

# voice of *Impact* '2014

SPECIAL EDITION

WE ARE RAISED TO RAISE • WE ARE LIFTED TO BE LIFTERS • WE ARE BLESSED TO BE CHANNELS OF BLESSING

# This Mind





# mercyHall

A PLACE OF GOD'S ENDURING MERCY...

**we are a people victorious  
on earth  
and prepared for Heaven**

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CELEBRATION SERVICE -9:30am
- + Every Tuesday  
BIBLE STUDY -7pm
- + Every Thursday  
FAITH CLINIC -7pm
- + The First 3 Days of the month  
FIRE FROM HEAVEN SUMMIT - 7pm
- + Last Friday of the month  
HOLY GHOST NIGHT -10pm
- + Every Night -10pm (CT)  
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**we praise we pray we preach**

# Welcome Message



Pastors Innocent & Christy Utulu

It is with great and overflowing joy of the Lord in our hearts that we welcome you to impact 2014 the maiden conference of the Women of Impact of RCCG MercyHall Katy Texas.

We give all glory, honor and adoration to God Almighty who called us and has continued to sustain us in His service.

We thank God for His wonderful doings in our midst in MercyHall particularly in this year of uncommon lifting as He continues to lift us higher. This conference is a testimony of uncommon lifting and we appreciate our lifter for making it possible. We also thank the WOMEN OF IMPACT home and abroad, far and near for your cooperation and contributions to making this conference a reality. God bless and reward you accordingly.

Beloved Sisters, we encourage you to approach God's presence at this conference with an open mind. Empty yourself of all that can stand on your way of the blessings that God has for you. Please open up your heart to the Lord so He can have His way in you.

The theme of this conference is THIS MIND. There is a particular mind we must have. The word of God admonishes us in Phillipians 2v5 'LET THIS MIND BE IN YOU, WHICH WAS ALSO IN CHRIST JESUS'

As we embark on this journey of knowing the mind of Christ and letting it become our mind, at this conference may we all encounter Jehovah afresh. May our minds be renewed and the mind of Christ become our minds. May we come out of this conference full of praise unto the Lord as He does great and mighty things in our lives, homes and in His Church.

We also welcome our readers to this special edition of Voice of Impact. Please come along with us and allow the Holy Spirit to minister to you through the pages of this magazine.

God bless you and welcome to Impact 2014

MARANATHA!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

**Anthem for 2014:**

OUR YEAR OF  
UNCOMMON  
LIFTING

CONFERENCE  
ANTHEM

Verily verily verily verily verily  
The Lord said to me  
Uncommon lifting  
Uncommon progress  
Uncommon success  
Is mine

Verily verily verily verily verily  
The Lord said to us  
Uncommon lifting  
Uncommon progress  
Uncommon success  
Is ours

Verily verily verily verily verily  
The Lord said to you  
Uncommon lifting  
Uncommon progress  
Uncommon success  
Is yours

Let the beauty of Jesus be  
seen in me

All his wondrous  
compassion and purity

Oh thou Spirit divine, all my  
nature refine

Till the beauty of Jesus be  
seen in me



# LET THIS MIND BE IN YOU



by Christy Innocent Utulu

The mind as defined by the Oxford dictionary is “the element of a person that enables them to be aware of the world and their experiences, to think and to feel; the faculty of consciousness and the thought.”

Your mind therefore refers to your thinking or your thought, opinion and this translates to your attitude, it becomes your act.

We are told in the bible the kind of mind we should have, what our thinking should be and if we need to express our opinion, our feelings, our thoughts it should align with that of our Lord Jesus Christ because He is our perfect example in all things.

Phil 2v5 says “Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.”

Phil 2v5-11 [NLT] ‘You must have the same attitude that Christ Jesus had, though He was God, He did not think of equality with God as something to cling to. Instead, He gave up His divine privileges, He took the humble position of a slave and was born as a human being. When He appeared in human form, He humbled Himself in obedience to God and died a criminal’s death on a cross. Therefore God elevated him to the place of highest honor and gave him the name above all other names, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow in heaven and on earth and under the earth and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the father.’

What then is the mind of Christ?

The summary of the mind of Christ as stated in our key scripture is “HE HUMBLED HIMSELF”

The mind of humility is the mind of Christ. This is the bedrock upon which other manifestations of the mind of

Christ rest. We shall be considering in this article how Jesus manifested His mind of humility that is to say how Jesus acted out his mind of humility. Put in another way since we express our mind through attitudes and actions we shall see how Jesus demonstrated His humility and how He expects us His children to do same.

**1. Mind of forgiveness** – The humble finds it easy to forgive. When we are offended our ego is brushed and the natural man reacts in various ways. Jesus forgave our sins in spite of all we did to Him. And He is still forgiving. We must continue to forgive one another. Jesus taught us to pray in Matthew 6v12 ‘And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us’ Ephesians 4:32 And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ’s sake hath forgiven you’

Jesus further encouraged us to forgive one another when He told the parable in Matthew 18v 23-35

‘Then the Lord, after he had called him said unto him, o thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt. shouldst not thou also have had compassion on thy fellow servant, even as I had pity on thee? And his Lord was wroth and delivered him to the tormentors....so likewise shall my heavenly father do also unto you if ye from your hearts forgive not everyone his brother their trespasses.’

The mind of Christ is the mind of forgiveness.

**2. Mind of Gratitude.** We express humility when we show gratitude. Jesus and His father [God] are one, yet Jesus was always thanking God for everything.

