

# THE BLOOM

MAGAZINE

ISSUE #7



## Occupy Till I Come

(Luke 19:13)

**Pastor Nelly  
Mulema**

*"We have all been called  
to some unique kind of  
ministry..."*

Mental Health in the Church

*Young Women in Ministry*

**Change Through Mindset**

The Warrior Spirit in a Woman

SUNDAY  
SCHOOL  
MINISTRY



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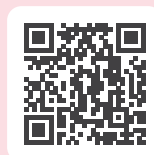
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# *Launch into your Assignment*



W

e have all been called to some unique kind of ministry. The master of the work only assigns those he trusts. We are geographically assigned, this means there is a place, a city, a location where God wants you where you are specifically assigned. You are not wired to do just anything but to do some things well. Once you surrender to your vision, success begins to chase you. Where you are divinely located is where you will flourish and succeed. We work under God's instructions and we MUST work under those instructions. Anything done outside the instructions is work done in futility. One example is Jonah who ended up in the belly of a whale while heading away from the place God sent him to. Each instruction from God is linked with your assignment. Even your financial provision is waiting for you at the place where God has assigned you.

The fulfillment of your assignment of occupying till he comes scares the devil the most. Nothing gives him as much pleasure as keeping you distracted. There are three things Satan loves to do to your assignment: (a) substitute it, delay it or waste it. His favorite pastime is to substitute people's dreams. As for me and you he will no longer succeed in distracting us from our divine assignment.

You have a global assignment and it takes the anointing to launch you into it. It takes a prophet to commission and release you into your divine purpose on earth. Moses laid hands on Joshua; Isaac blessed Jacob; Elijah dropped his mantle on Elisha (*2 Ki 2:9-15*). I pray that some woman will be launched into their destiny in this conference.

To succeed, you must remove every limitation from your mind. You must change your attitude and mindset. What's inside of you determines the level of success you will achieve in life. Reaching the highest peak possible depends upon your mindset and your attitudes. The content of your mind determines the color of your life.

Our hearts are open, we are expectant. The lord will do a new thing then only can we Occupy Till He Comes.

**Pastor Nelly Mulema**  
GBI President

*"Once you surrender to your vision, success begins to chase you."*

# Occupy Till I Come

Pst. Nelly Mulema



*(Luke 19:13)*

*Calling ten of his [own] bond servants, he gave them ten minas [each equal to about one hundred days' wages or nearly twenty dollars] and said to them, Buy and sell with these while I go and then return.*

Jesus explains to his disciples that He is going away and that while He is gone, He has called His servants and gave them authority to take care of that business of His which remains on earth. This is a very important statement of the purposes of God's Church on earth while He is gone to Heaven, for He reiterates the theme of this parable in numerous other parables in His teachings.

## What does it mean to occupy?

To occupy is to take hold of territory. The people who occupy don't become like the land they occupy; instead occupiers strive to change the land they occupy into the image of their mother country. The word occupy has two meanings. In a passive sense, occupy does mean to protect that for which we have been made responsible. However, as we shall see in this parable, the primary meaning of occupy is not to protect, but to invest. One of the great challenges to us believers is to be both a protector and investor simultaneously.

We all want to make a difference in the world. We do not want to be counted as a person or a people who existed and never made an impact. In order not to be a statistic it is important we purpose

to impact the world we live in positively.

The noble man commanded his servant to "occupy till I come". This signifies that he vacated certain position or seat for his servant and he expected them to act in his stead. Likewise, our Lord Jesus Christ expect us believers to perform those functions he performed while he was on earth (*Matt. 28:18-20*).

Those the Master commands to occupy must occupy for the Master. And what does it mean to be occupied? Those of us who are conversant with restrooms, the sign occupied is seen whenever someone is inside there, when nobody is in the rest room, they read vacant.

When we are occupied for the master, it means we have no room for other activities.

## How should we be occupied?

We should be occupied practically. The master of the servants gave them something to do, and said to them, Occupy or do business for me. The master provided them with the resources to do the business. The bible says he provided them with Minas.

GOD never sends us without equipping us. In *1 Corinthians 9:7* the question is paused: "Whoever goes to war at his own expense?"

GOD's work done in GOD's way will never lack GOD's supply. God has provided what we need to run his business.

What do you do with your pound of influence, sister, what do you do with your pound of influence brother? You are in a place where you can influence people for CHRIST. What are you doing with them?

The lord has provided us with Influence. We all have a sphere of influence; some may have a wider sphere of influence, and of course the Bible says, to whom much is given, much is expected or required. What do you do with the sphere of influence the Lord has given you?

How do you influence those in your sphere, do you influence positively or negatively, do you influence with love or hate, do you build or tear down, do you unite or divide? Do you influence them for CHRIST or against CHRIST?

## Money as a Resource

The Master gives us a measure of affluence to do business for HIM. The issue of money is a source of sorrow for many Christians.

## Opportunity

How often does the LORD bring people who do not know HIM our way and we miss the opportunity to introduce them to CHRIST. The reason is that we do not live in the consciousness of CHRIST as fully as we ought to. The Apostle Paul said to the Corinthian believers in (*1 Corinthians 2:2*).

## Authority

God has given us the authority which can be described as the enabling power that is necessary for the accomplishment of a responsibility. Once there is responsibility, there must be authority to back it up. The noble man gave his servants varying amount of talents according to what he expects of them with clear instruction to "Occupy till I come". Likewise, our Lord Jesus Christ gave us power and clear instruction of what to do with it.

There is a measure of God's gift in every believer which he expects us to use for His work and Glory.

We must continually perform a self-evaluation of our lives to make sure we are doing what is expected of us, because the owner of the job will soon return and we shall all give account of our stewardship



# Open my Eyes Lord that I may See

Genesis 21:14 – 20

**I** read Genesis chapter one, the story of Hagar and Ishmael. After Sarah got Isaac, she implored Abraham to send away Hagar and her son Ishmael. Though Abraham was not for it, God told him to do what Sarah was asking because Isaac was going to be his posterity

*Rom.9:7* However, I want to focus on Hagar and Ishmael because there are great lessons we can learn from her miserable story. Abraham sends away Hagar and Ishmael from their home into the unknown with little supply of food and water and these got finished.

In *verse 15 of Genesis 21*, water is finished and Hagar is distressed and cannot bear seeing her son die, she puts him down under a shrub and moves further. The boy Ishmael lifted up his voice and wept and Hagar also raised her voice and wept, God heard the voice of Ishmael crying and I believe also heard Hagar – the wailing in the wilderness/desert made heaven respond and an Angel was dispatched to go and see what is happening. Whoever says that, “*wanawake wanapenda kulia bure, alikosea*” because this crying moved heavens and there was emergency response. As women we cry even tears of joy and so we should respect the tears of women. Hagar acted just like us women, when our children cry and we can do nothing to help them, the best thing we do, is to join them in the cry – it helps the baby and the mother to feel better. In *verse 17*, the Angel confirms to Hagar that God has heard the youth where he is – interesting revelation there, God hears our cry, our prayer wherever we are, in our desperate situation etc. The Angel affirmed to Hagar to fear not and even now, I want to tell you to fear not, do not fear for yourself, for your children, your family as long as you cry out to him, he will open your eyes, change your life and make you great – *verse 18*.

*Verse 19* is interesting, the Angel opens the eyes of Hagar and she sees a well of water. The question is, was the well there in the first place? I don't think it was there for her to see with her natural eyes because she was in the desert. The common things in the desert are few shrubs, snakes and scorpions but God helped and protected Hagar and her son because he had good plans for them. The I am that I am visited her through an Angel, opened her eyes and she saw a well of water which her natural eyes could not have seen. Clearly there was no water around and for her to see the water that God was providing, her eyes had to be opened – these eyes are not natural eyes, she was given eyes that see things that are not as though they are. *Heb. 11:1* Understand this and get the revelation, there was no water, both her and the son cried because they needed water but our God who is all in all, who is the water of life appeared and had to give her new set of eyes to see the water – *verse 19*, her eyes were opened. Once



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Deputy GBI President

you get the revelation of divine provision, you will not cry but thank God in all things.

