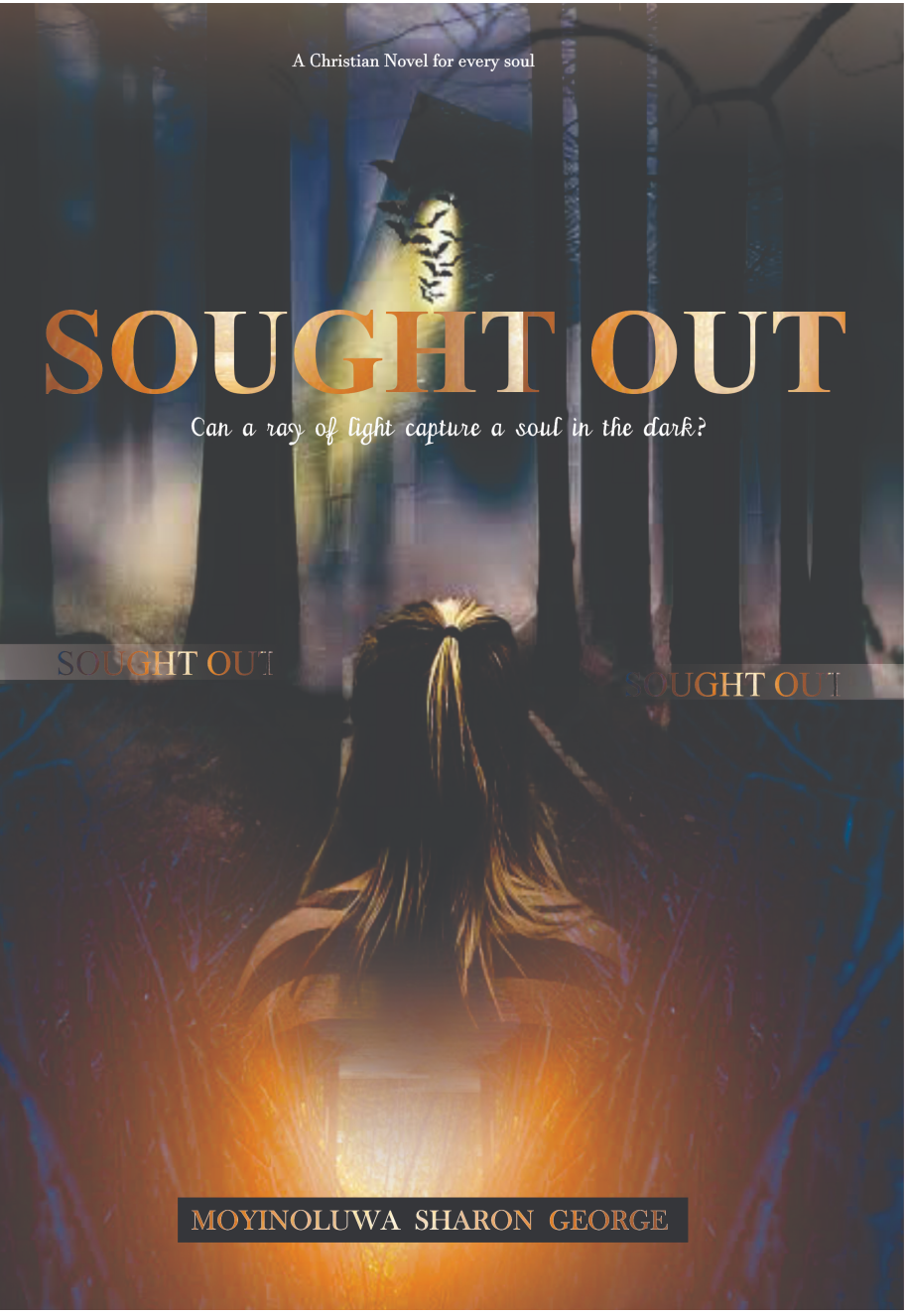

A Christian Novel for every soul
SOUGHT OUT
Can a ray of light capture a soul in the dark?
SOUGHT OUT
SOUGHT OUT
MOYINOLUWA SHARON GEORGE

MOYINOLUWA GEORGE.