- He thanked God for the good,
- He thanked God for the bad,

· He thanked God at the grave side,

Joh 11:41 Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead was laid. And Jesus lifted up his eyes, and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me.

· He thanked God when He needed to feed so many people and there was little provision

Joh 6:11 And Jesus took the loaves; and when he had given thanks, he distributed to the disciples, and the disciples to them that were set down; and likewise of the fishes as much as they would.

· He thanked God for every little thing.

1Th 5:18 In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.

**3. Mind of obedience.** Jesus was obedient to the point of death.

Phlp 2:8 And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

- He was obedient when it was shameful ( death of the cross)
- He was obedient when painful
- He was obedient when it was difficult
- He surrendered to the will of God even in agony.

Mat 26:39 And he went a little further, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt.

We must be obedient to the commandments of God at all times, in all situations and circumstances.

Mary said to the disciples in Joh 2:5 ... Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it. This is what obedience means.

**4. Mind of love.** God is love. The coming of Jesus into the world demonstrated God’s love towards us. Jesus demonstrated His love for the Father by submitting to Him at all times.

Joh 3:16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

Jesus Himself enjoined us to love one another as He loves us.

Joh 13:34 A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.

John 13:35 By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.

John 15:12 This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you.

John 15:17 These things I command you, that ye love one another.

**5. Esteeming one another.** Phil 2:3-4 Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.

[NLT] Don't be selfish, don't try to impress others, Be humble, thinking of others better than yourselves. Don't look out only for your own interests, but take an interest in others too

Jesus was always promoting God the Father.

Luke 18:19 And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? none is good, save one, that is, God.

**6. Mind of service.** Php 2:7 But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the

likeness of men:

Jesus served His Father and equally served His disciples.

John 13:14 -16 If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet.

For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you. Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him.

### **BENEFITS OF HAVING THE MIND OF CHRIST**

**1. The humble shall be exalted.** God exalted Jesus.

Php 2:9 -11 Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name:

That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth;

And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

We shall be exalted too when we humble ourselves

Luk 14:11 For whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.

**2. The humble shall receive grace**

Jas 4:6 But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble.

### **3. The humble will have their desires granted**

Psa 10:17 LORD, thou hast heard the desire of the humble: thou wilt prepare their heart, thou wilt cause thine ear to hear:

### **4. The humble will be honored**

Pro 29:23 A man's pride shall bring him low: but honour shall uphold the humble in spirit.

### **5. The humble shall enjoy divine presence**

Isa 57:15 For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.

### **6. The humble shall be the greatest in God's kingdom**

Mat 18:4 Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

### **CONCLUSION**

Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering;

Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye one body; and be ye thankful. Col. 3:12-15

### **MARANATHA**

Job 14:14 If a man die, shall he live again? all the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come.

For you to experience change, either by the act of God or by way of personal responsibility, you must change the way you think.

Your thinking cannot be fixated and yet you are expecting a change of circumstance.

Change your thinking, change your life

Change your thought life, change your life.

Pro 23:7 For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he:

(GNB) "...what he thinks is what he really is"

Prov. 4:23: GNB "Be careful how you think, your life is shaped by your thoughts"

(NLT) Guard your heart above all else, for it determines the course of your life.

(MSG) Keep vigilant watch over your heart; that's where life starts.

The world we have created is a product of our thinking; it cannot be changed without changing our thinking. -Albert Einstein

The World is what we think it is. If we can change our thoughts, we can change the world. - H.M. Tomlinson

Your thought = your life  
Success or failure begins in the heart

Your life today is a function (product) of your thoughts of yesterday.  
You are today where your thoughts have brought you; you will be tomorrow where your thoughts take you. - James Allen

When you change your thought (i.e. your way of thinking) you will change your life.

What you will become tomorrow must first of all be settled in your heart today.

Thinking goes on in the heart and that is why the Bible warns us to be careful with what we allow into our hearts.

Prov. 4:23. Says We should watch over our hearts. Why:

#### QUOTES ON THOUGHT

The law of attraction attracts to you everything you need, according to the nature of your thought life.

Your environment and financial condition are the perfect reflection of your habitual thinking. Thought rules the world.  
- Joseph Edward Murphy

# CHANGE YOUR THINKING: CHANGE YOUR LIFE

Pastor Innocent Utulu



No problem can withstand the assault of sustained thinking.  
- Voltaire

No matter where you go or what you do, you live your entire life within the confines of your head.

- Terry Josephson

You and I are not what we eat; we are what we think.

- Walter Anderson

Gen. 11:5 And the LORD came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of men builded.

Gen. 11:6 And the LORD said, Behold, the people is one, and they have all one language; and this they begin to do: and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do.

HOW DO YOU KNOW HOW A MAN THINKS? Matt. 12:34(b)

(AMP) ...For out of the fullness (the overflow, the superabundance) of the heart the mouth speaks.

(BBE) ...Because out of the heart's store come the words of the mouth.

(CEV) ...Your words show what is in your hearts.

(GNB) ...For the mouth speaks what the heart is full of.

(KJV) for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.

(NLT) ...whatever is in your heart determines what you say.

NASV: "For the mouth speaks out of that which fills the heart".  
TLB: "For a man's heart determines his speech".

The easiest way to know how a man thinks is to listen to what he speaks (says). You will then discover that the things a man says will be easily seen in his business, marriage, spiritual life etc. Thought creates character.

Pro 18:20 A man's belly shall be satisfied with the fruit of his mouth; and with the increase of his lips shall he be filled.

Pro 18:21 Death and life are in the power of the tongue: and they that love it shall eat the fruit thereof.

