that moves. Faith that carries us when we can't keep going. Faith that reminds us that we are not bastards. Faith that stirs us to action. This faith is a shield for us against the twisted lies that are disguised as truths in today's world. A light to find our way through the quagmire of deception that abounds in modern society.

Our fathers have laid the foundation. It is up to us to continue this legacy of faith by "holding fast to that which we have been taught." (2 Thessalonians 2:15). And when we become parents, we must remember to pay it forward and equip the next generation, of our children, with the discipline to sustain a lifestyle of knowing and walking with God.

Like my parents did for me.





*She doesn't belong to me.  
She belongs to God.*

*I am simply the caretaker  
of her heart on God's behalf.*

---

*@myshuzia*



A close-up portrait of Tolu Michaels, a woman with long, wavy brown hair, smiling warmly. She is wearing a white blazer over a brown ribbed top, a gold chain necklace, and large gold hoop earrings. The background is a soft, out-of-focus light blue.

EXCLUSIVE

SHUZIA

INTERVIEW

GIFT OMALE INTERVIEWS

TOLU MICHAELS

***About Tolu Michaels***

*Tolu is a best-selling author and founder of SHOWUP HQ. She is an Educator committed to helping brands show up purposefully, persuasively & profitably.*

# MEET TOLU MICHAELS

## GIFT OMALE INTERVIEWS PTM



**Pastor Tolu, your journey as a bestselling author and founder of SHOWUP HQ has inspired many women and entrepreneurs. Can you share a bit about how you embarked on this path and how your faith has influenced your entrepreneurial Journey?**

In February 2017, I lost my job. This was two months after my wedding and subsequent relocation to join my husband in the city where he lived. Plans had already been made to officially transfer me to the branch of my company in the new city, but at the last minute, those best laid plans fell through. So, here I was – newly married, newly relocated and newly jobless; an investment banker one day, and a job seeker the next.

Since my worst nightmare had happened, I decided to patiently find a job I really liked and enjoyed. But in the meantime, I would offer my skills to clients beyond my physical location. At that time, I didn't think I could have predictable income every month without a regular 9-5 job, but I was willing to show up and try. Because of that decision to show up, I've created a successful business that grows year after year, and I get invited to stages I couldn't have dreamed of, simply because of the difference my work makes in people's lives.

Faith is the lens through which I view everything including my entrepreneurial journey. It has formed the values with which I conduct business and relationships. It also influenced my decision to treat each client like someone who's God-sent. I consider my work as a bridge between where a person is and what God wants to do in their lives. Many times, I am even a bridge between two people that God wants to connect to each other. For example, many beautiful relationships have started in our community SHOWUP Circle that look like coincidence, but I know God did that.

Finally, it has given me the advantage of being a step ahead and never at a loss for what to do. Many mornings, I wake up knowing the next move to make, only to later realize it was always the best move. Every major move from writing my book to starting SHOWUP Circle, was born out of doing what I sensed God wanted me to do at that moment. God is the greatest strategist and my biggest advantage.

**Can you describe a typical day in your life, balancing your roles as an entrepreneur, pastor, and mother?**

No two days are the same and while I'm a planner by nature, priorities and commitments find ways to overturn my calendar on a weekly basis 😊 There are some days where I invest more of my time with pastoring. Some other days, I invest more time in business, but every single day I spend the most time being a wife and mother.

**Balancing a thriving career with family responsibilities and pastoral duties requires exceptional time management skills. How do you manage to excel in both your professional and family roles?**

Honestly, there's no magic formula but God helps me every day and people help me too.

I prioritize communicating my schedule with my family and stakeholders. So whenever something needs my focus, there's an understanding support system.

I set intentions ahead of time - where I'll focus per week, month, or year. This gives me clarity on what doesn't need my focus. I recognize that not every call needs to be answered immediately, not every email needs a reply the same night, and not every invitation needs a Yes. This allows me to be fully present in the areas that I'm committed to per time.

I've learned that managing my energy is as important as managing my time, so I partition my days according to what's happening in other areas eg. Deep work and Meetings when the children are in school, and next day prep when they are asleep. Also, naming the days helps me manage energy eg. Thursdays are for Client Sessions, Wednesdays are for writing, etc.

Some days it doesn't work out as planned. Like when I have to officiate a Wedding or conduct a Baby's Naming, it doesn't matter that I've designated it a no-going-out day, I'll show up for my duty.

In every area of commitment, I try to understand what's required of me specifically.

“Live out your faith in your  
roles, responsibilities,  
relationships, and all you do.”

TOLU

I know the unique value I bring to every organization, project, group, or relationship, and prioritize it per time, keeping in mind the difference between what I can do VS what I have to do and leaning on God for whatever I have to do.

**Can you share a memorable moment from your career where you witnessed the impact of your work on entrepreneurs' lives and businesses?**

So many memorable reports to think of. From the wife whose confidence blossomed when she started contributing to the family income to the Mom who now feels confident about her child's future because we've taught her how to communicate her value and confidently raise her prices. Or the coach who has helped dozens of professionals get certified and earn salary raises. As my clients continue to reach more people, I'm indirectly reaching those people.

No impact story is more valuable than the other but something that tugs at my heart every time is when people say that they took action towards their dreams because my content inspired them to show up to their own life. There are so many people with incredible talents and gifts. I love to see people tap into that and win.

**Please share a hilarious nickname one of your family members has and the story behind it.**

Hmmm. I'm fondly called TM or a version of it eg. PTM or CTM. Those are my initials. Years ago, people called me TK - my former initials. The real origin was my appointment as TimeKeeper at my secondary school for a year. So, when people called me then, the first thing that came to mind was the picture of me ringing the bell vigorously when we can't wait for a class to end. 🕒

**In what ways has motherhood influenced your perspective on leadership?**

I'm used to forgetting things easily and I have to set a reminder for almost everything. But as a Mom, my brain has become super-powered. I remember everything; medications, doctor's appointments, party invites, etc. The lesson is "Never write anyone off. There's more capacity in a person beyond what the eyes can see. The most forgetful person can become the most efficient when there's a necessity. It is the responsibility of a leader to raise necessity."

I used to worry a lot about what kind of Mom I would be. However, becoming a Mom taught me that God has given grace for every season. Don't be scared of stepping into leadership roles. Every new level comes with grace to excel in that responsibility.

Lean into the grace instead of worrying ahead of tomorrow.

Motherhood has also helped me realize how limited I am and taught me time management. I used to have this big sister syndrome where I felt I could be responsible for so many people. However, motherhood has shown me my limits, it has taught me to play to my strengths and focus on my core. Leadership newsflash! It's not your responsibility to fix every problem. Know when to defer to people who have greater expertise, passion, or bandwidth for the matter at hand. There's no award for struggling through life and doing everything yourself is not a badge of honor.

Children are often unpredictable. They don't understand what you understand. They test boundaries, throw tantrums, and don't always follow instructions. But they are predictable in this ONE THING: They don't need you to be perfect. You don't need to be perfect to be the perfect parent for your child. Perfection is not a requirement for leadership, but presence is. Paying attention and Learning how to reason with those who don't know what you know will not only make you a great mother, but also a great leader.

**What is your go-to Bible verse?**

This changes every few years, but at the moment it is:

Psalm 18:29-31 For by You I can run against a troop, By my God I can leap over a wall. As for God, His way is perfect; The word of the Lord is proven; He is a shield to all who trust in Him. For who is God, except the Lord?

Psalm 44:3 It was not by their sword that they won the land, nor did their arm bring them victory; it was your right hand, your arm, and the light of your face, for you loved them.