Sought Out

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Moyinoluwa George. asserts the moral right to be identified as the author of this work.

Inspired by the Holy Spirit.

Edited and professionally typeset
by Akandu Precious Nk.
|Professional Writer and Editor|

To the Holy Spirit who held my hands and unravelled this story beyond my limit. Thank you for every step of revelation you gave me.

And to you reading this, from the mind of the Father to you was this title written. You have been SOUGHT OUT and placed in a treasured place in Christ. Your name is graven on the palm of the Most High's hands, he is forever mindful of you!

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Reviews

Can a ray of Light capture a soul in the dark?

Sharon thought all her life she would forever remain in the dark, with her past stinging her. She would have thought it was over when she met herself in the place she least expected, kidnapped!

What's more with her life? Could God even see her? Can she really see the Light amidst the thick darkness in her world? Can Love ever seek her over to Himself?

SOUGHT OUT is a book everyone needs to read to get answers to the above questions. The beautiful writer, Moyinoluwa has written this book to bless every soul to embrace uncommon love.

Yes, a ray of Light can reach the soul in the dark, even you! But find out 'How' in this book when you read.

Enjoy your reading journey to Light, Life, and Transformation!

~JOY ONIFADE.

We live in uncertain times, a time when darkness seem to prevail and truth is scars. One thing I have come to understand while reading through this book is that darkness will always hold sway as long as light is absent.

What is light? Light is love and love is God. There is no place far enough that love cannot go, no depth so deep that love cannot reach. God is always chasing after us and He is more willing and ready to give us love than we are even ready to receive it.

The world has absolutely nothing to offer but pain and misery but Christ came to give life abundantly. If you are among the people who ask why God would allow pain like Sharon in the novel, I want you to know that pain is never from God, however it takes your
acceptance of His offer to experience true love.

This book is a must read for every person's searching for answers,
searching for true love, every broken person needing mending,
every person in the dark seeking for light and also every believer
with many questions. Shalom.
~DR. FEMI OLAGBENDE.

I have been SOUGHT OUT!

These five words won't stop ringing in my head after reading the book, SOUGHT OUT.

Though I might be tagged Forsaken, but I HAVE BEEN SOUGHT OUT. Though I might be Rejected, but I HAVE BEEN SOUGHT OUT.

I HAVE BEEN SOUGHT OUT to break barriers, I HAVE BEEN SOUGHT OUT to shine my light, for in my light, Men will see Light.

I HAVE BEEN SOUGHT OUT to stand in the gap for my generations and the generations to come. I have been Sought Out because I'm already loved and that is enough!

SOUGHT OUT is a must read for every individual, it won't just bless you but it will remind you of the love your Father(Jesus) has for you.

~IFEOLUWA ADEOLA

Acknowledgement

My first gratitude goes to the Most High God. I am grateful for the privilege and amazing grace he gave me to bring this work into reality. Truthfully speaking, I never saw myself writing a whole story that could contain a book. Thank you, ABBA. You are the best!

I appreciate my parents for seeing my potential and God's gift in me. Thank you for your support in every way.

I appreciate every one of my friends and family who believe in who I am. Thank you for your encouragements and prayers.

I appreciate every of those who made me strong in the life of Christ. I am grateful for the godly communities I have found myself in; my Church and Teens Made For More Community. I deeply appreciate everyone who supported this work in one way or the other, it means a whole lot. Thank you, Mama Joy Onifade for holding my hands and believing in me.

I appreciate every Christian Creative. You are the light that lightened my path in writing. You all have been a great source of inspiration. Mrs. Opeyemi Akintunde, your story opened my eye to edifying and godly content. I celebrate every Christian writer, God bless you all.