GNB Pro 18:20 You will have to live with the consequences of everything you say.

Pro 18:21 What you say can preserve life or destroy it; so you must accept the consequences of your words.

What gives the tongue and mouth power is the heart.

A man will live with the consequence of what he says.

Whether or not you will become what God has ordained you to be will be determined by your thinking which will be reflected in what you say.

Let us look at the story of people that suffered the consequences of their worst: Num. 13: 1-2: Moses instructed to send out spies.

Num. 13: 25-27: Joint vet communiqué

After this, two groups were formed and what distinguished the two groups was their thinking.

GROUP 1: Evil Reporters

People that were already defeated in their hearts before they spoke out.

Num 13:28-33 Nevertheless the people be strong that dwell in the land, and the cities are walled, and very great: and moreover we saw the children of Anak there.

The Amalekites dwell in the land of the south: and the Hittites, and the Jebusites, and the

Amorites, dwell in the mountains: and the Canaanites dwell by the sea, and by the coast of Jordan.

But the men that went up with him said, We be not able to go up against the people; for they are stronger than we.

And they brought up an evil report of the land which they had searched unto the children of Israel, saying, The land, through which we have gone to search it, is a land that eateth up the inhabitants thereof; and all the people that we saw in it are men of a great stature.

And there we saw the giants, the sons of Anak, which come of the giants: and we were in our own sight as grasshoppers, and so we were in their sight.

A pessimist sees the difficulty in every opportunity; an optimist sees the opportunity in every difficulty.

- Winston Churchill

Pessimism never won any battle.

- Dwight D. Eisenhower

A pessimist is one who makes difficulties of his opportunities and an optimist is one who makes opportunities of his difficulties.

- Harry Truman

Act as if it were impossible to fail.

- Dorothy Broude

The winners in life think constantly in terms of I can, I will, and I am. Losers, on the other hand, concentrate their waking thoughts on what they should have or would have done, or what they can't do.

Denis Waitley

Num. 13:33 GNB

"And we even saw giants there, the descendants of Anak. We felt as small as grasshoppers and that is how we must have looked to them".

Consequences of an evil report (Doubt)

Numbers 14: 1-4

And all the congregation lifted up their voice, and cried; and the people wept that night.

And all the children of Israel murmured against Moses and against Aaron: and the whole congregation said unto them, Would God that we had died in the land of Egypt! or would God we had died in this wilderness! And wherefore

hath the LORD brought us unto this land, to fall by the sword, that our wives and our children should be a prey? were it not better for us to return into Egypt?

And they said one to another, Let us make a captain, and let us return into Egypt.

From the above scripture we can see that evil report

Brings fear

Brings anguish

Brings failure

Brings retrogression

Makes you to see yourself smaller than you are

Makes your God to look small

Makes you to always anticipate failure and defeat and impossibilities.

Will not allow you to see any good or possibility in your situation.

Makes you to see only giants and fenced cities.

Makes you to always murmur and envy others.

Could make you to backslide (back to Egypt).

Attracts the anger of God.

God's response to evil reporters:

Num 14:28 Say unto them, As truly as I live, saith the LORD, as ye have spoken in mine ears, so will I do to you:

Because they said they were not able to possess their possession, God agreed with them and they all died in the wilderness without possessing their possession.

GROUP 2:  
Good Report (Faith) Num. 13:30; 14:24.

Num 13:30

(KJV) And Caleb stilled the people before Moses, and said, Let us go up at once, and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it.

(CEV) Caleb calmed down the crowd and said, "Let's go and take the land. I know we can do it!"

(MSG) Caleb interrupted, called for silence before Moses and said, "Let's go up and take the land--now. We can do it."

(NLT) But Caleb tried to quiet the people as they stood before Moses. "Let's go at once to take the land," he said. "We can certainly conquer it!"

Num 14:24 But my servant Caleb, because he had another spirit with him, and hath followed me fully, him will I bring into the land whereinto he went; and his seed shall possess it.  
RSV

· The positive thinker sees the invisible, feels the intangible, and achieves the impossible.

- Winston Churchill

· Speaking for myself, I am an optimist - it does not seem to be much use being anything else.

- Winston Churchill

Consequences of good report:

The report that sees the greatness of God and not the fenced cities and giants

The report that believes in the integrity of God's word and His trustworthiness

The report that brings success

The report that strengthens

The report that increases faith.

The report that calls the things that be not as though they were

The report that sees the invisible, feels the intangible, and achieves the impossible.

The report that drives away doubt and fear

The report that gives hope

All things are possible to him that believeth.  
Mk.9:23

CONCLUSION:

What is your thought life like?

Change your thinking and your life will change.



**Pastor E. A. Adeboye**

**BIBLE READING: LUKE 21 : 32 - 36.**

**O**ur God is a God of plan and purpose. The creation of man had a beginning (Genesis 1 : 26 – 28 ) and the existence of man on earth will surely have an end. We should not be ignorant of the end-times. The end-time did not start in 1975 neither is it 1975 as some heretical teachers and so-called witnesses falsely teach. The end-time is also not an allegory used in scripture to describe when things are not going on well for an individual. The Bible presents the end-time as the period of time that ushers in the return of Jesus Christ. We should not be deceived; neither should we allow anyone to deceive us. Matthew 24 : 4 clearly warns us against this :

“And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you.”