**Can you describe a mentor or role model who has inspired you to excel in both your family and professional life?**

If I made a list of people who inspired me, it would be a long one. It would include past & current mentors, bosses, and leaders in my life. I am so grateful for everyone who has inspired me, as well as those who have been a part of my journey at some point. However, this is a great opportunity to appreciate Apostle Emmanuel Iren, Tara Fela-Durotoye, Debola Deji-Kurunmi, Foluso Gbadamosi, Nkechi Atiba, Pastor Toks Oshokoya, and Oluwaseyi Adeyemo-Adeoye for investing and committing to my growth.

**What are some strategies you employ to maintain a healthy work-life balance as a mother and entrepreneur?**

I'm still learning in this department, but I don't think that balance exists where it is 50:50, e.g. 50% work, 50% life, etc. I don't try to balance, I prioritize per time.



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My strategies are a combination of planning, a support system, and self-compassion. I used to beat myself up for dropping some balls, then later evolved into making sure I catch any ball before they hit the ground.

Now, I gently drop some balls myself by rescheduling, outsourcing, or outright canceling. I apologize when I disappoint someone, but I'm no longer scared to disappoint. The balls are not hitting the ground, they're not getting knocked off, I'm just laying them down because I can't or don't want to do them in this season. Maintaining a bedtime routine for the children also gives me time to dedicate to something important before I go to bed.

I delegate whenever possible. I am surrounded by talented people at work and church. I empower them to take action so I can focus on areas where I make the biggest impact. This not only provides a good example for them but also sets realistic expectations. People do not expect me to be at every meeting or contribute to every conversation. That's sweet freedom as a result of setting expectations. "Multitasker" is not a badge I wear and I'm incredibly kind to myself. If I can squeeze in a work call while driving I'll do so but when I can't, I don't beat myself up.

Also, my faith is at the foundation of everything. I know that my worth is not tied to my productivity but to God.

Whether I'm leading a meeting, reading bedtime stories, teaching a class or potty training, I know that what I'm doing is important and I don't have to be a superwoman to be worthy. Finally, I do my best to take care of myself. I know that all the things I'm working on will only work if I'm healthy.

**Can you share a memorable family tradition or ritual that helps strengthen bonds and create lasting memories?**

Our family is still young, but one thing we've committed to is making everyone feel special. We never miss Christmas gifts under the tree, Birthday Song performances, and exchanging Cards. For now, Dad & Mom do the gifting, while the children design cards. The goal is to build a culture of appreciating and celebrating each other.

**Do you have a favorite quote or mantra that resonates deeply with you?**

"When you show up to your life, you not only give others an example of what is possible, but you also give them permission to do the same." - Quote from the book Show Up, by Tolu Michaels.

**Can you share a favorite memory from your career journey that highlights the importance of family support and encouragement?**

In 2017, my long-time friend Tosin Adedipe, once gave me the gift of an expensive online course worth thousands of dollars – at a time when I struggled to explain what I did for a living, that gesture showed me that someone believed in me and understood what I was trying to create. I'll never forget it.

I remember the creator was an Australian woman and watching her teach business online gave me a vision of what a digital business model could look like and an example that it was possible.

Back then, I was just figuring out a lot of things and I feared that it won't work. Many years after, I'm teaching, making a decent income online and paying it forward.

### **What's the most unexpected pet your family has ever owned?**

Nothing unexpected about owning a dog, and we owned several going up, but then my dear dad once named our dog "Terminator". That was unexpected.

### **Kindly share some key prayers that Christian families can incorporate into their daily routines for spiritual growth and unity?**

I like using exact words from scriptures to pray.

And there are many examples of direct prayers like in Ephesians 3:14-21, Ephesians 1: 15-23, Philippians 1:9-10, etc.

They don't need to be paraphrased, but you could personalize them. For example, Colossians 1:9-13 can sound like "Thank you Lord for delivering us from darkness into light.. Fill my husband and children with the knowledge of your will every time and in every way. Strengthen us with all might, help us to be patient and enduring. Help us to grow in knowing you, and bearing fruit in every good work. May our lives be full of joy and may we daily do your will in sharing the light of the gospel with others.

### **(Here are some other references:)**

- **Psalm 1:** "My children will delight themselves in God's word, stay far from wickedness and be surrounded by good, godly friends. We walk in step with you, and blossom in intimacy with you"
- **Philippians 1:9-11** "We'll abound in God's love..."
- **Joshua 24:15** "I declare that our family serves the Lord in unity and dedication"
- **Psalm 91** "God is our refuge, so we are protected and no harm will come near any of us. My children are protected from accidents, diseases, injuries, infections, deception and every form of abuse"

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Devote yourselves  
to *prayer*, being  
*watchful* and  
*thankful*

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COLOSSIANS 4:2

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- **Ephesians 5:22-28** “My husband and I will embrace our God-given roles in marriage and our home will be patterned after the love of Christ for His church”

**What advice would you give to aspiring entrepreneurs who are also balancing family responsibilities and have a strong desire to integrate their faith into their work?**

The key is to not partition your life. Avoid separating your faith from your work, eg I’m a Christian this or I’m a Christian that. Instead, think about it like: “I’m a Christian everything”.

This means that you should live out your faith in your roles, responsibilities, relationships, and all you do. Ask God about any decisions, don’t relegate Him to “spiritual matters”. Pray about your clients, colleagues, and opportunities ahead of you. This is the key to a life of peace, clarity, and wisdom.

As a Christian, you’re always on duty. Life will get busier, so don’t wait for uninterrupted time to pay attention to your faith. For instance, you can listen to a sermon while you’re commuting to work. There’s no law that says you have to study your Bible in the morning. If Morning doesn't work out, you can do it in the evening after the kids have gone to sleep.

Get your worth and validation from God, not some “4am routine” that works for your fave. It's okay to fine tune as you go along. In some seasons, you’re a morning person, in some others, you’re a night person and that’s fine. The important thing is that you’re the person God wants you to be.

**As someone who wears multiple hats—author, entrepreneur, pastor, and mother—what advice would you offer to individuals striving to maintain a strong sense of purpose and balance across their various roles?**

To maintain a strong sense of purpose, you must preserve your authentic motives, stay true to the mission, and recalibrate your motivations regularly.

Culture and social media is constantly presenting thoughts, alternatives, and goals we should aspire to. If you’re not careful, you’ll be heading down a derailed path without knowing.

Stay in close community with people who share the same values and have a sense of purpose themselves.

Proactively take time away to be with yourself. Spend time alone where you strip off the titles, accomplishments, and see yourself for who God made you to be beyond the business, brilliance and branding that you have.

“For by You I can  
run against a troop,  
by my God I can  
leap over a wall.  
As for God, His way  
is perfect; The word  
of the Lord is  
proven; He is a  
shield to all who  
trust in Him.”

***Psalm 18:29***

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FATHER

THE  
SON

THE HOLY  
SPIRIT

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# PURPOSEFUL PARENTING

by MARGARET MAWONDO



*"You May choose who to marry, you May choose when to marry, you May choose when to have children, you May even choose how many children to have. But once you have those children, you cannot choose when to raise them. Your choices are gone! If you do not raise them, they will still grow. But you May not like what you get!"*

Dr. Stanley Mukolwe, "Raising Future Parents"

We all want to be good parents. We all want to be great parents. But you can't be a good parent unless you understand the purpose of parenting. And you can't be a good parent unless you stay focused on the purpose of parenting. To shoot a basketball effectively, you have to keep your eyes on the front of the rim. If you can't see the rim, then you're not going to make the shot.