And finally, my precious reader, I appreciate you. I am more blessed to have you reading this. You are cherished. God bless you!

1

What a Proposal

The scorching hot sun, that day, was without mercy. I had walked a reasonable distance under the sun, and at that point, I got parched and needed to quickly get some water.

"Here it is, ma," the water seller handed a sachet to me.

I paid for the water and continued my journey. This time, I did not take the usual path I always took. I continued the journey through a different route.

While walking through the path, I saw a group of people walking towards me.

I identified them from their appearance and knew I had to take a U-turn. "Are these people just jobless or what?" I wondered. They each had their usual book with their faces shining brightly. It was obvious they were glad to be doing what they were doing.

"Good afternoon, Sis," one of them greeted me with a persuading smile and tone. Her greeting disrupted my intentions to turn back. I immediately put up an uninterested look, in a bid to prevent them from going ahead with what they were about doing.

"Uhm, I'm sorry I can't be available for what you are here for."

"Sorry, Ma, we will only take a little of your time, we're not staying for eternity." One of them replied.

They were three in number: a lady and two men.

"I can't even give you the tiniest amount of my time. 'Who get time to waste? Not to mention eternity." I said without remorse, fixing my gaze on my phone to avoid eye contact.

"And yes, talking about eternity, we have something to share about it…" began the third person among them, who hasn't made any contribution all the while. He talked with so much dexterity, like the Gospel thing was a skill that can be acquired.

I patiently waited for the sermon to come to an end as the dogged evangelist kept emphasizing on the reality of Heaven, hell and God's love. My heart ached with anger. That was the last thing I wanted to hear at that moment.

"Stop, please. It's enough!"

I screamed out after holding on for a while. That thing bites me, I hate it. I passionately hate love. Love to me is the exact opposite.

Oh, the world has been fooled that there is a thing called love.

They do not know that love does not exist, it's such an illusion that has played upon the belief and intelligence of humans. Love does not exist! I have proof, if only the court of life will hear me out.

"Oh, we are so sorry ma, we can just quickly round off," replied the 'love' speaker. It was obvious they thought my shout was as a result of the time being spent.

"In a nutshell, we just want to let you know that there is no better life outside Christ. Only in Him flows the living water that springs from here to eternity. He has given us the greatest thing—his Life, and we can reciprocate by giving him ours. By the Holy Spirit, there is a witness that we are the sons of God." With so much passion in his voice, he said with a rush to finalise his statement.

After the sermon, one of them made an altar call, to worsen the matter. I refused giving in. Is it not the altar call that I made several times during my childhood? What is its essence?

"Ok, thank you very much for your time," the lead speaker finally broke the silence, seeing I wasn't responding.

Just then, they dropped that word that always gets me pissed.

"We just want to let you know that Jesus loves you," they cheerfully echoed in uniform.

I watched them with disdain as they had no idea how much I was against their belief.

One of them handed me a tract and I reluctantly collected it. I couldn't explain what pushed me?

Eventually, they chorused a 'bye' and parted ways with me.

Thank goodness! Everything that has a beginning has an end. I heaved a sigh of relief as they left.

I should have squeezed the paper and thrown it away, but I found myself taking it home.

At home, I dropped it on a shelf and found something else to do.

As I got engaged with something else, the word "love" kept echoing in my heart, I tried shoving it off but couldn't.

What was happening to me?

Why am I considering the word I detested so much?

2

The Quest

Everything was happening so fast. Images of the past kept flashing through my mind.

At the same time, the word "love" won't stop echoing in my heart. I desperately sought a way to stop it. I was not ready for any emotional breakdown. I didn't want to remember the past heartbreaks that turned me into a bitter person.

I took my phone and turned and went in search of a cool music, definitely not a gospel song. What will gospel songs be doing in my phone? I listen to songs that hype and boost my own life as a bitter person.