We are in the end-times. Going through recent historic events in the Middle East and making critical comparisons with prophetic utterances made by our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, coupled with prophecies of other prophets in

# ARE YOU AN END-TIME CHRISTIAN?

*This know also, that in the last days  
perilous times shall come. 2 Timothy 3 : 1.*

scriptures, we can say we have reached a critical period in human history. By going diligently through scriptures, a good student of the Bible can say with certainty that present world events point at one thing: “The coming of our Lord and Saviour – Jesus Christ, is at hand”. It is true that no man knows exactly when Christ shall come ( Matthew 24 : 36 ), it will therefore be unscriptural to try to calculate the year, day or time when Christ shall return. At the same time, we shouldn't be ignorant of signs of the end-times ( Matthew 16 : 3 ). The present situation of greed and lust that dominates human hearts, the financial, economic and industrial problems, as well as the spirit of selfishness that grips mankind, are all pointing to the fact that the terminus will soon be reached (2 Timothy 3 : 2 – 4 ). The Bible details many other end-time signs which include: mass suffering and destruction ( Matthew 24 : 7 – 9 ), decline of morals and problems of mass corruption (Matthew 24 :12), mind control and undue standardisation of thought and behaviour ( 2 Thessalonians 2 : 11 – 12 ) and the return of the Jews from captivity. We are in the end-times because history confirms that the

twentieth century alone witnessed the fulfilment of the aforementioned signs. If there is a time to be watchful and to keep our stand as Christians, it is now, in this end-time. An end-time Christian is therefore that Christian who is ready to live and die for Christ and the expansion of His kingdom. Such a person has a deep unwavering conviction that Jesus Christ is Lord, is committed to violent ministration against evil ( Matthew 11 : 12 ), the ministration of knowledge and the wisdom of God ( Proverbs 4 : 5 ) and the ministration of worship, holiness, love and joy in the Holy Spirit ( Romans 14 :17 – 18 ). Are you an end-time Christian?

**KEY POINT :**

Father, keep my heart fixated on the end goal of making Heaven.



# THINK LOVELY, BE OF GOOD REPORT

By Omosalewa Eniyewu

'...brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, WHATSOEVER THINGS ARE OF GOOD REPORT...think on these things.

What you think or what goes on in your mind is what you speak out. In order to give a good report, we must start by thinking of it just as said in the above scripture. When you think it, you will speak it.

The word of God admonishes us to also deal with our tongue. The tongue is said to be the smallest organ of the body, and yet it is the hardest one to keep under control. As Children of God, named after Christ [CHRISTIAN} we have to work diligently to tame our tongue.

"Likewise the tongue is the smallest part of the body, but it brings great boast."(NIV James 3:5) The tongue has the ability to defile the entire body. It has more power than an individual can imagine. "And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, which it defileth the whole body and setteth on fire the course of nature." (KJV James 3:6)

We must strive to put our tongue into positive use at all times.. "Death and life are in the power of the tongue..." (KJV Proverbs 18:21).

There are ways we can use our tongue and it will be unacceptable before God.

Psalm 19:14 Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in your sight, O Lord, my rock and my redeemer.

Whenever we have the privilege to give a report on one another or pass a comment on a fellow brethren, we should avoid derogatory and discrediting report as we know that words are powerful.

Colossians 4:6 Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer each person.

We must always be careful and verify information before we pass it on [IF WE HAVE TO]. Sometimes we are too quick to spread words that come to us. Psalm 37:30 The mouth of the righteous utters wisdom, and his tongue speaks justice. Any untrue story becomes a foolish and unjust talk. May we not be condemned before God our maker in Jesus name. Matthew 15:11 It is not what goes into the mouth that defiles a person, but what comes out of the mouth; this defiles a person."

Let us prayerfully ruminate over the following scripture.

Proverbs 21:23 Whoever keeps his mouth and his tongue keeps himself out of trouble.

Ephesians 4:29 Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those

who hear.

Psalm 34:13 Keep your tongue from evil and your lips from speaking deceit.

James 1:26 If anyone thinks he is religious and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his heart, this person's religion is worthless.

Proverbs 17:28 Even a fool who keeps silent is considered wise; when he closes his lips, he is deemed intelligent

1 Peter 3:10 For "Whoever desires to love life and see good days, let him keep his tongue from evil and his lips from speaking deceit;

Proverbs 18:21 Death and life are in the power of the tongue, and those who love it will eat its fruits

Proverbs 10:19 When words are many, transgression is not lacking, but whoever restrains his lips is prudent

Titus 3:2 To speak evil of no one, to avoid quarreling, to be gentle, and to show perfect courtesy toward all people.

In conclusion, we must continue to pray as David did in Psalm 141:3 'Set a guard, O Lord, over my mouth; keep watch over the door of my lips!'AMEN.

### Acts 16:23-26.

This story shows the unfair arrest of Paul and Silas. They were arrested because they did good; they had cast a spirit of divination out of a girl, the local Philippian authorities beat them and then jailed them. Besides the problem of the severe beating, they were chained with their arms and legs clamped in an immobile position, so that they won't move. It may be that the prison was more like the resemblance of a dungeon.