To be a good parent, you have to be able to see the goal or the purpose of parenting. The prophet Malachi, in Malachi 2:15, brings out the reason why God brings a man and woman together in marriage, that they May bring forth Godly offspring. The Good News translation brings it out so well, "that you should have children who are God's people".

Parenting is central to God's purposes for His people.

It is through intentional and purposeful parenting that a man and his wife can fulfill this responsibility of bringing up Godly children.

Psalm 127:3 says that children are a gift from God. They are not ours to own and do what seems fit to them. They are among the many gifts God gives to us and like every other gift, we are called to be faithful stewards of them. It is required of a steward that he be faithful. When we talk of purposeful parenting, we imply that parents need to understand that their children are not theirs to own and that there is a reason why God gave them to them. These children belonged to God before they belonged to us and they will continue belonging to God long after they have gone through our hands (Mukolwe, 2012). They have been entrusted to us by God and we are responsible for raising them.

How then can we be purposeful in our parenting, knowing that the end goal of it is so that our children May grow up to be God's people? Let me point this out- it is not just about having a purpose in parenting but rather having God's purpose with the right motives. In this way, we can parent our kids with a gospel mindset.

If your child belongs to God, then that means that you must raise them for Him.

You must raise them according to His goals for them, according to His purpose for them, and in a way that pleases Him. God has a plan for your child. And your success is measured by how well you lead your child to follow that plan.

Now that we have established that the purpose of parenting is to raise Godly kids, here are a few ways we can do that:

- **TEACH them the fear of the Lord**

Deuteronomy 4:10 AMP - 'Assemble the people to Me and I will let them hear My words, so that they May learn to fear Me [with awe-filled reverence and profound respect] all the days they live on the land, and so that they May teach their children.'

Deuteronomy 6:5-7 NIV - 5 Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. 6 These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts. 7 Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down, and when you get up.

- **TRAIN them in the ways of the Lord**

Proverbs 22:6 AMP - Train up a child in the way he should go [teaching him to seek God's wisdom and will for his abilities and talents],

Even when he is old, he will not depart from it.

Matthew 19: 14 ESV - but Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me and do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of heaven."

Ephesians 6:4 ESV - Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.

- **DISCIPLINE them in love.**

Proverbs 3:11-12 NIV - My son, do not despise the Lord's discipline and do not resent his rebuke, because the Lord disciplines those he loves, as a father the son he delights in.

Proverbs 29:17 NIV - Discipline your children, and they will give you peace; they will bring you the delights you desire.

Proverbs 13:24 NIV - Whoever spares the rod hates their children, but the one who loves their children is careful to discipline them.

In a nutshell, children belong to God and it lies on the shoulders of parents to ensure that they understand this truth and are careful to raise them in a way that brings honor to the One who owns them. So be purposeful in your parenting, not for comfort's sake, not for convenience' sake, not for your reputation's sake, not for your child's sake, but for Christ's sake.



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There's a quote I saw recently in the form of a photo. It said that "a Christian family is a family of individuals who deeply love Christ and who love Him together." I think that is profound.

I like to define words so we will define the keywords in this piece. These words are traditions, rituals, and celebrations. When people mention tradition, what comes to mind? The dictionary defines it as a culture that has been passed down from generation to generation. By culture, it means arts, customs or habits, lifestyles, and behaviors that characterize a society or nation. A ritual is defined as a repeated set of actions. Last but not least, a celebration is a solemn gathering to show gratitude, appreciation, or remembrance happily.

A Christian family, in my belief, is a family that shows forth the glory of the Lord as well as a safe space for all the members. Every family has activities that knit them together, strongly promoting a sense of belonging. I have chosen to separate these events and activities into three distinct groups.

It could be daily, weekly, monthly, annually, etc. Take a look at your family. What is a family ritual you remember?

This could be anything including Bible study, morning devotion at a set time, morning runs, evening walks, picnics, game nights, bike riding, movie nights, book reading, and eating together. Picture the annual family gatherings, especially with the extended family during Christmas. That is a ritual. These help to bring the family together, and foster love and connection.

### **Celebrations.**

Who doesn't love having good times? Families go big on birthdays, weddings, and graduations all over the world. Happy seasons like Easter, Thanksgiving, and Christmas are celebrated with new outfits and holidays. Other happy events include church milestones like baptism, confirmation, and the first eucharist.

Memorial services and burials are not necessarily happy events but they sure do bring families together. For Christians, it is an opportunity to retrospect and think about eternity. Events like that could also be an opportunity to build a relationship with the Lord. They may be solemn but they strengthen family bonds. All these celebrations give family members a sense of belonging and pride. These are just pointers, you are free to add your own as you go along. First, let me put the most important one down in a common saying, "A family that prays together, stays together."

### **Traditions.**

These are habits that have been passed down from great-grandma to grandma to mother to child. Arts like baking and cooking are most common. We have heard of families of bakers and chefs who have passed down family restaurants, cafes, diners, and hotels. Other traditions include storytelling, holiday getaways, making ornaments for both humans and the Christmas tree, playing musical instruments, inheriting books, wedding rings or dresses, etc. All these help differentiate between families and strengthen the bond among the family members. Take a look at what was passed down to you. How do you feel about it? Some pride, some gratitude, and lots of love, I'm sure.

### **Rituals.**

We agree that these are repeated sets of actions. These could be any activity a family does together repeatedly. It could be daily, weekly, monthly, annually, etc. Take a look at your family. What is a family ritual you remember? This could be anything including Bible study, morning devotion at a set time, morning runs, evening walks, picnics, game nights, bike riding, movie nights, book reading, and eating together.

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Memorial services and burials are not necessarily happy events but they sure do bring families together. For Christians, it is an opportunity to retrospect and think about eternity. Events like that could also be an opportunity to build a relationship with the Lord. They may be solemn but they strengthen family bonds. All these celebrations give family members a sense of belonging and pride. I do not want to ignore the existence of dysfunctional families or ungodly families with their traditions, rituals, and celebrations but I would want to attest to you that it is better when Christ is the center. Parents are called to raise godly offspring, according to the will of God.

The conclusion of the matter is, brethren, God is the author of families. He is also the glue that keeps them together. God is love.

May the traditions we choose, invent, and pass down be glorious, godly, and good. Above all else, May the Lord be shown forth that all may see and believe in Him.