"I've got no stress now
I'm gonna keep rolling till I die
My matter na me e concern.
Not any fucking body."

I kept humming the song as it was playing in my head. Whoo! I seemed to love this life but deep down I knew I wanted to feel

loved, I longed for acceptance.

Smiles…

Acceptance? I had no one, not even a single friend. Maybe because I chose to stay on my own. After all, many have stretched forth hands of friendship but I turned them down.

I laughed hysterically as I ruminated on how I resisted people, how I shut out anyone who tried to show interest in being a friend or a lover.

"Everyone is fake!"

I believe I am the only one real to myself, not even God. Maybe he exists but he isn't real to me anyway.

Recalling what had happened earlier that day, I laughed uncontrollably and almost fell off my chair.

I seemed to be the main character in the play. A good movie indeed. Instead of facing the heaven and hell they came to preach, they were talking about love.

"Who love help?" I murmured.

They even went ahead to say love is a person. "God is Love,' they said with so much passion. Imagine love being an entity.

That's crazy, right?

The love that turned my life upside down, shattered my dreams and made me a sour person.

Haha, I am glad that I am free now.

Yes, free from the lie that played upon the belief of humans. Love is an illusion. Who came about it? Where does it originate from?

Love does not exist!

I wished the Court of Life, probably the supreme court in Nigeria, will hear me out. Or wait! The supreme court in America would be the best, for that is where it can be broadcast to the world. The world must hear this gospel truth of mine that there is nothing called love. It does not exist.

But, did I know what love is?

What were its characteristics?

Where does it originate from? I thought.

I needed answers to those questions so I can put up my proof. My desperation to find a fault and defend my belief was burning.

But those questions appeared so deep!

Answers were meant to come forth.

How would I find the answers I needed?

Just then I remembered what one of the gospel preachers said to me about love.

I was asked to go through the book of 1 Corinthians 13, to know the characteristics of love.

I reached out for my Bible . Oh yes, I still had it, the one my mother left before she died.

I went in search of it and finally found it in the last drawer, at the bottom. It appeared like a parcel buried in dust for a very long time. On seeing it, a string of emotion stroke me. Tears welled up my eyes.

No, I can't do that now, I am here for research.

"Sharon, comport yourself," I cautioned myself loudly.

3

Love is a Lie

I tried as much as possible to wave those emotions off but it kept pouring out like a tap that just got unlocked.

"Oh, no! I can't start doing this now."

I sat on the ground leaning my back on the wardrobe with my hands wrapped around my legs and my face buried in it. The tears continued to flow, nonstop.

Love was the abattoir that brought carnage to me. I was massacred and shattered by its bloody sting. I hated love with my last breath.

…

My ordeals years back kept playing in my head.

12 years ago…

That cool afternoon, like a dream, my mother came in and packed our things to a man's house. My naïve mind couldn't

stop wondering what was going on, until she called me to herself and whispered in my ears, "That is your new Daddy." I accepted the fact with joy and danced to the tune of the new update regarding my family.

That was exactly one year after the demise of my biological father. My new dad lavished enough cares on me till I began to see him as a father indeed. As time went by, we became close and intimate friends.

Little did I know that there was more beyond what I could comprehend, then. I couldn't say if my mother was aware of my new dad's deeds, all I knew was that he tried his best to conceal whatever he does to me.

Hearing those same words, "Sweet baby," from my dad always left me in an emotional trauma. He used those words whenever he wants to show me how much he loved me, as he would always say.

"No one must know about what we do together, my sweet baby," he repeatedly sang into my ears. "That's how much I love you."

I lost my sense of proper reasoning. My self-esteem suffered. My psychology wept!

"I love you," He would whisper in my ears. With that, he would plant his lips on mine, strip me bare and lay me on the bed. He was so consistent in killing me. Mum seemed to be ignorant of all that was happening. Did she even love me? Why couldn't she see through my gloominess?