As women, we go through a lot in life, we cry a lot, we are rejected, and made

to feel useless and that nothing good can come out of us, but oh my, when we cry to God, our eyes get opened, then there is provision that we could not have experienced in our former state. You have to be rejected and feel alone in the desert with your children then you can understand *Isaiah 54:5* “For your Maker is your husband, The LORD of hosts is His name; And your Redeemer is the Holy One of Israel; He is called the God of the whole earth.” You get the opportunity to experience divine provision. Your eyes get opened and you see what others are not seeing. Those who rejected you watch in disbelief from afar, they expect you to die in the wilderness and your children suffer, but they get shocked when they see you prospering and your children prospering. They have no clue that in the wilderness where they threw you, your eyes were opened and God is making a great nation out of you, you will be a wonder and a sign to the nations, *Psalms 23:5 (nlt)* “You prepare a feast for me in the presence of my enemies. You honor me by anointing my head with oil. My cup overflows with blessings.” They see manifestation of *Psalms 112:1-3* in your life, “Praise the LORD. Blessed are those who fear the LORD, who find great delight in his commands.

Their children will be mighty in the land; the generation of the upright will be blessed. Wealth and riches are in their houses, and their righteousness endures forever”.

Do not despise the wilderness because it there where eyes are opened, it is there where God speaks to us, is there where we receive the promises of God. It is in the wilderness where we are made great. God bless you.

# Dealing with Miscarriage

One of the things that is least talked about is the issue of miscarriage. It is shrouded in so much mystery that whether it is in church or outside, one is likely not to hear much about it, yet it is a sensitive and disturbing topic – and the statistics keep rising.

It matters little whether we will talk about or not; it is there in our midst. Any random talk to a group of five to ten ladies will reveal that two or three of them have gone through this horror of miscarriage.

For the purpose of this article, I will use the term miscarriage loosely to cover both miscarriage and still birth. Even though both refer to spontaneous abortion of the foetus. In still birth, the foetus is normally above 20 weeks and is delivered but the baby is not alive.

Miscarriage, to me, is the death of a baby – even if it's just few weeks gestation. And every death is painful. The worst hit person in the case of miscarriage is the mother. This person has been connected to the baby since conception. When it happens it is painful, heartbreaking, depressing, devastating, agonizing – No one word can aptly capture that feeling.

To make it worse, there is too much suspicion surrounding miscarriage. Since society does not understand it, it will quickly put blame on the mother – who at this time is already grieving. The poor lady cannot escape the guilt. She blames herself for what she did, or did not do, what she ate, drank or where she went. She is miserable in her sorrow and grief – yet the people around her will inadvertently confirm through their words or actions that it is the lady's fault. It is not overstressing it to even think about witchcraft – whether one is a believer or not.

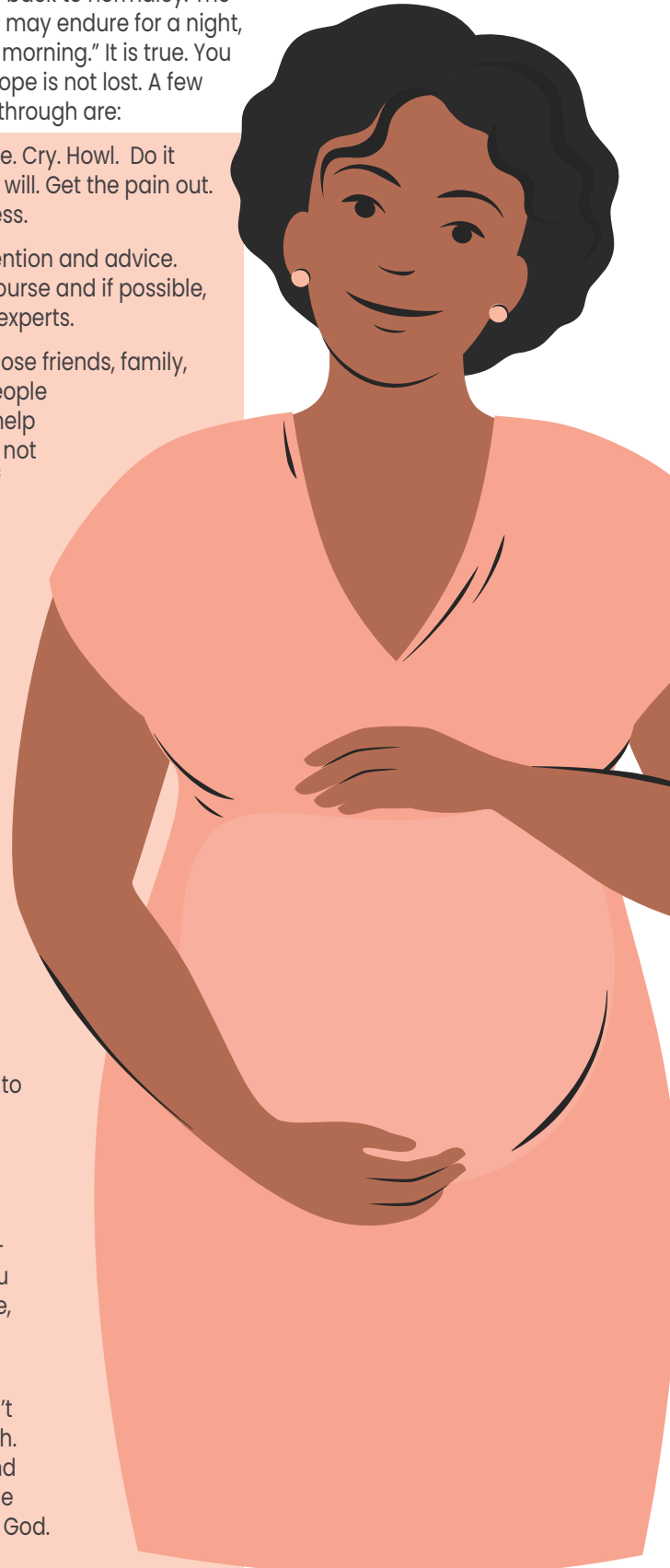
Since many people don't know that there is a funeral after miscarriage, the mother attends it alone. She will say a prayer for the child who was never to be and begin the process of burying in her heart. However well-meaning people may be, in the end the mother has to deal with it herself. Months after people have moved on, the mother will still be mourning. If care is not taken, some ladies even go into depression. She has to deal with questions like: Why did my baby die? Why me? God where were you? Is there something wrong with me? Etc. The situation is even worse where one has had multiple miscarriages. In this case, a lady can totally break down.

Even though miscarriages are painful and nobody is prepared for them, when they happen, there isn't much else to do. You can't salvage it. It is important to note that everyone around the lady is affected albeit differently. Therefore, steps must be taken deliberately to come back to normalcy. The bible says, "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy comes in the morning." It is true. You will smile again. All hope is not lost. A few pointers to help you through are:

1. Take time to grieve. Cry. Howl. Do it whichever way you will. Get the pain out. The loss. The Sadness.
2. Seek medical attention and advice. Discover the root cause and if possible, deal with it. Talk to experts.
3. Talk to people – close friends, family, confidants. Most people genuinely want to help although they may not know how. Get it off your chest. It gets better with time.
4. Nurse your body – eat healthy. Regain your strength.
5. Trust God – pray, He is faithful, talk to him constantly. He is your strong tower.
6. Keep your mind busy. Don't be idle. Read, Write, Plan, Watch. Find things you like to do and do them. However, do everything with moderation.
7. FORGIVE yourself – There is nothing you can do at this stage, accept it. Don't blame yourself.
8. FORGIVE God. Don't give up on your faith. He is the creator and giver of all things. He knows why. Forgive God.



*Marble Walter*  
GCI Central



# Created for a Purpose



Judy Chege  
GCI Central



## The Call of Jeremiah

*Jeremiah 1: 5-10*

**I** worked in the airline industry and one of the things we had is a Control Tower. The pilot is at all times to stay connected to the control tower because the engineer stationed there is able to see beyond what the pilot can see. The engineer has a clear picture of the path, the environment, and the weather hence he is in a position to alert and direct the pilot in case of anything.

God sits in the Control Tower; he sees our future and connects us to our purpose. He has gone ahead of us and prepared the way for us. He said to Jeremiah "Do not be afraid of them, for I am with you and will rescue you".