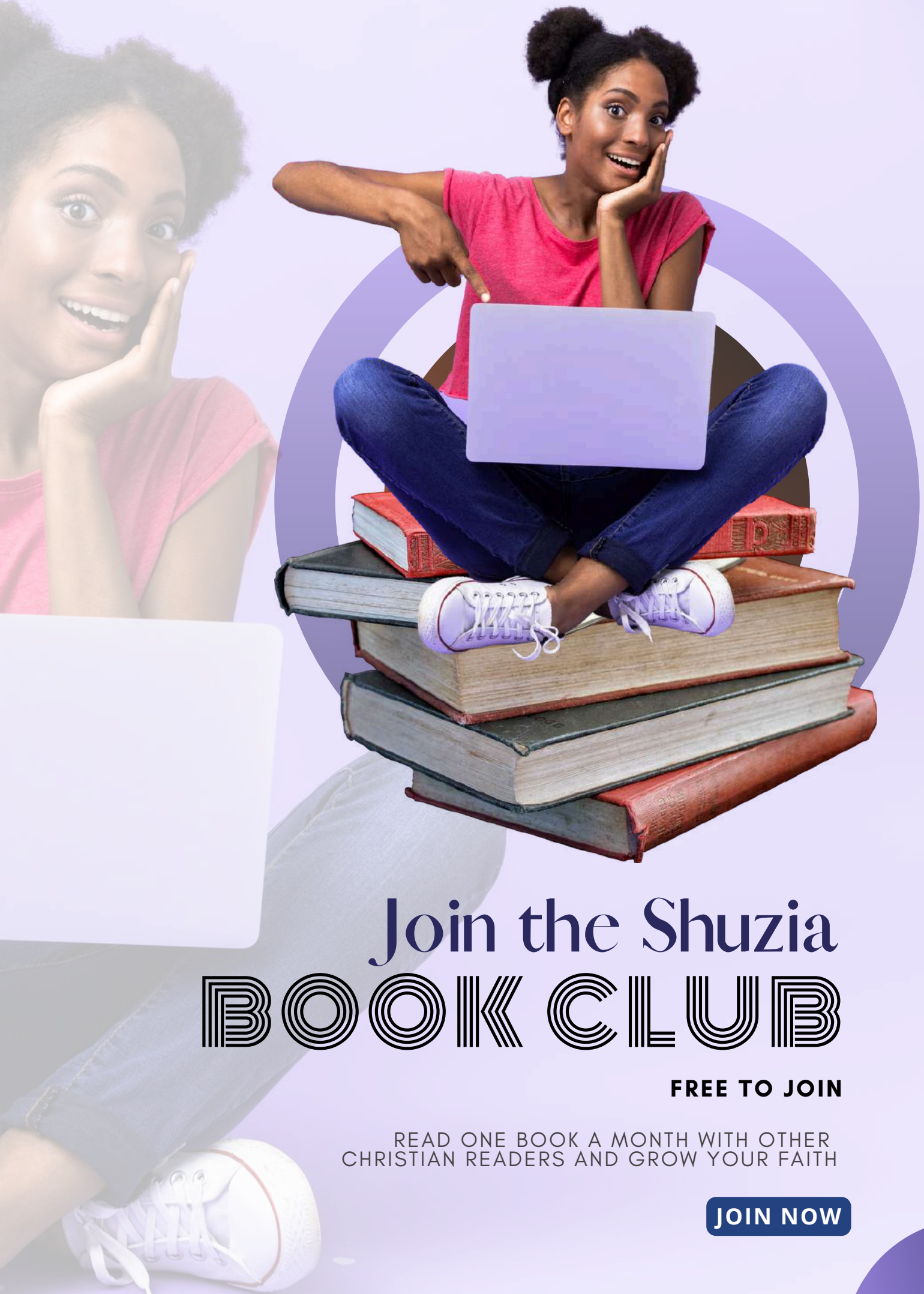
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/ˌvɒlənˈtɪr/

*agent of change*



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# MY HUSBAND'S WIFE

WRITTEN BY  
JEDIDIAH ADEOLA

The sun filtered through the wooden cut-out blinds. The rays shone right into Rachel's eyes, waking her up. She stared out at the morning sky, the events of the night before pouring into her mind. Fresh hot tears stung her eyes. All her life, she never believed love could be so...painful. She never imagined she could be hurt this much by a man, or that her father would do this to her, but then again, could anyone be trusted?

A sharp knock brought her back to reality.

'Rachel, come out for prayers!'

Smiling sadly, she took a deep breath. It was time to return.

***Six years before...***

Rachel couldn't believe her ears. Could this be true? The same man she had been patiently waiting for the last seven years had chosen to marry her elder sister! When had Jacob ever had feelings for Leah? She didn't know exactly how to react; hurt, rage, tiredness, and anger filled her. As soon as she saw him coming, Rachel turned back to her weeding.

Just as Rachel was getting ready to throw away the weeds, Leah walked in. Rachel tried her best to pretend she couldn't notice her presence, but it was hard to ignore her sister when she had just married the man she loved.

'So this is what you want, to have my life so bad that you had to steal him, right?'

'Believe me', Leah replied quietly, 'this is the last thing I wanted'

'So why did you agree if it wasn't what you wanted?' Rachel didn't care if she was screaming. Anyone could hear for all she cared. She had always been a good, kind, and very obedient and diligent daughter and sister. She just didn't get where she had gone wrong. Did Jacob not love her anymore?

'I hate you! All you've ever done is make my life miserable!' Tears streaked down her face - anger and frustration filled her. She had reached her peak. She didn't care anymore, they could all talk. She was done playing the good girl. Was this really what God had planned for her? Well then, Maybe she wanted to plan her own life by herself. She didn't know what to think anymore.

Without thinking, she ran. She didn't know where she was going, but she knew it was anywhere but this camp.

*Later that night...*

Jacob knew he was supposed to be focused on his new wife, but he couldn't help but notice that something was wrong with Rachel.

Sure, after she'd heard the news, she had been quiet but now, his mind was just far away, and he couldn't help but feel like she was going to do something...drastic. He had never known her to be a spontaneous person but she had her moments. He wasn't sure what to do about it, maybe sleep on it first.

But he couldn't. Something was wrong, and he had to go and check on her. As he made his way to her tent, he saw a silhouette of a girl running in the dark. Fear filled him, but before he could chase after her, a cool calm breezy feeling enveloped him, and he calmed down.

'Let her go. She needs it'

And so Jacob walked back to his tent.

### ***Five years after that night...***

Rachel drew water into her pail while she tried her best to avoid the women coming closer. They were women from her father's household, and she wanted nothing to do with them. However, she stopped when she heard their words.

'Never mind Leah. All she does is tire out poor Jacob. He's been stressed out; you can tell he's still worried about Rachel's sudden departure. He did love her, all because of Laban' She turned to leave. She had heard enough, but something they said caught my attention; he was

telling Laban that he was still interested in having Rachel, that is, if she ever came back 'As a second wife' the second woman looked skeptical 'Rachel won't settle for less'

'But, if she truly loves him and ever returns, she would be with him.'

Their voices faded away as they left carrying their pails.

\*\*\*

After the incident, Candace became a pillar to Rachel. Candace was an Ethiopian immigrant who had married a Jewish man who, unfortunately, died early. As a widow at a very young age, Candace had dedicated her life to helping women who were struggling. This was why she had accepted Rachel with open arms when she had come running to her with nowhere to go.

She had now lived with Candace for five years, and Rachel hadn't considered leaving anytime soon, especially due to the way she left, but that day, as she walked home, only one thought plagued her mind, 'go back,' her mind kept saying. 'It might be hard, but forgive'

Tears filled her eyes and spilled free. 'God, but it's going to be so hard. I loved him, but he just gave up on my love and didn't fight for me. Why should I forgive him? Don't I deserve to be happy? Do I have to suffer?'

Only one still small voice responded

“No, my child, come back”

The tears poured down her eyes. She broke down and let it all out. Rachel just lay there, sobbing out her heart. She knew she should go, but it was going to be so hard. ‘God, just one sign, let me know that it's time’

Before Rachel could get up and get going, she saw a white dove. Shock and amazement filled her. It was very hard to find a dove, especially a white one.

A memory from her some years back rushed into her mind.

\*\*\*

‘Open your eyes, my love’

Rachel finally removed her hands from her eyes and she stared in disbelief. In Jacob's hand was a pure white dove.

‘Where did you find that, I thought we had no doves in this part of camp?’

‘Yes, but I managed to find one’ he paused ‘You know what this means?’

Rachel shook her head

‘Love’ Jacob said ‘and forgiveness. This means we will always be together. Despite what anyone says, remember our love is from the Lord’

\*\*\*

Meaning filled her. Once again, Rachel ran but this time, for the right reason.