I couldn't say a word about what I was going through, to anyone. I was afraid of what dad would do if he found out. I wouldn't blame my mum entirely though, as she always left the house for the market early, everyday, and returned late. She was a petty trader.

Three years went by with the continuous sexual assault by new daddy.

One Friday evening, the day it felt like the ticking of the clock eventually came to a stop. I returned from school to meet the news that my mother has passed on. I was now 12. The same illness my mum battled with since one year after she married new dad has finally taken her life. I cursed and cursed that cancer as my uniform got soaked in hot tears.

After mother's death, my new dad disappeared into the moon leaving me empty and broken to pieces. Aunty Tomiwa took me up. She was my maternal aunt.

Living with aunt Tomiwa was like living in another apartment in hell. The pain and injuries I sustained from her constant beatings made me desire my step-dad's side of hell than hers. At least he never beat me, as long as I didn't tell on him. However, the emotional damage was a nightmare.

Having lost my self-value, I developed a wrong perspective about life. I walked with the wrong friends that made an indelible negative influence in my life. They endeared me to follow young guys and 'enjoy.' They said they believe in my beauty and bodily image.

Life in secondary school made me worse. Early puberty did not help matters. "I love you," those same words step-dad used to sap me of life, were the same my school boys used to get what they wanted –a taste of my womanhood.

With time, I saw giving myself to men for their fleshly satisfaction as a normal way of life.

After my final exams, my aunt sent me out of her house. I had contracted a sexually transmitted disease and she wanted to have nothing to do with me afterward. Aunt Tomiwa believed it was HIV. All my pleas to her fell on deaf ears.

My hopes were dashed when not even one of the men I gave my body to wanted to take me in with them. All my friends who walked this path with me turned their backs on me. I had no one. I stood on my own and resorted to finding a means to survive. I managed to do some menial jobs, saved some money and visited the hospital to take care of my health. Good heavens! It was not HIV.

Where are those who said they loved me?

They were all jerks. Nothing but elements of falsehood is whom they were.

Men made a mess of me. How could I have believed those words that crushed my dreams and sense of living? My trusted friends and aunt deserted me. I have enough reason to choose this kind of life. To me, I was the only real one. Everyone else was fake.

"I loathed the word love, I doubted its existence."

I burned with anger. Reminiscing on my past brought down hot tears and convinced me that there was no such word as love.

But here, some people were busy proclaiming love. It is a full lie, man has been deceived.

Humans are liars even the one called God does not love, that is why he has forgotten me.

I should not have passed through this, but he let it. He watched me go through hell and did nothing to help.

"No love!"

"I will prove this to the world." I promised myself.

As for the book (Bible), I concluded it wasn't for me. I was not interested in seeking answers again. I decided to look for another way to journey my research. But what way?" I thought.

…..

4

Bitter Life

It was cockcrow. The sound of the cock swiped sleep of my eyes. I didn't know when I slept off the previous night.

I jerked up from bed and hastened to get things done. I had to be at work early. I worked in a restaurant and had to be at work at 8:00 am.

It was 6:05 am. I hurriedly arranged my room. I smiled sheepishly as I saw the Bible on the floor. I remembered what happened the night before I fell asleep, how I cried my tragic life out. My hands reached for it and I kept it in my wardrobe and went on with other duties.

At 8:02 am, I was on the go for work.

"Only God knows how this woman would react today again, she is problematic." I mumbled, as thoughts of my boss flashed through my mind.

I came out in a rush, with my usual countenance: face as long as a fiddle.

Good morning, ma. An unfamiliar lady greeted me. She appeared to be a visitor.

I didn't feel like uttering any word, hence I ignored.

"It's you I'm greeting ma." She insisted.

She definitely doesn't know who I am. I only interact with my neighbours when I chose.

Good morning).

I replied sharply and continued my journey as I walked briskly to board a bike.

…..

"Is it not Aunty Sharon? She does not interact with anyone in this house. She is a typical lackluster lady," Lady T. told her visitor.