*Verse 5:*

Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born, I set you apart, I appointed you as a prophet to the nations.

Before time began you and I were in the mind of God, we are a chosen generation and a royal priesthood, God calls us His own.

It takes God's intervention for you and me to know and understand ourselves better and when you understand that your life has meaning and purpose,

you take good care of yourself, get fulfilled, and live a happy life.

*Verse 6 & 7:* Ah Sovereign Lord I said, I do not know how to speak, I am only a child (Tone of negativity and deception of the enemy). Do not say I am only a child; you must go to everyone I send you to and say whatever I command you.

When God calls us, He doesn't want to hear excuses, He has already appointed, anointed, and approved us, our assignment is to answer His call.

Jeremiah looked around and couldn't see the future, he was concentrating on his current status and environment, he never knew what lies beyond the horizon. God is calling us beyond what we think or imagine we are capable of doing, He knows us better than we know ourselves. As people of faith, we should go beyond what circumstances, people, or the environment dictates.

*Verse 10:* See today, I appoint you over nations and Kingdoms to uproot, and teardown, to destroy and overthrow, to build and to plant. After the Lord equips us, he sends us with instructions. We must be alert and attentive so that we don't say or do what we were not sent to do.

## Jeremiah's Assignment

1. Uproot – Pull something e.g., a tree or plant out of the ground. When uprooting you have to dig deeper in order to remove all the roots – This requires energy and patience.
2. Teardown – an act of completely dismantling something, demolishing e.g., shredding papers.
3. Overthrow – Throw something further than the intended distance, and remove forcibly from power.
4. Build – Construct by putting parts or materials together, rebuild people's lives to establish, strengthen and restore.
5. Plant – Put in the ground so that it can grow, set, or place in a particular position, place something in a location that is suitable for growth.

All that Jeremiah was called to do was to change the environment. He impacted lives by answering God's call, listening to God, obeying Him, and following instructions. This is what God requires of us when He calls us. Nothing can diminish who God created us to be.

We come from different backgrounds, cultures, have different personalities, strengths, and weaknesses, talents, and gifts, all these help us complement each other. We are made and filled with uniqueness hence we should use our personalities as tools and instruments to fulfil our purpose, impact lives and glorify God.

Apostle Paul was a writer, a thinker, a speaker, and a tent maker. He was able to influence Aquilla and Priscilla not because of his preaching but because of his work. He had influence and affluence, from which a relationship emerged that affected the Kingdom. When we are living our purpose, we impact people's lives and God's Kingdom.

There is a spot that needs our talents, gifts, and skills. We should not let the enemy discount the spot that God has planted us.



# Change your Mindset

Joyce Chebet,  
GCI Central,  
Battle Axe Ministry



Looking back, I remember there were times I used to struggle with my self-esteem, thinking I wasn't the best-dressed girl, not from the best background. I was literally losing friends because of my appearance. Actually, my dress at the time was something else! I couldn't get a well-coordinated outfit and honestly, it was terrible! I didn't however see it until a friend called me out in a very demeaning way, saying how my dressing is old fashion and so on. Like they say, the truth hurts, I thought we are supposed to correct people in love. We should!

I wasn't the coolest kid on the block and but I still wanted to fit in. I however couldn't keep up with that pace! So my approach was different. Of course, I was sad, but I just couldn't let that drain me for long. I wanted to feel sad but I remembered that verse where God affirms us how beautiful we are! I am fearfully and wonderfully made. So instead of feeling sad, I decided to check what type of dress works for me, what make-up goes with it and even a handbag! I changed my entire wardrobe; I was able to get so many simple yet classy things at affordable prices. I learned how to pause and take care of myself and even be gracious to myself.

I made sure that wherever I go, the first thing that would pop up would be my presentation.

Interestingly, today I get people consulting on what to wear. I have grown to love fashion, and am very passionate about wellness and self-care. I love to see women know who they are in Christ and take steps to become who God wants them to become! There's more to occupy!

Later, I got into the telecommunications industry and I loved my Job. From handling reasonable customers all the way to irate ones. It was a learning curve. At work, we had systems for performance and appraisal, and at one time I got

into a PIP. A PIP is basically a performance-based platform for improvement, on which you get assessed on what you did wrong and how to do better.

I felt so shuttered and I was like what's the point of trying? I could just quit and look for something else! But then I thought to myself that I was better than that. I knew I have the potential to do way better, and so I purposed to prove to the management that I am better than that. I developed a routine that works for me. I ensured that I was consistent and ensured I was efficient in my deliverables. I couldn't quit just yet. With time, I was among the best productive. My confidence was back. I even got new challenges and I wasn't afraid to take them on because I knew God has my back and I have what it takes to achieve!

Later there was a massive layoff in the same organization with over 100 employees leaving. I was among them. I couldn't understand why considering I was doing very well. I later came to understand the reason.

Following the stint, a number of us decided to go interview at another company offering the same services. They all got in but me! You can imagine the questions in my head like "I'm I not good enough? Why me? What is wrong with me?"

So since I didn't get feedback, I decided to walk to that office myself. Good thing I had built my networks well, and so knew what was happening in the company. I was advised to call HR, but I went there. The receptionist wouldn't allow me to see the HR. I waited and I watched in pain as my friends did what we used to do and I felt terrible for myself. I mean I couldn't understand why I would be denied an opportunity. I literally watched myself get rejected. The HR response when I reached them, was "We will reach out". I knew they wouldn't.

I wanted to be mad at God but I couldn't, instead, I took some time to

process the rejection and re-strategize. There was no time to be hopeless! I got an expert to review my cv and I continued applying for jobs, even in different areas. I later found out that the company I was fighting to get into got bankrupt and everyone had to leave. Sometimes we don't understand how God works. I was not jumping for joy that it happened but I looked at it from a different angle, what if God closed that door with a reason? God works things out for our own good and sometimes we don't see the good but eventually, He reveals why.

As I waited for new opportunities, I went back to my love for fashion. I opened an online clothing line which really did well in that season. I rented outfits and did consultancy. I was thriving in that. God has instilled in us values, ideas, tools and much more to be successful!

I recognized that and I run with it! I am unstoppable! When it comes to occupying I don't have breaks. I go all out for it knowing that God has empowered me enough to have it. Currently, I'm in HR and I love it. Am giving my best to excel and succeed.

Now let's talk about ministry! I delight in serving God! It gives me so much satisfaction.

Of course, ministry has its own challenges like conflicts, division and even not giving other people the opportunity to serve, which is very sad. There are days am forced to take a back seat, and ask why? I take that time to benchmark and learn because I need to be effective in ministry. I also take time to draw from the Holy Spirit and discern what God has in store.

I want to say having found my identity in Christ has opened my eyes to many things. One is realizing that God sees me differently. Moments I looked down on myself and thought to myself, I can't be this or I can't do this, He actually looks at me and sees tremendous possibilities. He says that I can do all things through Him. Knowing that I am everything God says I am in His word and I can do all



that He says I can do changed my perspectives. If God believes in me and speaks good of me then I had to learn to say Good things to myself.

The theme scripture "Occupy till I come" excites me as I have been given power and authority to take my place, and that God has placed in me tools that I require to occupy the land He's placed me in. I'm basically blooming where he's planted me.

So even when I face storms of life, I would never let myself drown in desperation and let the negative emotions linger for long! Why? Because I will remember that I have been given authority by my Father in Heaven to

take charge. In that moment I will raise my head high, Chin up, shake off the dust and Straighten my crown and operate from a place of victory and fullness!

I know there will be moments when circumstances bring fear and defeat, moments when we will feel like there's nothing we can do or it belongs to a specific category of people, and moments when all you would want to do is stop trying. Well, I can tell you that in those moments, you will need to push harder, take a small break, and don't dwell on your failures. God tells us, you can dine with Kings! It's who you are! So take those risks! Step into those rooms! execute that business

idea. Buy that dress, and move to that city! Go to that showroom and check out your dream car, even though you are not buying it tomorrow! Because eventually, it works!

Lastly, run your own race, some will go before you, don't beat yourself too hard, take small breaks, handle yourself with love and grace, and don't compare yourself with other people. If you run a race that's not yours, you will faint because you can't keep up, we are all unique!