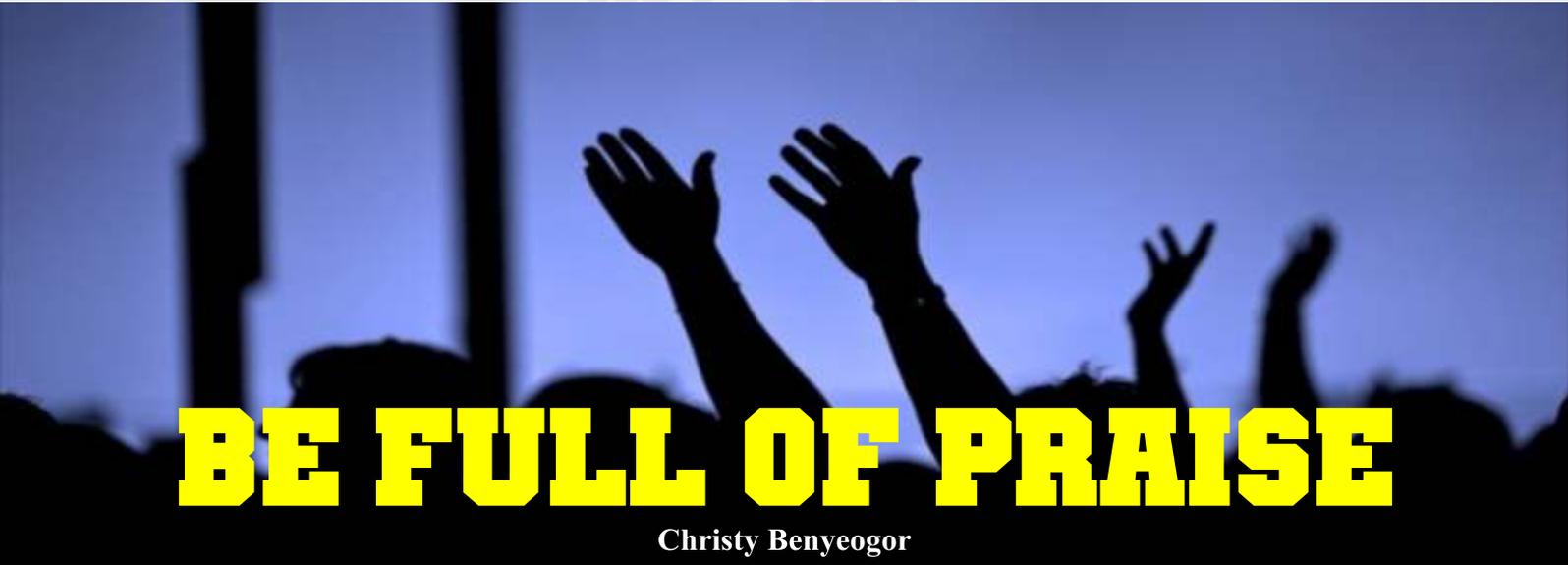
Yet, in spite of the pains in their bodies and the disheartening atmosphere, at midnight

supernatural and into the power of God. "Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O LORD, in the light of thy countenance" (Psalms 89:15)

There are many actions involved with praise to God — verbal expressions of adoration and thanksgiving, singing, playing instruments, shouting, dancing, lifting or clapping our hands. But true praise is not "merely" going through these motions. Genuine praise to God is a matter of humility and sincere devotion to the Lord from within. This is what it means to Be full of praise! Be full of praise!!

3. Praise sets the enemy running. Since praise manifests God's presence, we also realize that praise repels the presence of the enemy, Satan. An atmosphere which is filled with sincere worship and praise to God by humble and contrite hearts is a threat to the Devil. He fears the power in the name of Jesus, and flees from the Lord's habitation in praise. "Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me: and to him that ordereth his conversation aright will I show the salvation of God" (Psalms 50:23).

Again, when the children of Judah found themselves outnumbered by the hostile



# BE FULL OF PRAISE

Christy Benyeogor

Paul and Silas were heard praying and singing praises to God! What a strange sound this must have been to the other prisoners, who were used to only hearing the cursings of those who had been beaten. Then suddenly, there was an earthquake that shook the prison. The doors flung open, and amazingly, the bonds of Paul, Silas, and every other prisoner were removed.

### What is Praise?

Praise means "to appreciate, to commend, to applaud." For the Christian, praise to God is an expression of worship, lifting-up and glorifying the Lord. It is an expression of humbling ourselves and focusing our attention upon the Lord with heart-felt expressions of love, adoration and thanksgiving.

Praises bring our spirit into fellowship and intimacy between us and our maker — it magnifies our awareness of our spiritual union with the most high God. Praise transports us into the realm of the

### Why should we be full of praise?

1. Praise Lifts you above and beyond your troubles. Paul and Silas knew the secret of how to lift their hearts above their troubles and enter into God's presence and power. Through praise and worship their hearts were raised into the joyous presence and peace of God, and provided God a channel for his power to operate in their circumstances.

2. Praise attracts the presence of God. The Bible says that God inhabits the praises of His people Pslm. 22:3 In other words, God "dwells" in the atmosphere of His praise. This means that praise is not merely a reaction from coming into His presence - Praise is a vehicle of faith which brings us into the presence and power of God! Praise and worship is the "gate-pass" which allows us to enter the sacredness of His glory. Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name" (Psalms 100:4).

armies of Ammon, Moab, and mount Seir, King Jehoshaphat and all the people sought the Lord for His help. The Lord assured the people that this would be His battle. He told them to go out against them, and He would do the fighting for them. So what did the children of Judah do? Being the people of "praise" (Judah actually means Praise), and knowing that God manifests His power through praise, they sent their army against their enemies, led by the praise leaders. (2Chronicles 20:22) They experienced uncommon Victory over their enemies.

When you begin to praise his name, it sends the enemy running! I urge you to become a person of praise, and you will experience the release of the power of God into your life.

Therefore, be full of praise.

# Be full of virtue

-Kate

**V**irtue is defined biblically as moral excellence based on the word of God. This implies that one may be considered virtuous by worldly standard and yet fall short of God's standard. The bible says in 1 Samuel 16:7 that men look at the outward appearance whereas God sees the mind.