Candace was shocked when Rachel announced that she was ready to return to her father's camp. Of course, she was sad, but if God said so, then who was she to complain?


She could only pray for her.

### ***Two years later...***

Jacob stood, in his all-white outfit. He watched as others passed, most likely mocking him, but he didn't mind.

He knew today was the day everything would go back to normal, and when he saw her running towards him, he knew that all was right again.





**Friend:** "Are you free tomorrow?"

**Me:** *Looks up at cross and blinks back tears*

"I am free for eternity"

# Shuzia Creative Spotlight



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**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...

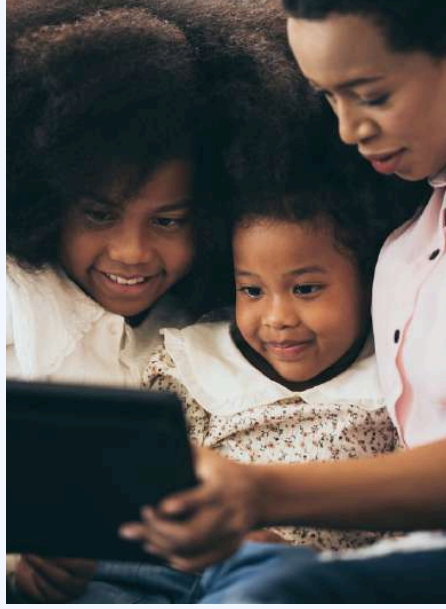
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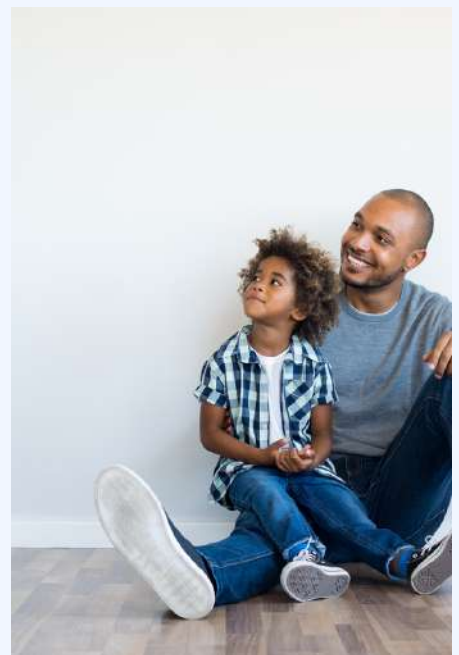
# Overcoming Family Conflicts through Forgiveness

***"The voice of sin is loud, but the voice of forgiveness is louder."***

**-Dwight L. Moody**

Family is important. Family is one of the most important facets of human living. Merriam-Webster defines family as a group of persons of common ancestry. In a broader sense, it is a group of people who share a common interest, goal, or bond.

These common attributes are what link us together. Families are the ones with whom we share our joy and laughter, and our tears and grief find home in their embrace.



*Written by Fabian Omini*

They bear the burdens of our wake, and our victories through life's turbulence. Family is God's system to us mankind, to remind us of his constant love.

Conflict is inevitable in human existence. Our freedom of will and our distinctness of choice and character strengthen conflicts and disagreement. Like two pieces of a jigsaw puzzle, separate and unique in its shape and form. When trying to put a puzzle together, there is a bit of friction before it attains unity. No matter how pure and chaste our intentions are, no matter how intense our love towards one another May feel, to achieve unity, frictions are bound to happen, and misunderstandings break out.

Feuds are part of human existence, and family feuds are non-negotiable as we strive for a peaceful coexistence.

Resolutions always follow conflicts, and in our context, forgiveness always comes into play after both sides have decided to settle differences and achieve an alliance. It is a crucial step taken in reconciliation, and a vital point if both parties are to walk together.

Forgiveness doesn't mean forgetting what happened, justifying the wrongdoing, or ignoring the hurt and pain.

Forgiveness is simply acknowledging wrongdoing, letting go of the negative emotions associated with it, and choosing to move forward with love and understanding.

In our world of differences, forgiveness should become a skill we embrace, a mantra we acclaim.

***“Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.”***

**-Paul, the Apostle**

When my brothers and I gave our lives to Jesus, we had countless fights at home with our parents on account of our faith. We were born Catholics, and my parents considered our newfound way of 'believing' extreme.

Fights were regular at our house, and it would lead to days, turned weeks, of a silent and mental tussle. Condescending remarks and disdainful comments had their place, and these most times lengthened the conflict's duration. This newfound faith had created a new variation, one that never before existed, and it'd take loads of friction and conflicts for the pieces to fit in perfectly.

Pride is subtle, slowly creeping into one's soul unaware in most cases. Unforgiveness primarily has its roots in pride.

The desire to remain superior; like the other person doesn't deserve forgiveness because of the level of hurt inflicted on you; and a lack of empathy and understanding for seeing the other person's perspective; all have a major bearing on pride, and forgiveness requires humility, and lots of it at that.

Also, I've learned recently, that considering the extent of hurt, forgiveness might be a journey, rather than a spur-of-the-moment decision. In this case, it may be harder to take one pill, but way easier to receive treatment via an IV drip.

In addressing the issues at home, we sought to first recognize and acknowledge our feelings of hurt and anger.

Also, putting ourselves in our parent's shoes in a bid to understand them, gave us context and perspective as to what they were going through seeing their children change paths from their ordained way.

Furthermore, communication was key in learning to forgive, as we had honest conversations with them, reflecting on how holding grudges impacted the parent-children relationship.

Get Jesus! 

Finally, the most important step was making the conscious decision to forgive, and shifting our energies to rebuilding and restoring the relationship.