Therefore, let's keep remembering who we are in Christ because only there's where we draw our strength and Identity from.



## Continue in the Race

Deacon Betty Aseyo  
GCI Central



According to Apostle Paul, nothing would stop him from preaching the gospel.

In our journey of faith, circumstances that come our way can easily discourage us from serving the Lord. We may encounter retrenchment, relationship breakdown, sicknesses, loose friends, and many more setbacks. Despite all these happenings, we should not lose our focus while serving God.

Sometimes we may reach a point where we are hard-pressed, crushed, in despair, abandoned, neglected, and struck down. However, in all this, we should not stray from the race of serving God.

There's no turning back when it comes to serving God. No retreat, no surrender until we complete the tasks given unto us. These tasks include testifying the good news of the Lord, rebuilding and restoring the Broken walls of nations, families, and so forth.

### How Do We Continue in the Race?

According to *Hebrews 12:1-4*, we do so by:

- Throwing off everything that hinders us.
- Throwing off every sin that easily besets us.
- Fixing our eyes on Jesus Christ, the author and finisher of our faith. We will sink when we remove our eyes from Jesus.
- Enduring hardship that comes our way as a form of discipline. The discipline is for our own good and a way of refining our lives by removing impurities so that we may share in His Holiness.
- Strengthening our feeble arms and weak knees in prayer and tarrying in the presence of God.

I encourage us to continue witnessing in the mission field, in prayer and serving the Lord in various capacities as we advance the advancement of the Kingdom of God. Our focus should be on edifying the Body of Christ.

Finally, let us continue to grow and advance in wisdom, stature, and favor with God and men! Beloved, let us continue in the race until we finish it with Joy!

# Christian Ladies

*Should practice more Self-Care*



*Janice Kabibi  
GCI Central,  
Youth Ministry*

MORE

SELF



**W**hen I was younger my mother crocheted a sweater for my aunt who was getting married. She spent a lot of time and energy working on it. She made it blue with little yellow flowers on the sleeves. She did her best to make sure it was the perfect gift for her. Years later, we went to visit her at her home. We noticed her using a rag that resembled the sweater to wipe some water that had spilled on the floor. It was black and had many holes in it. My mother was very upset when she realized that my aunt had converted the sweater into a rag. She was sad that the sweater had not been valued and taken better care of because she knew the time, energy, effort, and love that had gone into making it. Yet my aunt obviously viewed the sweater differently.

We have been given the good gifts of our bodies, and yet we often view them differently than the giver does. God gave us bodies to do good works, to love others, and love him.

Sometimes the way we see ourselves and how we think God see us, affects the way we care for ourselves. If we see ourselves as torn, spotted with stains and beyond repair, we may treat ourselves that way. If we see ourselves as loved and valued by a gracious God, we may treat ourselves much better.

Taking care of ourselves starts with:

- **Realizing our worth and whose we are**

We take care of ourselves because we are loved and cared for by God. We are his precious creation. Just like we want our children to take care of themselves, God wants us to value and take care of ourselves. He values us, so we value ourselves.

- **Realizing who we are**

God created us humans, with limited abilities and energy. Unlike us, God never grows weary, does not wear out, and does not need to refuel his energy. We were created to need rest, to have limitations, to be reliant on Him and others. We were not designed to accomplish everything. Nor were we designed to be like God and know everything. When we truly realize who God is, and who we are and our dependence on him, as well as others, we can humbly realize that God designed us to need self-care as a way to remind us we are human.

- **Realizing the gifts have been given**

God gave us good bodies, souls, and minds. We are able to solve mathematical

problems, tie shoes, talk to God, feel emotions, use our senses to enjoy this world, and do multiple tasks. Our bodies, souls, and minds are more complex than a computer. And yet, how often do we complain about our bodies, instead of noticing the miracles they are?

- **Realizing our role and the role of others**

We are to partner with God, not do everything ourselves. We are a valuable body part, one of the many needed by the body of Christ. We are not like everyone else but have been given specific talents and gifts to benefit the spiritual body and help us partner with him. Part of self-care is recognizing our worth and the worth of those not like us, realizing we will all love others a little differently. When we know this, we quit trying to be someone else, controlling others, or comparing ourselves with others, because we are secure in who we are and whose we are. We can then grow and blossom into who God wants us to be as we partner with him and appreciate those around us.

- **Imitating God**

Self-care starts with imitating God who rested on the Sabbath after creation. When we imitate Jesus, we are enjoying our work, forgiving others, managing our emotions, and treating others with dignity and love. Imitating God is the core of caring for our soul, body, and mind.

Self-care is about taking care of what God has entrusted us with. This body that is made to serve him and others. Our bodies, minds, and souls, when viewed through God's eyes are truly gifts worth taking care of.

You are a precious gift. Even on days when you don't feel like it and when the voices in your mind and from others say otherwise.

Like everything we are to do. We take care of our bodies as a form of worship and gratitude for what God has gifted us.





# Mental Health

*in the Church*

*Pastor Rose Kirungu  
GCI Kitengela*

# Mental Health *in the Church*

## Introduction

Mental health is a very sensitive topic in the church circles. Many believers have many varying views about this topic, and we are often tempted to wish it away but the sad reality is that mental health is part of our lives and is affecting many of us in the church today. Many believers have suffered, suffering, have someone suffering or they have been a victim of someone struggling with a mental health problem. The challenge is that at times others may see it while the person suffering from the same is not able to tell that he/ she is not well and other times we get the awareness late when a relationship has become tricky or when a person is already suicidal or has already attempted suicide. Other times we get the sad news that someone we knew has already taken their life due to unattended mental distress.

For this reason, it is important for the church to raise Awareness about mental health among women in church and the church in general so that together can guard ourselves, our loved ones and the church against mental distresses degenerating into mental illness and also be ready and willing to offer appropriate support to one another when going through such life challenging times.

## Meaning: what is mental health?

Health is a state of complete physical,

mental, and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease and infirmity (WHO, 1948).

Mental health: is the person's emotional, social, and psychological wellbeing. It affects how one thinks, feels, and acts. Our mental health status determine how we handle stress, relate to others, and make healthy choices. Mental health is important at every stage of life, from childhood and adolescence through adulthood. It is important to note that mental health affects our physical health, and our physical health affects our mental health hence both must be taken good care of otherwise you cannot be healthy if any of the two is not functioning well.

While many people experience mental health issues, mental illness occurs when the symptoms cause frequent stress or begin interfering with the normal functions of everyday life.

## What is mental illness?

Mental illnesses are health conditions involving changes in mood, thinking or behavior (or a combination of these). Mental illnesses are associated with distress and/or problems functioning in social, work or family activities. It is a true reality that anybody can struggle with their mental health whether the individual is young or old, a believer or an unbeliever. If you struggle with mental health, you are not alone, Statistics show that 25% of us suffer a mental health problem in our lifetime, that means 1 out of 4 people suffer mental illnesses and this doesn't change because we are people of faith but because we humans and live in a fallen world.

The common examples of mental illness include anxiety, depression,

schizophrenia, post-traumatic stress disorder, addictive behaviors, personality disorders and eating disorders. Each of these happen in the life of an individual for a variety of reason and affect different individuals to different magnitudes.

## What are the characteristics of a person with good mental health?

When mental health is mentioned, many are tempted to quickly think about the mad man or mad woman in the market wearing dirty and rugged cloths. However mental health goes far and wider than that. You might have heard of a learned and polished person in the society such as thriving professionals in Athletics, soccer, gospel musicians, university lecturers, religious leaders or even people who had great faith in God that committed suicide. Right!

Mental health and wellness is not merely the absence of depression, anxiety or any other disorders; it's evidenced by a person's ability to cope with normal stresses of life, ability to bounce back after difficulties & adapt to adversity, balance different elements of life such as: Family, friends, school, work, talents etc. and also enjoy life feeling safe and secure. GOOD mental health status is also seen in the ability to achieve one's full potential, being able to work productively and get results and making a contribution to one's community.

## What are the characteristics of a person experiencing mental health problems?

Mental health concerns degenerate into mental health illnesses when the ongoing signs and symptoms cause frequent stress and affect a person's ability to function, at home, school or work, Mental illnesses can also affect ones functioning and make life very miserable. It can affect important relationships including family and faith causing loss of hope in Christ, loss of faith in God, departure from faith and feeling suicidal.