As Christians we are called to live a life full of virtue where Christ becomes the standard of living in every area of our lives, that is, the way we conduct ourselves, talk, dress, treat people etc. All these should reflect that Christ, is indeed, living in us.

Proverbs 31:10-31 aptly describes the virtuous woman. In brief she is:

- a) A woman of worth, fully devoted and loyal to God, her husband, and her children
- b) Caring and hardworking
- c) A prudent entrepreneur
- d) Diligent in all she does
- e) A selfless giver
- f) God fearing
- g) Gentle and loving
- h) Humble in all her ways.

Our Lord Jesus Christ, during His time on earth, exhibited these qualities and many more. Even as a child he worked under His earthly father Joseph as a Carpenter before He began His ministry. He was never

idle. During His ministry, he went about doing good. He was so diligent that He cramped so much into three and a half years of ministry.

He healed the sick and delivered the oppressed. He brought comfort to people wherever He went. He led a holy life, putting God first in all He

did. He showed kindness to the outcasts. He was always humble even though He was the Son of God. All He did on earth was to glorify His Heavenly Father. He came to serve and not to be served despite the fact that He was the Son of the most high.

It is often said that we are the Bible people read. How then should we conduct ourselves so that people around us can see the Christ that dwells within us? How can we exhibit godly virtues in our daily living? What can we do to help us lead a life that is full of virtue?

i) Despite the demands of modern society we still need to live a life that will continuously bring glory to our Heavenly Father. On our own we cannot achieve this. The bible says in John 15:5 that we can do nothing. We need to find time daily to study the word of God (2 Timothy 3: 16-17). With modern technology we can do so much. Even while in the kitchen, in our cars or while doing household chores we can turn on the internet bible and hear the word of God. There are so many devotionals we can listen to in one way or the other. All these are geared towards building the inner man within us that will help us to be full of Godly virtue.

ii) We should take time to study biblical characters that led lives that were full of virtue. Examples abound in the bible of

women who lead truly remarkable lives. Women like Ruth, Abigail, Esther, Lydia, Hannah etc. The lives of these women are lessons in fortitude, perseverance, love, servitude, humility and total reliance on God.

iii) Above all we need to ask for the help of the Holy Spirit, our Standby Helper, in all situations.

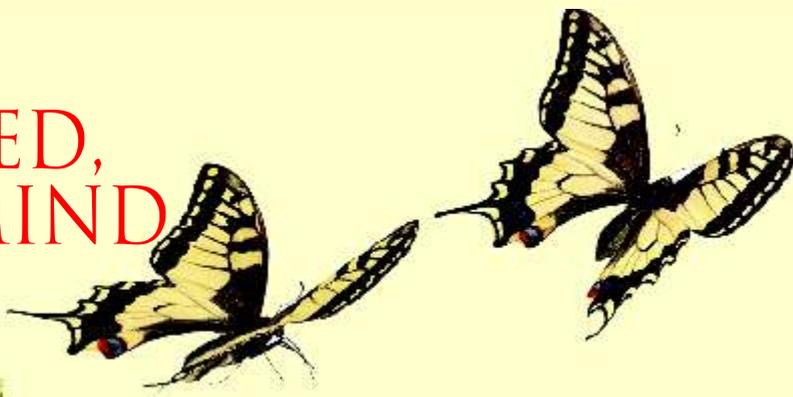
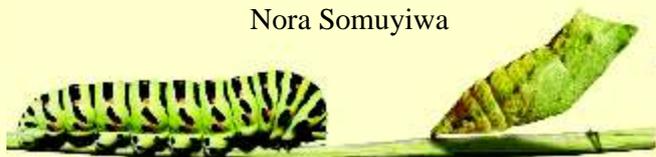
We need to consciously die to self and allow Christ to take first place in every area of our lives daily. Then, and only then, will the inner man within us grow and we can begin to exhibit the qualities of the virtuous woman. Two central attributes of God are His holiness and His love. His holiness demands that we live by His word. His love for us made Him to die on the cross of Calvary for us. In 1 Peter 1: 22-23, we are called to love one another fervently with undying love. Colossians 3:13 takes it even further. This should be the basis of all our relationships, loving one another unconditionally as Christ loved us.

If we apply these to our day to day living, as women in the home we should pay particular attention to the way we treat our husbands, our children and everyone around us. So much is expected of us. So many battles have been won through love, prayers, faith in God, and extreme patience. As we face circumstances that life throws at us we should remember that the battles have already been won. We just need to lay claim to all that Christ purchased for us on Calvary. Many at times, our faith will be tested, but we should remain firm, declaring the word of God over our husbands, children and our home.

In conclusion, we must make every effort daily to grow in all Godly virtues, that is, peace, kindness, gentleness, love and especially holy living without which the bible says no one will see God. The Apostle Paul in his letter to the Philippians aptly sums up what we need to do to be full of virtue. "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, dwell on these things" (Philippians 4: 8 KJV.).