"Wow, I had no idea."

"Look, it's her problem. Let's get to business," Lady T. replied her customer.

….

While I was waiting for a bike at the junction, my eyes beheld a scene. I watched how a mother protected her child from the path that led to a gutter, preventing the child from falling.

The child was reluctant, not knowing that her mother was only looking out for her.

"It's because I care about you, you'd better come here," she said to her.

I chuckled while watching the scene. It appeared funny.

"That's love," a tiny voice whispered to me.

It sounded absurd. I waved it off and continued my journey.

……...

Work that day was stressful. I finally had some time to rest.

I relaxed on the bed to take a nap. I reached for my phone and visited the online space. I was a social media influencer and a good love critic. I made consistent posts that degraded love, friendships and relationships.

And yes, I had committed followers who agreed with my philosophy.

"Who love help?"

'People are fake, YOU are the only one real to you', was one of my posts on my social media handles. I logged in Facebook, clicked on the notification icon to see reactions and comments.

Reading "agreed" comments from several people blew out a satisfactory smile on my face.

"Yes, all men are fake."

"You can say that again."

"Right on. Love is a full scam." And on and on.

I heaved a sigh of satisfaction. I was getting new followers and engagement, my influence was booming!

While scrolling down to watch some short clips and read some posts, I received another notification…

"True love exists and it ultimately emanates from the Father who gave his Son to die for us. If you feel unloved, read Isaiah 49:15. Thanks."

It was another comment, but this was of a different opinion.

I laughed, "True love, my foot."

I sought for a perfect response but none was coming, so I ignored it.

I turned off my data and resolved to take my proposed nap.

"But, wait! I was still on a research, I could use this, right?"

With this, I could come up with another philosophy and use it to counter love.

"Tomorrow is another day to come up with something," I fantasized in my mind.

5

A Dark Past

Thinking about the ordeals I had gone through in life, I refused to agree with what I saw in my hands. Yes, I had checked the Bible verse I saw in that comment.

Isaiah 49:15 (KJV) "Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee."

It seemed enticing but I wasn't going to buy that. Where was he when I was sexually molested? What was he doing when I lost my mother? Where was he when I was maltreated by my aunt? He chose not to send help when I was blinded, making the wrong decisions, selling my body to get food.

He never loved me. I was neglected.

"But why do others go through even worse situations? What about those who were raped and others being molested in their marriages, orphans who roam about on the street, and the sick

who have thin chances of living?

Then indeed, God forgets some of his creations." I concluded.

I believed he had some category of people he was mindful of, probably his Generals. But why won't he care for innocent humans? Why?

I picked up my phone to create a post I would drop on social media.

"Let's consider the bitter experiences some innocent people in life face. Why should some humans go through this, if indeed God never forgets his creations?"

I quickly dropped the post and left the internet to prepare for work, with the hope of checking comments after work. Soon, I was ready for work, set to take up the journey to my workplace.

As usual, I got to the junction where I'd board a vehicle, I waited patiently but found none. I decided to walk down the spot where taxis park to board passengers.

On arrival, there were only two empty taxis. I hopped into one and sat comfortably. Soon, another passenger joined and the taxi kicked off. The sound of the music buzzing in the car helped ease my stress.

"Life is one-sided.
It faces you only;
Choose to live for you.
No man has the right to choose for you."

I enjoyed the vibe as I moved my head to its rhythm.

Soon, two other passengers joined. They were both female. I observed how the driver resisted male passengers. I didn't consider it as something to worry about hence I kept flowing with the song on play. Getting to my destination was my only business at that point.

The journey continued and everything went on normally, but something appeared fishy. The ride was getting longer than usual yet everyone appeared unperturbed.

At a point in the journey, the driver requested our phones. Like hypnotized robots, we handed them without questions. It seemed like we were under a strong influence.