The signs and symptoms vary depending on various factors such as the kind of mental illness or disorder and the circumstances. Mental health Experts are able to make a diagnosis of the mental illness from the set of symptoms presented in the specified circumstances. Some of the symptoms include: Feeling down,

confused thinking or reduced concentration, Extreme mood changes, withdrawal from friend and activities one once loved, significant tiredness, low energy and sleep problems, inability to cope with day to day problems and stress, constant headaches, stomachaches, detachment from reality, hallucinations, problems with alcohol and drug use, suicidal thoughts, sex drive change, among others.

These symptoms form a very large number of cases that are taken to the spiritual leaders for prayer and counselling. For example, mothers struggling with mental illness will become neglectful to their children, Marriage where there is mental illness will be troubled, a student with mental illness will fail the exams, other people will drug and substance addicts. Prayer for these issues is good but gaining knowledge and awareness of the root cause of these problems is critical to the healing of the person and transformation of the situations.





### Why do mental health illness thrive in the church?

The church is a place of love, forgiveness, healing, and restoration; however, Believers find it very hard to approach their leaders or the church community to share when they suffer mental health challenges. When overwhelmed believers are likely to approach their leaders for pastoral counselling and prayer but they may never let them know of the root cause of the issue presented. You may hear this and wonder why should born again believers behave in this way! Here are few of the reasons why this is happening: Stigma; The fear that fellow brothers and sisters in Christ will isolate, belittle, and judge them as having less faith because they struggle with mental health causes many to feel ashamed and sit back instead of reaching out for support.

### What can the church do to prevent Christian from suffering mental health problems?

Spirituality is a resource while struggling with mental illness as it provides hope, community, and comfort through the healing process. This makes Church and the church groups very important for the prevention, healing, and Support of those struggling with mental illnesses. For the church and church groups to this vital support to her members, the first place to start is by being intentional in creating mental health awareness among the church community.

- **Acknowledging** that mental health is an issue this will help those who are struggling to come out and seek help without feeling ashamed or judged for the human struggles. This can be achieved by asking mental health professionals to attend leader's meeting or conferences and discuss on how to identify, manage, and heal from mental illnesses.
- **We should believe and acknowledge that the Bible has something to offer those struggling with mental illness and the church either by example or a solution.** For Example, we read of Elijah the Prophet of God (1 kings 19: 10) Elijah felt lonely and overcome by despair, he became suicidal and told God that He wanted to die. King David (the man after God's own heart) recorded: *"My guilt has overwhelmed me like a burden too heavy to bear."* (Psalm 38:4). Jeremiah the great prophet that God used to reveal the future Glory recorded: *"Cursed be the day I was born...why did I ever come out of the womb to see trouble and sorrow and to end my days in shame?"* (Jeremiah 20:14)
- **Establishment of care groups** Presence of a genuinely loving, understanding, and caring support is necessary for those going through emotional pain or struggling with mental health. This statement by King David indicates the effect of the presence of strong support during time of emotional struggles. They provide comfort, assurance, and safety through the journey. *"Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me."* Psalm 23:4

### Provision of counseling services

Christians are called to love, serve, and comfort our brothers and sisters, (Rom. 12:15; 2 Cor. 13:11; Gal. 5:13). Through biblically and professionally trained counselling, those going through difficult times can be guided on how manage their situations, difficult and distressing questions can be asked and answered, issues can be discussed through in confidence and people can be reconciled and helped to heal.

### Encouraging Christians to Seek Professional Help

Just as people don't go to their pastor/church to heal them from a broken leg, they should not expect their pastor/church to be able to heal their mental illness. We should realize that counselling is not for mad people but anyone with distressing thoughts and going through mentally challenging issues should not shy away but should to seek professional help.

Finally, Prayer is critical for God is our great Physician. A church community that publicly acknowledges that mental illness is a valid prayer request and prays for the healing of mental illness provides great comfort and hope for those who suffering.

### CONCLUSION

Your mental health is an important part of your well-being and determines how you're able to operate psychologically, emotionally, and socially among others.

## Serving the Lord



Pauline Makena  
GCI Huruma

Shalom!

My life has never been the same since I gave my life to Christ. I serve as a bloom's leader in Gospel Centres International -Huruma. I also represent couple's ministry, am an active member of the Christian home fellowship (Home Cell)

I have lived majorly depending on the scripture in the book of (Galatians 6:2)  
Bear one another burden and so fulfil the law of Christ.

I currently lead 35 blooms and truly the blooms ministry has impacted me to be an all-round woman both in church, in the society and to set boundaries. I have learnt that great women are not born but made and a great woman chooses to be great.

As a leader I must be diligent in equipping other women in the ministry. It is always good to train and support blooms to accomplish their God given roles in church and community in preparation for heaven.

To all the blooms I encourage them to take part in the church and serve so that the vision of the church can be fulfilled with excellence.

# A Letter to the Women Ministers, Leaders, and Co-laborers in the Kingdom



*Kimberly Sandra*  
*GCI Central – Youth Ministry*



I am writing as a young woman in her early stages of being in ministry. This is a letter to the women ministers, leaders and co-laborers in the kingdom who are a step or two steps or perhaps one hundred steps ahead of me in this journey. I extend my gratitude towards you, your courage, sacrifice and visionary leadership has fueled my dream and passion of fulfilling God's call to ministry. I look up to you and there so many questions I want to ask you.

Did you find it difficult choosing to quit the pleasures of the world? I would like to hear your story; you were once an 18-year-old like me who was discovering herself in this wide world, wrestling and debating whether God was actually calling you.

Tell me about a time when you took a leap of faith because you had no idea what awaited you on the other side. Assure me that you were also nervous to talk. You didn't always know how to network and felt intimidated at times.

I want to sit with you after church and listen to your "look at what God has done for me" moments over and over. This will give me courage and confirm my own calling.

I need you to assist me with writing my story, cultivating my God-given abilities and assisting me in finding opportunities to develop them, as well as calling out gifts in me that I may not be aware of. Please assist me in recognizing what the Lord is doing in my life.

I want to pursue the dreams God has placed in my heart as quickly as I can and with all of my power. Show me patience and how to go at a sustainable pace while running a ministry marathon rather than a ministry sprint so that I can be successful in this path.

How do you manage your time between family, ministry, career, and friends? I'd like to learn more about the practical challenges you're dealing with. How do you keep a sacred space for the Lord to speak to you while you are going through a difficult time in your life? How do you handle insecurity and comparison?

I need you to be my haven, where I can escape when things don't make sense and the world of ministry depresses me. Allow me grace when I make mistakes, which I will. Trust me enough to let me make errors and learn from them.

Most importantly, I need you to pray with me and for me and my generation. I must follow you as you follow Him, because I will one day look back and find someone following me.

God bless you, women of God.

*Kimberly Sandra*



# Women: How to Set Boundaries and Find Peace



Liz Njeru  
GCI Central



“Have your colleagues delegated tasks to you that they should be doing, but you do the extra work because you want to please them?”

“Have your adult children ever asked you for money, and you give it to them against your better judgment even though they haven't paid you back for prior loans?”

“Has your husband told you that he doesn't want you to go out with friends, and you stay home for fear that he will get angry if you do try to enjoy your outing?”

“Has a church member/leader asked you to volunteer for an activity/, and out of guilt, you say “yes” when you really should say “no” because your schedule is already overloaded?”

**S**ound familiar? All of these scenarios reflect a lack of boundaries – limits that could help you avoid unnecessary stress and enjoy the peace God wants you to experience.

As a woman, you may respond to other people's needs at your own expense and consequently suffer from the chaos resulting from the absence of proper boundaries.

Here's how you can start setting boundaries in your life and start enjoying peace:

## **Shift your focus from your current situation/circumstance to how you respond.**

Dwelling on your current situation will only frustrate you because it won't change anything. However, purpose to change how you respond by focusing on God. While you often can't control your circumstances, you can always control your reaction as you surrender them to God and follow the Holy Spirit's guidance in setting appropriate boundaries. Keep in mind that taking control isn't the same as being controlling. Setting boundaries isn't about trying to control other people; instead, it's about being clear about what you will and will not accept in your life to claim your God-given spiritual authority and guard your heart against harm. You never have to feel guilty about setting boundaries.