# BE TRANSFORMED, RENEW YOUR MIND

Nora Somuyiwa



I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.<sup>2</sup> And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God." (NKJV). ("12<sup>1-2</sup> So here's what I want you to do, God helping you: Take your everyday, ordinary life - your sleeping, eating, going-to-work, and walking-around life - and place it before God as an offering. Embracing what God does for you is the best thing you can do for him. Don't become so well-adjusted to your culture that you fit into it without even thinking. Instead, fix your attention on God. You'll be changed from the inside out. Readily recognize what he wants from you, and quickly respond to it. Unlike the culture around you, always dragging you down to its level of immaturity, God brings the best out of you, develops well-formed maturity in you." – The message version)<sup>3</sup> For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith. (Romans 12:1-3 NKJV)

The word "mind" as discussed in the above verses is not only referring to just an attitude neither is it being referred to as just a mere concept, but Paul in His admonition to the Romans, used this word mainly in the verb form, referring to the "mind of Christ" as an action, something in-the-doing. So as a believer in Christ Jesus, born again children of God, we should endeavor to demonstrate a life that reflects the mind of Christ not just in words but mostly by our actions within and without the Christian circle. It is a known believe that action speaks louder than voice;

this fact is especially true in the way we live our everyday life as a believer in the Lord Jesus.

Phil 2:3-4 states "Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others." (KJV). This simply means as renewed and transformed believer, you have to exercise the act of putting others before yourself, using the acronym JOY (Jesus, others and yourself), we are sure to find JOY in the Lord when we choose to do things God's way. As believers we are called to complement each other in the fold of Christ not for competition, thus putting somebody else first, will ignite the act of constantly praying for each other and doing whatever possible in our capacity in making sure that our fellow believer succeeds in his/her calling and walk with God.

It takes a renewed mind to pull this act through, because this is a battle against the flesh. Our selfish self is always saying "me, me, it's all about me," but Paul is admonishing us here again, that if we want to be transformed while renewing our minds, we must be willing to disgratify the flesh and allow the mind of Christ to be made manifest through and within us. Just as Jesus exemplified for us by leaving behind His glorious throne in heaven and taking the form of the sinful man, bore the shame and died for our sins on the cross of Calvary, to reconcile us back to God.

Despite an individual's past life history, it is possible for us to live a renewed and transformed life, below are ways we can use to renew our minds:

## 1. Constant meditation in the word of God.

Renewing the mind is an ongoing process. Every day we need to take time to study the Word so we can purposely think according to what it says. "My soul is consumed with longing for your laws at all times. Your statutes are my delight; they are my counselors" (Ps. 119:20, 24, NIV). Like the psalmist, we can find joy and knowledge in the Word when we choose to dwell on it.

## 2. Making truthful things the subject of our daily thoughtful consideration.

Summing it all up, friends, I'd say you'll do best by filling your minds and meditating on things true,

noble, reputable, authentic, compelling, gracious—the best, not the worst; the beautiful, not the ugly; things to praise, not things to curse. Put into practice what you learned from me, what you heard and saw and realized. Do that, and God, who makes everything work together, will work you into his most excellent harmonies." (Phil. 4:8-9. The message). God is a God of truth, the bible in Heb. 6:18 confirm this truth that it is impossible for Him to lie. He gives us His truth in every situation to apply to our thoughts.

So in conclusion let us briefly discuss the benefits of renewing our mind:

- As a believer in the Lord you will come to the full knowledge of the mystery of God, both of the father and of Christ. – Colossians 2:2

- You will experience the peace of God – Paul describes this in Romans 8:6 "...to be spiritually minded is life and peace."

- You will experience increased intimacy with God. God wants us to come and reason with Him. He desires for us to know His will for our lives, He desires loving relationship that has no breakage – Isaiah 1:18; Hebrew 13:21.

- You will always desire to live a life of obedience to Him. David in his words asked God to give him understanding in keeping His laws and walking in His commandments so that he might "turn away...from looking at worthless things" (Ps. 119:33-37). Having any mind other than Christ's causes us to live a life of disobedience and rebellion.

Thus as David did it will be beneficial for us at this point to plead with God for such a transformed and renewed mind like this: a mind that thinks no evil of another, but good; a mind that seeks to complement and not compete with the gift of God in his/her neighbors life. This is the mind of Christ. And I pray as we whole heartedly seek God's face in this regards, he will surely answer us speedily in Jesus name. Amen.



# BE OF ONE ACCORD AND ONE MIND

By Yombo Ogunde

**S**o if there be any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy, complete my Joy by being of the SAME MIND, having the SAME LOVE, being in FULL ACCORD and of ONE MIND. [PHIL. 2, 1-2; ENGLISH STANDARD VERSION].

To be of one mind and one accord means to be united in spirit and in purpose. The Almighty God desires that His children will be in unity. Jesus expressed this desire as He said in John 10v30 "I and my father are one"

We also have recorded that the disciples of Jesus followed in this direction of being in one accord. Act 2v1 'And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place'

There are several blessings flowing to us from God when we are of one accord but we all know fully well that our arch enemy the devil will not want us to be in one accord so He can be happy when we struggle to get what would have come to us easily through obedience to the word of God.

We must all therefore arise wherever we are to be agents of unity, promoters of

unity and keep doing what will make us to always be of one accord so we can enjoy the blessings of being in one accord listed below.

## BLESSINGS OF BEING IN ONE ACCORD.

1. God is happy with us .
2. Prayers are answered matt 18v19
3. The Holy spirit is present Acts 2v1
4. We manifest the gifts of the Holy Spirit Acts 2v1-4
5. We win souls into God"s kingdom Acts 2v41
6. We achieve easily Gen 11v6
7. We make good progress Deut 32v30a
8. We enjoy uncommon lifting.

When we are in ONE ACCORD, we move the hand of God in our lives, families and the Church of Christ; things and situations begins to change because of the Unity. Disunity brings strife and strife is not Gods will.

In conclusion, let us all be agents of unity wherever we are as this is the true evidence of discipleship. God bless us all.



# THINK JUST, THINK PURE

Ehinomen Onwuachi

**T**he dictionary defines being pure as 'having the same components or character throughout. Not mixed with anything else or adulterated.'