***"For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you."***

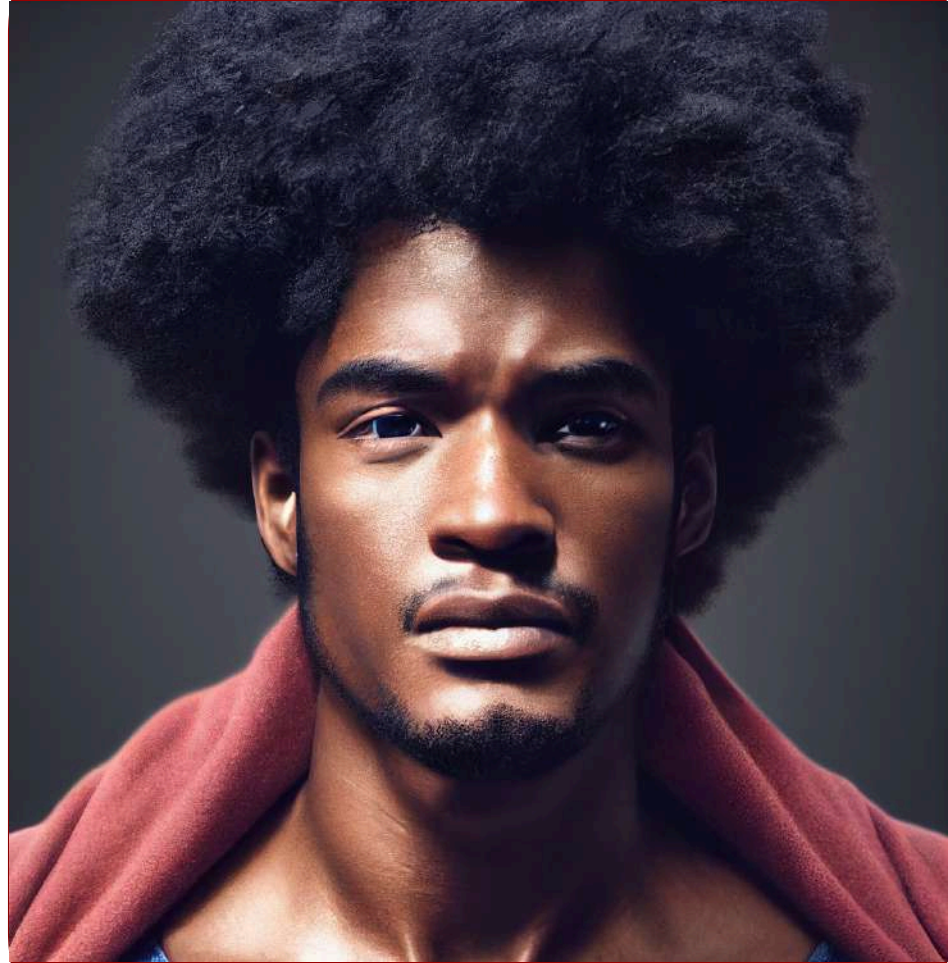
### **-Jesus of Nazareth**

What are the benefits of healing family disconnects and resolving conflicts? First, it fosters a positive environment and creates a supportive and loving atmosphere that creates a safe space for open communication. Next, it breaks cycles of revenge and retaliation, helping individuals release pent-up emotions, and reducing resentment and bitterness.

Also, forgiveness improves overall mental well-being by reducing stress and anxiety, thereby paving the way for reconciliation, rebuilding trust, and strengthening family bonds. Lastly, it helps family members appreciate each other, and consequently build healthier relationships.

Will there be many conflicts as you bond and grow with your family? Most likely yes. But the most important thing to remember is that as Christians, we have the supernatural inherent ability to forgive and love again.

Shalom!



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# GET *Jesus*

## START A NEW LIFE WITH GOD



### *Believe.*

Before you can accept Jesus, you must first believe. Christians believe God created the heavens and the earth. When Adam and Eve sinned, mankind became cursed with original sin. However, God sent down his son Jesus Christ to die for everyone's sins, granting forgiveness to those who believe.



### *Receive.*

You are acknowledging that Jesus died for your sins and, through him, you are made righteous before God. It's very easy to accept Jesus! You just need to believe and pray to him, asking him into your heart.



### *Live for Him.*

Do your best to always do the right thing by modeling your actions on Jesus. ~Read your Bible and attend church to learn more about how to turn away from sin.

GET JESUS



# God: The Third Cord in A Bind

I think one of the best ways to get your family to be on the right track is to establish the presence of God. People often miss it when they think building a family is just to have children and then take care of them. It is a wicked world out there and the earlier you realize this, the better.

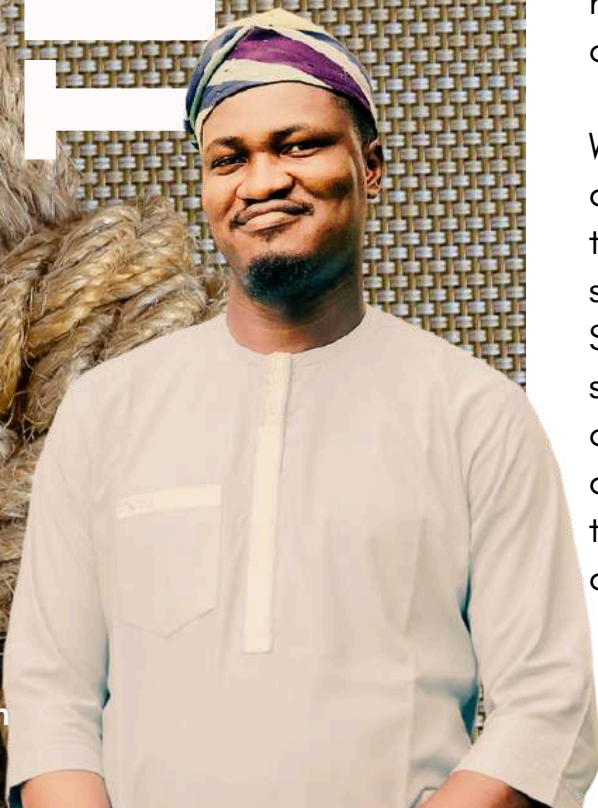
You have no idea how many homes have been ruined just because of a careless statement made by a spouse and sometimes, it is not usually the carelessness of a statement but the seemingly zero intentionality behind the words, and boom, trouble starts. There are so many homes of married couples that look like they have it going great because of their outward demeanor but inside the home, they probably do not speak to themselves - they only put on a show outside.

When we say allow God to be at the center of your home, we are not saying this to enforce His authority, we are saying it for your good. It is simple. Some people revere God outside just so they can get the praises of men, but on the inside, they are as vile as vile can be and it is weird because do they think God does not see them in their closets?



THINK TANK

WITH TIMOTHY OJO



A marriage counselor puts it this way: "God being at the center of your home is like the third cord of a bind where you have the man, the woman, and God."

In other words, it means that both the man and the woman all acknowledge God as the ultimate decider of their fate in the marriage, hence, they are always quick to put him in their marriage. This is how it is supposed to be. You cannot say you have the fear of God and still allow yourself to be used by the devil.

Quick pause. I need to say this. I do not think it is always the devil that causes people to misbehave. I sometimes think it is our will that we give free courses. That is why we must subject our will to God to help us.

I don't intend this article to be lengthy. I hope I have been able to communicate all here.

In summary, God becomes "God" in your life when you subject your will to him. When you revere God, it is easy to walk in his precepts, which ultimately leads to you becoming a better person and also a better husband, wife, and child.