**Distinguish between helping and enabling others.** Consider whether or not you're actually helping the people you're trying to help. Helping is doing things for people that they cannot do for themselves. Enabling – which leads people to

depend on you in unhealthy ways – is doing things for people that they could and should be doing themselves. Recognize that when you're enabling people rather than helping them, you create an atmosphere where others can comfortably continue their unacceptable behavior. Even though you intend to help, if you're enabling, you actually hurt other people and yourself.

**Become a strong woman of faith.** Resist the myth that women shouldn't set as many boundaries as men should set. Expect God to use you just as fully as He uses men, and recognize that setting boundaries is vital to fulfilling God's purposes for your life. Instead of letting other people distract you from living the life God intends for you, claim the spiritual authority God has given you by setting the boundaries He leads you to set in your life. Pray for the confidence you need to overcome whatever fears have been holding you back from setting proper boundaries in your life.

**Let the wisdom of God's Word change you from the inside out.** Every day, make time to read, study, and meditate on passages from the Bible, praying for God to give you the wisdom you need to apply its principles to the situations you're facing. The more you learn how to apply biblical wisdom to your life, the better you'll be able to set boundaries that will help you accomplish God's will.

**Stop your own negative behavior.** Ask God to help you identify specific negative attitudes and behaviors that contribute to a lack of boundaries and the resulting stress. Then decide to stop your destructive patterns and pray for

power from the Holy Spirit to each day to replace your unhealthy attitudes and behaviors with healthy ones. Don't waste time or energy anymore on trying to get the other people in your life to change; that will never work. Instead, focus on simply changing yourself with God's help.

**Assemble supportive people.** Seek the support and encouragement of some caring Christians whom you can trust to help you on your journey to set proper boundaries in your life.

**Nip excuses in the bud.** Don't tolerate any more excuses from yourself (about why you're not setting boundaries in your life) or other people (about why they want to step over boundaries you've set for them). Ask God to help you stand firm so that you can make real and lasting changes in your life. Say "no" clearly and without guilt whenever you sense that you should say "no." Doing so will give you the freedom to say "yes" to activities that the Holy Spirit convicts you to pursue.

**Implement an action plan.** Identify specific changes that

God is calling you to make, and then do the necessary work to change every day as God leads you step by step. Set clear boundaries with the people in your life – from your husband and children, to your friends and coworkers – and define specific consequences for violating those boundaries. Don't hesitate to enforce consequences whenever your boundaries are violated.

**Trust the voice of the Spirit.** Pay attention to how the Holy Spirit speaks to you about boundaries. Listen for the Spirit's guidance about boundaries every day in prayer, and be sensitive to the Spirit's promptings in every situation you encounter. In some situations, the Spirit will restrain you from taking action; in others, the Spirit will urge you to take action and move forward.

**Yield everything to God.** Live to please God alone, and don't worry about pleasing other people. Let go of everything that holds you back from fulfilling God's purposes for you, including unrealistic expectations, negative emotions, and Satan's lies. Trust God to give you peace in every situation where you set the boundaries He leads you to set.



## WHAT IS IN YOUR HANDS?



*Elder Joyce Ogutu  
GCI Utawala*

**Yes, what is in your hands? For Blooms – Women of valor, we hold lives in our hands, we hold our families, we hold the church, we hold ministries, clearly, we hold the whole world in our hands! So, we must do all it takes to take what we are holding to the next level. One day God asked Moses, what is in your hand?**

**E**xodus 4:2, Moses answered, "A Rod!" God instructed Moses to use the Rod in his hands to perform a Miracle! God works with full hands, busy hands! ensure your hands have something, whatever you have in your hands, Occupy till He comes. Meaning, keep yourself busy, another verse I love; Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with all your might, for there is no work in the grave! *Ecclesiastics 9: 10.* We have an opportunity to work and change the world! Have the courage to try many things, of course some will work, and some will fail, but remember, success is in the failing!

Some of us must change the world through our small and big initiatives, we must be found trying new things, we must challenge status quo and aim at doing new things. We can't keep doing same things and expect different results. Try out that new thing and you will be surprised how much you

achieve. God is expecting us to change the world, everyone of us from the place we are standing, impact your small world, and soon we will cover the entire globe!

There are small things I dreamed, and tried, with a little faith, yes with very little faith, that faith as little as a mustard seed! After many encounters and challenges, I achieved them. I now stand in a corner and smile at what God enabled me to achieve. Things that make my family smile! Indeed, all these is in the risks that we take to change our lives and the lives of others. God has called us to put the talents in our hands into use, these talents MUST Multiply by all means- Occupy till I come! Thus says the word of God.





# THE HOME MAKER

## BUDGETING AND ECONOMICS AT HOME

*Pastor Irene Mudaki ~ GCI Mombasa Rd*

**T**he war in Ukraine and the drought in Kenya coming just on the heels of the corona pandemic has seen Kenyans go through tough economic times.

The prices of everything have gone up from fuel to fees to food stuff, name it. Yet the income of many has not gone up (when things are good give thanks, when they are bad consider) that is the advice we get from the word of God. Tough times calls for tough decisions and many families have had to make those tough decision.

The eyes of the wise are in his head so says the bible in Ecclesiastes 2:14. One of the solutions we have as Christians is to pray to God to give us wisdom to wade through this tough time.

One of the strategies to manage these times is to make adjustments where possible. For instance, one can choose to change schools. look for a school that has quality but the cost is lower (I once changed schools for my children and what I was paying for one was able to pay for all the three in the new school, and the school was equally good) shop around.

You may want to move in your own house and use the rent to work on your house bit by bit until you get there.

If you have been eating out especially lunch, you may want to carry packed lunch from home and save on that money or redirect it

One of the strategies to manage the times is through family/household budgeting. What is budgeting you may ask? This is a spending plan that helps you determine where your money should go in a specified period of time.

Why should we budget? To avoid falling into crisis, (which can make us borrow and even at times over borrow), to avoid shame and it is also a requirement of good stewardship.

While budgeting you may want to consider the following steps to help you

- Assess your financial resources: calculate how much money is coming in each month.
- Determine your expenses: look at how you have been spending your money by reviewing your records
- Set goals: this must be realistic and achievable goals.
- Create a plan. That is how you intend to do things
- Pay yourself: always make sure you set a side something to pay yourself.
- Track your progress

Always remember to pritorise your needs in the budget, for instance your tithe and rent must come first followed by food then fees then clothing., medical, entertainment, savings and social responsibility

A few tips on how to streamline your budget and achieve much with the less resources

- Avoid impulse buying. Always make a small shopping list when you get out of the house.
- Buy during off peak...for example school items tends to be exaggerated when schools are opening, so immediately

schools close replace all the things you need to replace

- Buy in bulk; buying in bulk helps you save money and keeps you from spending little money every day which when accumulated is too much.
- Take advantage of sale offers. This will either help cut cost or get more for less.
- Learn how to do simple hacks at home this can save you money and also become a source of income, e.g., how to make your own snacks, soaps etc.
- Use family labor where you can to avoid paying for some services like fence trimming, mowing or slashing grass, painting etc.

**Luke 1:37** encourages us that with God all things are possible as sure as the lord lives, the lord is able to carry us through this tough times. Let us seek his guidance and wisdom and we shall emerge victorious through our lord Jesus Christ.