For us Christians, to think pure is to be free from moral corruption, evil intent or guilt. It is to be clean and have a pure heart.

The bible enjoins us to emulate Jesus Christ in purity. Matt 5:8 says, "Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God"

It was also emphasized in Phillipians 4v8 thus "Finally brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.'

On top of our priority in our journey as Christians here on earth should be making heaven. I pray that all our Christian activities will not be in vain in Jesus name. Making heaven is our ultimate goal. Jesus Christ is saying that in order to reach this goal, we must have the right mind and think pure.

God is not only interested in granting our earthly heart desires, but He is highly interested in us being whom He [God] has called us to be as stated in the scriptures.

James 4v8 'Draw nigh to God, and He will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners and purify your hearts, ye double minded.'

## STRATEGIES TO ACHIEVING A PURE HEART

- Repent of all sins and forsake them (John 3:3)
- Believe in God with all your heart
- Ask God to fill you with the holy spirit
- Learn and follow the instructions in the scriptures. It covers everything in life.
- Do not forsake the assembly of ourselves together (Hebrew 10:25). What you see and hear will define you. (Hebrews 2:1)
- Study and obey the word of God. Psalm 119v105, 2Peter 1v8-10.

## THE BENEFITS OF A PURE HEART.

- Seeing God (Matt 5:8)
- God's presence (Psalm 15)
- God is good to the pure in heart (Psalm 73:1)
- The friendship of God (Proverbs 22:11)
- All things become pure (Titus 1:15)

## CONCLUSION

I Peter 4v7 'but the end of all things is at hand; therefore be ye sober and watch unto prayer'

Hebrews 12v1-2 ....' Let us lay aside every weight....let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.



# Keys to Peace of Mind

By Charles Ojo

**T**he relevant words are keys, peace and mind and are defined in the Webster Dictionary in the context of this discuss thus:

A key is a means of gaining or preventing entrance, possession or control.

Peace is defined as freedom from disquieting or oppressive thoughts or emotions.

Mind is defined as the element or complex of elements in an individual that feels, thinks, wills, and especially reasons.

The key to having peace of mind, is to have the Mind of Christ, which can be achieved by focusing on Christ alone, and this can be found in Colossians 2: 2, 3 - "Then you will have minds confident and at rest, focused on Christ, God's great mystery and nowhere else..." (Message Translation). We are told it is only in Christ, and nowhere else, that we can find rest, which would ultimately lead to peace of mind.

Apostle Paul further admonished in Colossians 2: 4 - "I am telling you this because I don't want anyone leading you off on some wild-goose chase, after other so-called mysteries, or 'the Secret.'" (Message Translation). In other words, we should not look too far, but just focus on Jesus, who is the mystery of God. Not in Yoga, not in modern day fanciful ways or methods.

Apostle Paul further advised we should

stop pursuing shadows and reach for the substance. In Colossians 2: 6-8, we are counselled to live Christ and be deeply rooted in Him. We should "stop studying the subject and start living it".

In Matthew 14: 25-33, we see the classical example of what happens when we cease to focus on Christ. It is the story of Jesus suspending the Law of Gravity and walking on the water. In Matthew 14: 22-34 ESV, we read:

"Immediately he made the disciples get into the boat and go before him to the other side, while he dismissed the crowds. And after he had dismissed the crowds, he went up on the mountain by himself to pray. When evening came, he was there alone, but the boat by this time was a long way from the land, beaten by the waves, for the wind was against them. And in the fourth watch of the night he came to them, walking on the sea. But when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were terrified, and said, "It is a ghost!" and they cried out in fear. But immediately Jesus spoke to them, saying, "Take heart; it is I. Do not be afraid." And Peter answered him, "Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water." He said, "Come." So Peter got out of the boat and walked on the water and came to Jesus. But when he saw the wind, he was afraid, and beginning to sink he cried out, "Lord, save me." Jesus immediately reached out his hand and took hold of him, saying to him, "O you of little faith, why did you doubt?" And when

they got into the boat, the wind ceased. And those in the boat worshiped him, saying, "Truly you are the Son of God."

What are the keys exemplified in this passage of the Bible?

## Key 1 - Separation (V. 22)

Just as Jesus separated himself and the disciples from the maddening crowd, at times, there is need to separate ourselves from the crowd, crisis, happenings around us to be alone with God. This would enable us to talk to and hear from God.

## Key 2 - Prayer (v. 23)

A Christian who does not pray, would soon become the prey of the evil one and ends up as meat in his mouth. Our Lord, being aware of the danger ahead, separated himself and seriously prayed for the safety of his disciples. Our Lord was in the habit of employing the keys of separation and prayer throughout his ministry on earth. In Matthew 26: 36-46, we read that at Gethsemane, just before our Lord was betrayed, He separated Himself to pray.

## Key 3 - Time (V. 25)

We learn that Jesus appeared to His disciples in the fourth watch of the night (4:00 am). In this verse, we learn the importance of not only praying, but the importance of time in prayers. The Lord appearing at 4:00 am, was here showing the importance of the hours between midnight and sunrise. We should not relent in our night vigils, because those are the hours plans of spiritual wickedness are perfected and executed in spiritual high places.

## Key 4 - Do not Fear (V. 26)

When the disciples saw Jesus walking on the water, they were afraid and thought Jesus was a ghost. To be able to have peace of mind that comes from the Lord Jesus, we need to conquer the battle against fear. Fear is one weapon Satan uses again and again, to destabilize Christians. Studies have shown that most times, the cause of our