Till I come your way again, *no fall God hand*

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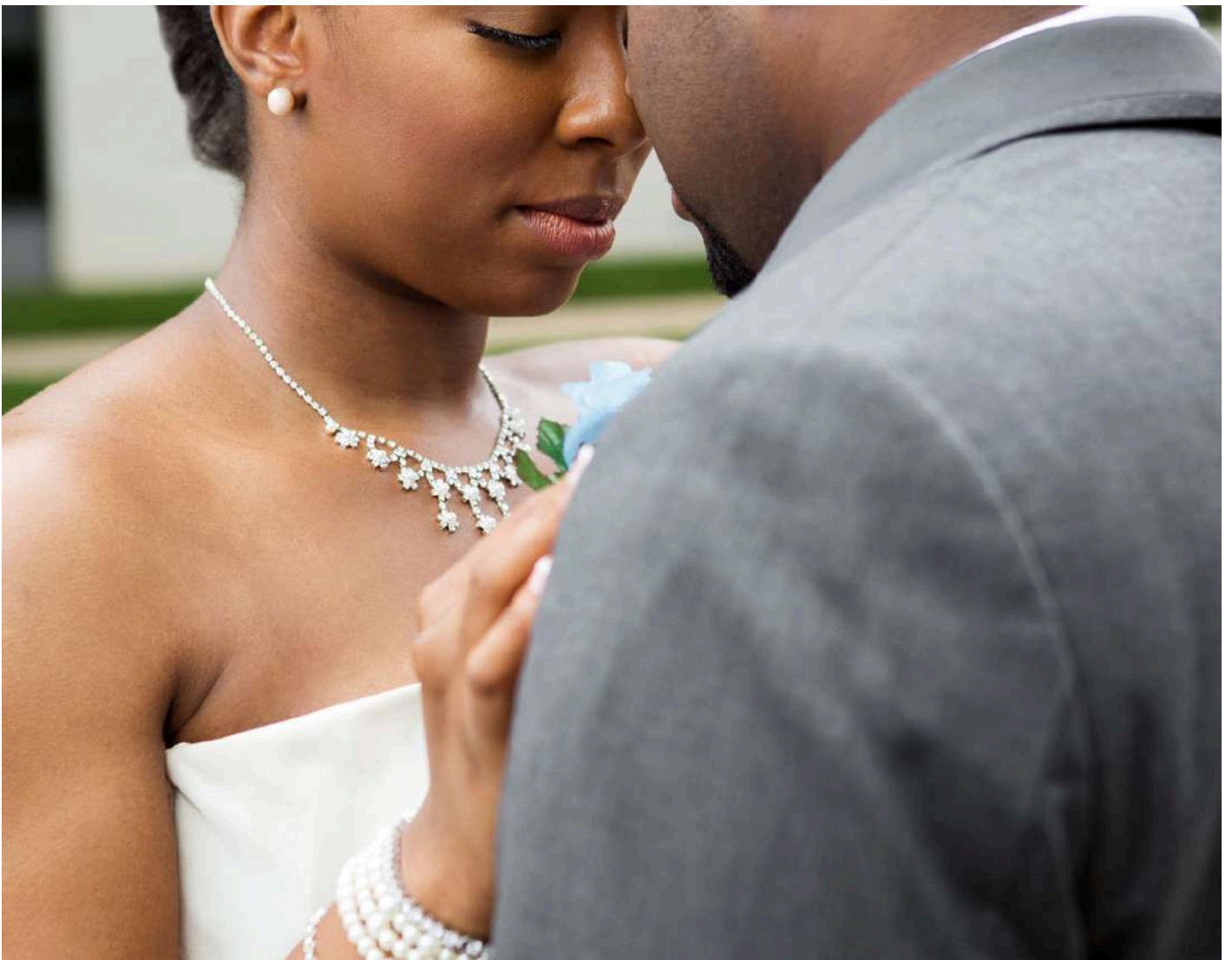
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*how to end*  
**AN AFFAIR**

AND STILL KEEP YOUR MARRIAGE

---

WRITTEN BY CHINA OKWU



There is a question that has been asked for centuries - why do married people cheat?

Over 40% of married people have admitted to some sort of indiscretion - either emotional or physical.

This percentage is slowly rising as adultery becomes a normal part of society. Now we have professional side chicks and Zaddys. Comediens always make jokes about married men and little girls with big gods.

I recently watched a viral video on twitter where the "side chick" called the wife to let her know that she would never let go of her husband.

We have become shameless in our pursuit of physical pleasure and we look for any reason to justify it. We blame our behaviour on our spouse, our jobs, ourselves and have no way to control ourselves.

The deeper we get into adultery the further we move from God's destiny and will for our lives.

It is a gateway sin and opens the door to so many other issues concerning the flesh.

***He who commits adultery is devoid of sense; only one who would destroy himself does such a thing. He will meet with disease and disgrace; his reproach will never be expunged.*** Proverbs 6:32-33

So what are the reasons people give for cheating?

Some people cheat because they never learnt how to control their urges before they got married. Or they need some spice or variety. Many men say you can't eat the same pot of soup every day of your life.

Some other reasons are unhappiness, dissatisfaction, feeling unappreciated, lack of commitment, boredom, body image/aging, revenge, opportunity, Internet, poor boundaries and pornography.

*"Men and women cheat in different ways," says Mark Epstein, MD, a psychiatrist in private practice in Manhattan. "It's more like an appetite thing for men, more oral in a way; their partners are more disposable. And the experiences are more disposable."*

This statement has a ring of truth but I have counseled women who have had one night stands and men that have had affairs that lasted years. Truth is, it depends on so many factors - your value system being the very first thing.

Remaining faithful has extraordinarily little to do with sexuality or what your spouse is bringing to the table.

It depends on your world view and whether you see cheating as dishonouring God or if you use the "body no be wood" excuse.



The truth is marriage demands commitment and holiness from us to be successful regardless of whether the spouse does what they are supposed to do.

***Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers ... will inherit the kingdom of God. 1 Cor 6:9***

God's standards will never change so the question is how do you stop what you have started?

It depends on how sincere you are and how much you want to invest in repairing your marriage. It also depends on your spouse's desire to work alongside you. Some affairs expose a lot of truth in a marriage and both parties have come out better. God can really give you beauty for ashes if you commit to putting the work in.

If you are serious about ending the affair and keeping your marriage there are some things you can do

1. ***Know why you want to stop.*** Is the reason compelling and strong enough to withstand future temptation? Imagine you want to end your affair because your wife will leave you if you don't. Will that reason be strong enough to keep you from going back to your affair when the home front stabilizes?

The best reason to end an affair should be a renewed focus and dedication to your marriage and living a holy life for God.

2. ***End the affair and close all open doors.*** It's tough but very necessary - change jobs, change location, delete numbers, pictures and break contracts. Make sure that you have eliminated every reason for you to have contact with this person.

3. ***Accept the responsibility of what you did*** - this is the part that breaks people. When there is a full realization of how they have hurt God and hurt their family it can be earth shattering. Get help to work through all the emotions of guilt, shame and pain that comes from this. A counselor, mentor or trusted friend can help.

4. ***Understand the process of personal healing*** - each day will get easier but understand it will take sometime for you to forgive yourself.



5. **Rededicate your life to God** and put a spiritual literacy plan in place - daily prayer and bible study. Change your circle of friends if any of them helped you conceal your sin. Find an accountability partner that can pray with you when temptation strikes.

6. **Ask for forgiveness from everyone you hurt** - start with your spouse. It is very tough but you need to be naked and not ashamed before your spouse. Lay yourself bare and open and confess it all.

It is only when the building of lies is broken down that a new foundation can be built up

7. **Go to couples counselling** to restart your relationship with your spouse. You will need to rediscover yourselves in this new era of trust and openness. A counselor or pastor can help you both walk through any issues that brought on the affair.

8. **Be prepared** - you will be tempted again. Your spouse will take some time to forgive and may lash out but fortify yourself. Be ready to fight for your marriage.

I pray that God restores you and your spouse and He helps you heal. June He give your beauty for ashes and joy for your sorrow.

Amen.