*Pastor Jane Mudoga*  
*GCI Ngata- Nakuru*



# The Warrior Spirit

## in a *Woman that Never Say Die*

A woman is born as a baby girl, in need of tender care and protection, becomes a young girl who then becomes a woman. Personally as a woman and as part of the women fraternity, I have learnt through experience that generally women, whether young or old, face various circumstances in their day-to-day lives that affect them either negatively or positively. Many a times we encounter inevitable trials and challenges that often make us feel stuck, lost, discouraged, worthless, or hopeless. Yet, during these difficult situations, one will discover that women are clothed with unique strength and confidence to fight, conquer and overcome. Even in tough times, there is a warrior spirit that arises in women to push them forward. A true Christian woman will be the last one to give up on her shaky family, spoilt children or a relationship that is not working. She equips and fills herself with uplifting words to remind her of her worth and value in this life. Blake Lively says that - *"The most beautiful thing you can wear is confidence."*

We live in a world that often diminish women's worth and value depending on the set standards. Whether these standards concern beauty or capabilities, women experience inferiority complex in different places (workplace, school, society, or even in their families). Surprisingly, despite all these situations/challenges, many women can still afford a smile and walk with their heads held high and glow with confidence. Thus as women we should not allow the enemy to take away our confidence and security found in the Lord, and therefore whatever life throws to you, you should know that you are a conqueror and a warrior. At times maintaining our physical appearance take a tall order on us and as women we spend too much time, money, and energy to reach the standards set by this world. These standards often lead us to lose our confidence, feel insecure, or even doubt our self-worth. However, in this, remember God has created you in His image and likeness. He has made you uniquely and wonderfully (*Psalm 139:14*). In God, you are more precious than any expensive stones here on earth. Therefore other than just focusing on the outward appearance, women must also develop the inner beauty and the spirit of godliness. God sees through us because he looks at the status of our hearts. The world may judge us for our appearances, yet God is the one who can judge us accurately based on what is in your hearts. Note that, true beauty begins inside.

It is important to know that God created every woman with a purpose which she has to accomplish. Like Queen Esther, born as a Jew, she became a queen, which led her to save the Jewish people with the help of her adoptive father and mentor Mordecai. Though there was a decree to kill the Jews, Esther and Mordecai believed in God's care and help. *Queen Esther unleashed the warrior spirit in her and risked her life by approaching the king to petition for the deliverance of the Jews as Mordecai and the Jews interceded for her.* For sure deliverance came.

As a woman, you are capable of doing great things and should never listen to those who persecute and look down upon you, for God has already made you qualified to face all difficulties in life victoriously. Don't let others extinguish the fire in you; instead, continue to shine amidst darkness so that others can see God in you. The bible tells us that God has not given us the spirit of fear, but the spirit of power, love and a sound mind (*2 Tim.1:7*). God's spirit doesn't make cowards out of us, but the spirit gives us power....As an effective Christian woman, you must adorn yourself with this power, love, and sound mind and above all, let us do everything with love. Remember, salvation is not for the weak, and thus we need to be strong and resilient in our spirits to fight and make it in this life.

*Woman!!!  
Let's not  
give up in Life,  
Shalom.*



# Trusting God Even When It Doesn't Make Sense.



*Elder Priscilla Najoli  
GCI Central*



**T**rust entails having a strong conviction and firm belief that whatever truth you hold in God is reliable. The concern that would arise from the title of this topic is when trust and the experiences are not reconcilable. One day I had an encounter of an episode in a certain health facility that really touched my life and made me to have a deep reflection of what life could bring along. I found middle aged woman wailing uncontrollably having lost a baby under mysterious circumstances.

I wondered why the people around her could not calm her. The truth of the matter is that these people were equally trying to process the sudden bad news. This lady woke up towards dawn to breast feed her infant but found the baby was non responsive, thus called a neighbor to rush her with the baby to the nearest hospital. On arrival the baby was confirmed and pronounced dead. It is on this backdrop that the lady was at the point she could not be consoled nor hear anything from any one.

Her screams attracted every attention. I listened keenly to what she was saying while holding on a close relative, 'My God what wrong have done! my husband disappeared without a trace and this has happened again'. This was the most traumatizing thing to hear from a woman who had suffered another loss of a significant person in her life. Individuals kept on telling her to trust God. At the state she was in, I doubt if she could barely take in anything.

The above life experience, is quite traumatic and it will take a radical trust in God even when every experience one may be going through is pointing on the contrary. In the bible, there were several instances in the bible trusting God would not make sense. *Luke 4:35-41*, the storm was so fierce that shook the boat and the disciples were filled with a lot of fear because of the likelihood of drowning in the sea. Remember this occurred though the Lord Jesus Christ was in the boat. The moment they awoke to the reality that Jesus was with them, they decided to call for his help. The Lord spoke to the turbulence and there was calmness.

## **Jesus presence in people's lives and experience.**

It is interesting to note that what we may be going through is not uncommon to man according to James 1: 12-13. The challenge we have is that when are going through some

motions and experiences of life we tend to be overwhelmed and hardly remember that the Lord is with us. Some of the typical examples of what went through as in their normal lives are captured in the bible for our learning.

*Luke 5:4*, Jesus instructs Peter to launch the nets to the deep for a great catch. The instructions given were contrary to favorable conditions of fishing. Peter is told to do so during the day when fish is not expected to be easily caught. At the same time, Peter with his colleagues had struggled the whole night and came out with nothing and here he is instructed to try again. Peter obeys the master and caught so much fish that he had to ask for help from the other fishermen.

In *John 2:1-11*, Jesus at a wedding at Canaan. A confusion almost arose at this wedding when their wine ran out and under the instructions of Jesus the ceremony went on uninterrupted and many of the guests may not have realized what had transpired. It took the effort of those who followed the Lord's instructions for the wine to be restored and the party continued without the bride and groom suffering any set back or embarrassment during such a special occasion.

## **How to trust God irrespective on what you are going through**

- Invite the Lord in everything you plan to do or going through. It means in good and even in bad times. This is because our God calms storms and performs miracles and ensures there is a great catch and the wine never runs out.
- Let the Lord Jesus know what you are going through and surrender all without any reservation.

Trust the Lord with your heart and lean not in your understanding, *Proverbs 3:5-6*. This is not based on your experience, understanding and intelligence.

In all your ways acknowledge the Lord, *1 John 4: 11*. If anyone acknowledges that Jesus is the son of God – God lives in them and they are in God.

The Lord will direct your path, *Psalms 37: 23-24*. The Lord directs the steps of the godly *Proverbs 16:9*. Man plans but God establishes them.

Despite what we are going through today let's endeavor and be encouraged to trust in God again. Let us not give up; the Lord is nigh to step in our case. He has never failed in ensuring that His purposes come to pass in our lives.

# Your Small Victories **MATTER!**



*Pst Rhoda Masarwi  
GCI Central,  
Youth Pastor*

from the paw of the lion and the paw of the bear will rescue me from the hand of this Philistine." *1 Samuel 17:34-37 NIV.*

Then the king called out for his armour to be brought and David was dressed in the king's military attire. Everything was uncomfortable for David as it was oversized and the option was to take it off.

Sometimes in life, opportunities will present themselves as giants –mountains that you cannot see any way through; and in such moments, voices will tell you how unqualified you are for that assignment, position or opportunity with the odds stuck against you. All you need to remember and go with, are the small victories from your past. Those moments where no one else, but God, came through for you. Undoubtedly, when you step out in courage, God makes you stand out and grants you victory.

Back to the story, David was not a soldier, had never been trained in any capacity as a soldier, he was not dressed for the fight, he didn't have the tools to participate in what would look like a fair fight. We all know how the story ends. Goliath was defeated with a sling and a stone and the young shepherd boy, won the battle with astounding victory!

Our victory won't be because of how well empowered, resourced, prepared, trained or war tested we are. It will be purely because of God. David said to the Philistine, "You come against me with sword and spear and javelin, but I come against you in the name of the Lord Almighty, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied." *1 Samuel 17:45 NIV.*

Child of God, let me encourage you as I encourage myself: be prepared to step into places and positions, the world around, would think you have no business being there. Summon courage and face whatever is placed ahead of you, knowing well, that God will grant you the victory because you revere and honour His name.

**D**avid son of Jesse, as a young shepherd boy, his days were nothing but ordinary. Same routine and same activity –looking after his father's sheep, while his three elder brothers, joined the king's army to defend their motherland. This is a story we've all heard several times. One day, David was sent by his Father to take supplies to his brothers at the battle front, and some chief for the commander of the unit, and to find out how they were doing.

The young lad arrived at the camp and found a face-off going on, and at the centre, a huge giant who would get up, taunt and hurl insults and dare someone, anyone from the army of the Lord to come and fight him. The Philistine's champion was a mountain of a man. A giant named Goliath who was from Gath. His height was six cubits and a span. He had a bronze helmet on his head and wore a coat of scale armour of bronze weighing five thousand shekels; on his legs he wore bronze greaves, and a bronze javelin was slung on his back. His spear shaft was like a weaver's rod, and its iron point weighed six hundred shekels. His shield bearer went ahead of him. *1 Samuel 17:4-7 NIV.*

That day, as the young lad entered the battlefield, he walked into Goliath's daily briefing which happened twice a day; making the same remarks, calling for someone to come and challenge him. David heard the insults, looked around and sensed nothing was going to happen. Soon, he was spotted by one of his elder brothers and was scolded for having left the sheep alone to only come and watch the war. In the meantime, King Saul had promised a long list of things. Top of the list was his daughter's hand in marriage for the warrior who would kill Goliath. One would think that all the men in David's town would line up to try their luck, but no! No one came to challenge this war tested warrior giant.

David rose to the occasion however, and went ahead to tell the king, to let him deal with that giant who kept hurling insults. David said to Saul, "Let no one lose heart on account of this Philistine; your servant will go and fight him." *1 Samuel 17:32 NIV.*

Immediately, the king pointed out that, Goliath had been a warrior from his youth, prompting David to give an account of his bravery at the back of the wilderness while keeping his father's sheep; "When a lion or a bear came and carried off a sheep from the flock, I went after it, struck it and rescued the sheep from its mouth. When it turned on me, I seized it by its hair, struck it and killed it. Your servant has killed both the lion and the bear; this uncircumcised Philistine will be like one of them, because he has defied the armies of the living God. The Lord who rescued me



# SUNDAY SCHOOL MINISTRY



ALYSHA MUTHONI KINYANJUI  
4/1 THIKA ROAD  
"LIVING AS "CHILDREN OF LIGHT"

My name is Alysha Muthoni, I am 9 years old. I am in grade 4. I go to Rophine Field Junior School, located in Utawala Embakasi, Nairobi County. My father is called Morris Kinyanjui and my mother is called Margaret Gatibaru. I have a brother called Lashan Kinyanjui. I love my parents and brother so much. We live in Utawala near Maono Prayer centre.

I fellowship at Gospel Centres international Thika Road Church. In our Sunday school, I am in Lamplighters class. This is a class for children between the age of 6 years and 9 years old. I have so many friends in Sunday school!

When I am free, I love reading storybooks, schoolbooks and the Bible. I also do my homework. The bible in John 8:12 teaches us that Jesus is the light of the world. Children who follow Jesus will never walk in darkness but will have the light of the world. This teaches me that I should follow Jesus because he is the light of the world, his light shines in me too! I am a child of the Light.

I would like to encourage other children to be the light of the world by following Jesus, Reading the bible, obeying their parents, Praying, going to Sunday school, being kind to one another. I shine the light of the world to my parents because I love and obey them. I shine the light of the world to my teachers because I obey them and respect them. I shine the light of the world to my friends because I help them in their schoolwork and remind them to be good.

Children should not follow Satan who brings darkness. Darkness will make them do bad things like stealing, abusing others and disrespecting their parents and teachers, instead they should allow Jesus to shine his light in their hearts so that they can be good children and finally go to heaven.



HULDAH MIRIAM  
4/1 MOMBASA ROAD

My name is Huldah Miriam, I am in grade 2

There is a very interesting story from the book of Luke 19:13, that Jesus used as an example where the master who was going away gave ten of his servants each some talents to do business with. When he came back, he called each of them to account.

The one who was given much, multiplied, he was given more, the one who did not multiply had his taken away and given to the one who had much.

As children, we have been given opportunities through the help of our parents to be responsible and all that we can as we wait for the coming back of Christ. Occupy till I come means we must be, diligent, and hardworking, faithfully in whatever our parents, our teachers, and our pastors places in our hands. Serving Christ should be our topmost priority.

I have learned through this that, I can perfect my life by doing what I am able to do because all these abilities we have been given by God, to help those around us and to win many people know Christ and make the world a good place.



**NICOLE CHEPTOO**  
**GCI KITENGELA**

### LIVING AS CHILDREN OF LIGHT

My name is Nicole cheptoo from GCI Kitengela, am 10 years old.

1st Thessalonians 5:5 "You are all Children of the light and children of the day. We do not belong to the night or to the darkness".

Jesus calls himself the light of the world and whoever follows him will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life. In Matthew 19:14 Jesus said let the children come to me do not stop them for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these. Hence, we are all children of the light and children of the day. Light represents holiness and darkness is sin.

As children of light, we should be able to shine and triumph over darkness by seeking Jesus our source of light in depth. This we can achieve by shunning away from sin and embrace that which is good. We should live in a way that makes people realize that something is different about us by being kind to one another, compassionate and forgiving. Our character should reflect light of Christ and attract the people we meet.

We do not belong to the night or to the darkness, Jesus Christ died for us on the cross so that we may receive the gift of salvation and we bear fruits of peace, love, patience, kindness, gentleness, goodness, faithfulness, and self-control through the holy spirit that gives us an identity as believers.

Light triumphs over darkness thus we are more than conquerors through Jesus Christ who loves us. Just like a city on a hill cannot be hid, let thy light shine before men so that they may see your good works and glorify our Father in heaven.

Let us all strive to live in light for "those who do wrong hate light. (John 3:19-21). When light shine on us, it reveals our true nature (Eph 5:8-13). Light produces life, growth and beauty, but sin is darkness: and Light and darkness cannot exist in the same place."



**JYLAN HEGE, GCI MOMBASA ROAD**  
**OCCUPY TILL I COME**

Luke 19:13

So, he called ten of his servants and gave them ten minas/talents, put this money to work he said, until I come back. It means using your talents to serve God in all ways. Like in Church, School and at Home.

How I apply this verse in my life

The word of God has taught us if we do not use our talents God will take them away from us and give them to those who are practising their talents. As for me I love singing in Church and I am looking forward to playing instruments in Church.



**SHANNEN MVINDI**  
**GCI-UTAWALA**

### LESS OF ME, MORE OF CHRIST

**MATHEW 16:24-25**

According to this scripture in the bible, Jesus wants you and I to live a life that shows his presence in us.

As children who are growing in Christ, we should put aside the things that give us our own happiness and focus more on what God expects of us. For example, we should set aside time to read the bible and pray, instead of playing games or chatting with our friends on the phone all the time. When we do this, we allow Christ to be seen more in us.

Let us choose to follow God's teaching and talk to him by praying every day so that we may find life in him. Also, when we pray and he answers, let us share with other children so that they may know about his goodness.

Putting aside other things and following Jesus will lead us to the right things always.





**OLIVIA WAMBUI**  
GCI NGATA - NAKURU

My name is Olivia Wambui, I am 12 years old, a bloomlet who has decided to follow Jesus. Am born again and Jesus is Lord. Every Sunday, my parents and I fellowship at GCI Ngata Nakuru. I have personally experienced God's unconditional love and I am inspired by God's word in Matthew 16:24-25 "Less of me, more of Christ ". I have decided to deny myself and follow Jesus that he may teach me his ways and that he may guide and lead me in my life. I desire to be his good disciple and serve him. If we are to fulfil our God given roles in our lives, our church, or our ministries, we need to have less of ourselves but more of HIM, JESUS CHRIST in our lives for He alone is truly great. I will follow Him.



**VICTORIA WAMBUA**  
GCI MACHAKOS

**LESS OF ME MORE OF CHRIST**

Mathew 16:24-25

I was born in a Christian family, raised up in the church mainly in the Sunday school.

My life experience has taught me many things more so to wait upon the Lord. Thank God I accepted Christ as my personal savior and He washed my sins away and now I am free.

In Mathew 16:24-25 Jesus told his disciples that whoever wants to follow him should deny himself take up his cross and follow him. For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for Christ's sake will find it.

Despite many challenges I face I have realized that following Christ is all I need in my life.

My body is the temple of the Holy Spirit and He has good plans for me. He has good thoughts for me as it is written in Jeremiah 29:11. So let me deny myself things of this world and desire heavenly promises.

God bless you all.



**SHEKINAH MUMBE**  
GCI CENTRAL

Praise be to the Lord our God for sending His one and only son to save us. And for that my desire is for him to increase and for me to decrease

For if we allow him to increase in our lives, we are his followers, we become the children of light and bring glory to his name.



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