#1 CHARTS

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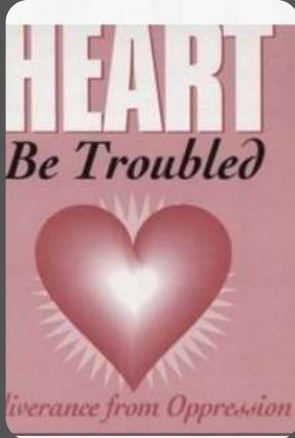
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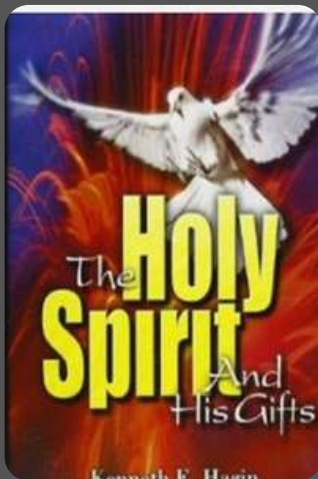
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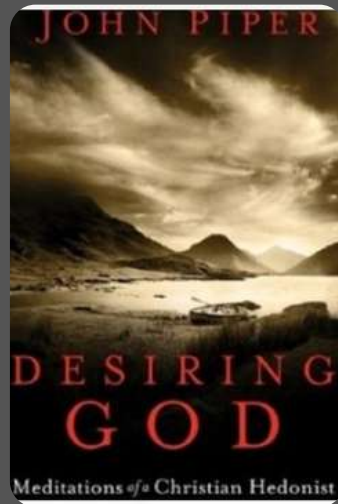
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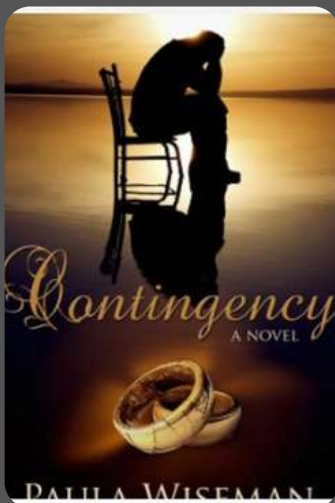
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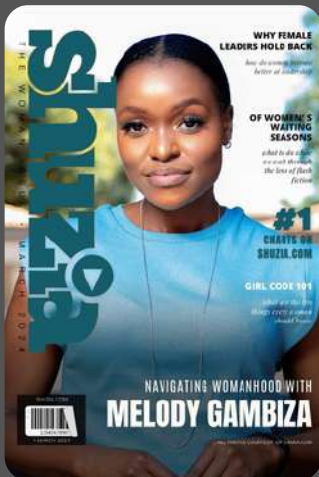
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## Sufficient Grace!

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.



## 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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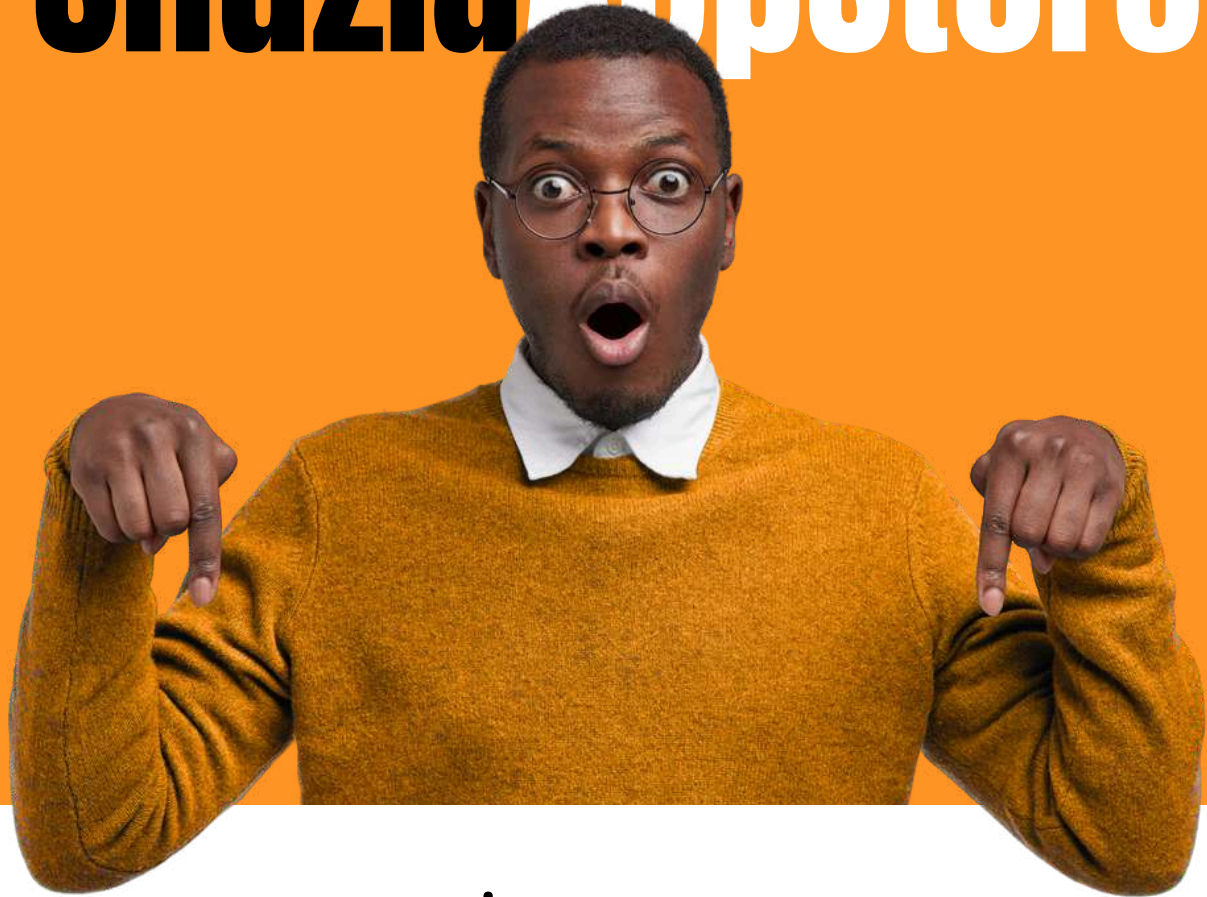
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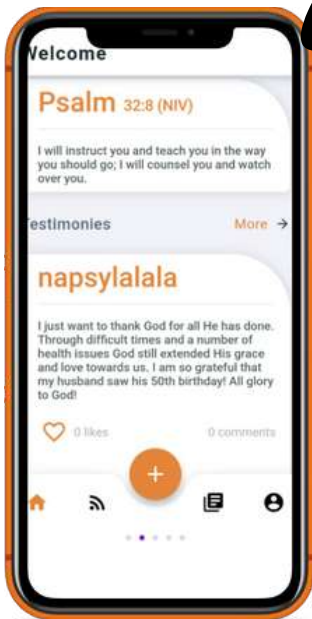
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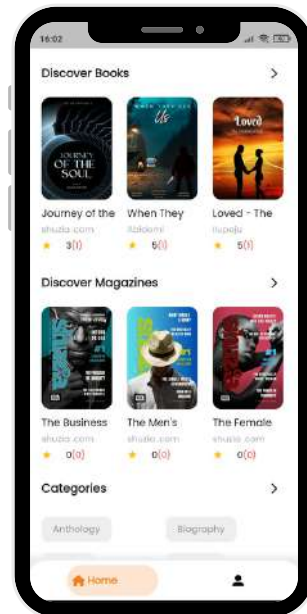


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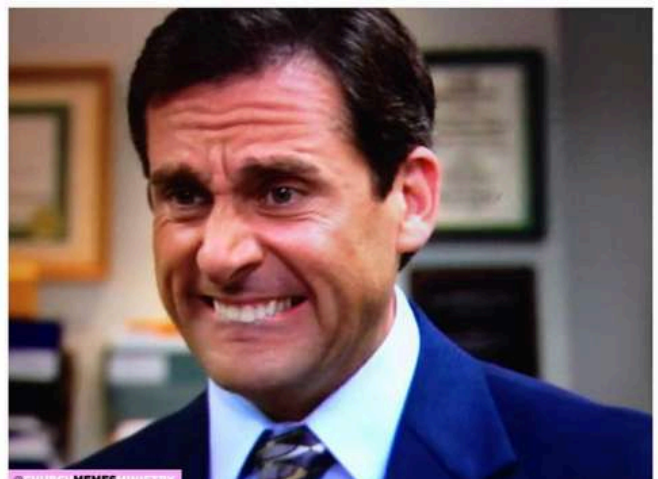
40yr olds at the youth church events pretending to be cool 🤔



When someone's being super annoying but Jesus taught you to love your enemies



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