It soon became obvious that we were far away from the town. The day gradually gave way for dusk. We had passed through areas that I had never encountered. We had journeyed through a long distance and I needed no soothsayer to tell me that.

The clouds became darker. Eventually, the car came to a halt and the driver instructed us to alight. We did as asked.

He led the way like a shepherd leading his flock to the slaughter and we followed.

With a headlamp on his head, we walked through a thick forest following his direction.

"Could this be walking through the valley of the shadow of

death?"

I observed the path we took through the forest, that it appeared man-made. The other two ladies and I had no idea where we were going. We just followed on without clue yet calmly.

After walking quite a long distance, I started hearing some indistinct voices. Apparently, it was a different language.

"Where are we?" I summoned a strange courage to ask.

"You, you get the mind to talk?" He replied fiercely.

In no time, others started feeling uncomfortable too. It was as though our mouths were loosened.

"Where are we?" The other two ladies screamed with their eyes hovering all around.

We were literally in a wonder land.

"E be like the charm don comot for yah face (it looks like the spell has lost its effect on you all)". He spoke in pidgin, trying to calculate the hours from when he took us to that time.

Out of the blue, three hefty men with ammunition appeared. We were asked to go with them, or we'll be forced.

"What is happening?" I asked in a shaky voice.

The other ladies were already lamenting in tears.

"Wetin dey happen be say, as you dey so, we don kidnap you (what happened is that you have been kidnapped)." The driver

said sarcastically.

"Not just kidnapped, but kidnapped for life." One of the hefty men dropped the bombshell.

"What?!" The three of us chorused. Reality struck us. "How do we get out of this?

What would become of us?"

"Oya, move!" The man said sharply.

We had no choice but to obey, moving with great fright.

6

The Ordeal

We got to a point. I saw some other ladies in bad shape and my heart broke in two. Why would this wickedness befall anyone? Being deprived of freedom and life!

A pillar of fire was made to serve as light at night. Each lady was kept in a separate room made of bamboo. The apartments were so small for two persons to share a room. The structure and size could be compared best to a prison.

"Ai," One of the men with us signalled a man at the other end.
"Wowe," responded one of them.

He went closer to communicate with him, evidently informing him about us: how we ended up being victims. I couldn't understand their language, but he kept pointing towards our direction.

Soon, we were signalled to draw closer. We did, together with

the men with us, the two hefty men and the driver. The driver discussed with the man in an unknown language. At some point, they laughed hysterically. One could fathom that the man was saluting his smartness and capability.

He handed a bundle of money to the driver, which he took and walked away with a spark of satisfaction.

I and the two ladies were directed to our apartment. We had stopped crying and obviously had decided to accept fate, since it appeared that is what was left for us.

We walked into our apartment. The door was made of bamboo, so it was just merely shut. The apartments were in sections, and each section was made of 7 rooms. The building was built closely and there were three sections which made it 21 rooms altogether.

As directed, I entered my apartment. The man uttered some words in an unknown language before going away and I nodded even though I didn't understanding anything. I had no better option.

As he left, I sat down on the floor, stressed out. The tiredness from the whole journey overwhelmed me. I leaned my back on the wall, trying to get over the migraine I was feeling. I have been out of this life. I wasn't ready to lament, think or display dissatisfaction with the cruelty of men.

While I was still trying to gain strength, the man who led me brought in a portion of food. He dropped it on the floor and went his way. Being so famished, I began to eat like a starving lioness.

I ate like my life depended on it.

"Yeee!" I heard a sharp voice.

The voice came from the other room. It was an agony of labour, a mother was being delivered. She sounded like she was struggling but few minutes later, I heard the voice of a crying newborn.

"What is happening here? Could it be that women gave birth here?" I reasoned anxiously.

I turned about to see a young man standing right in front of me, I had not seen him since I came.

"Who are you?" I asked him.

He spoke no words, dropped a cup containing some content and left. I looked into it and saw that it was water.

Being thirsty, I hurriedly drank the water, and that was it, I slept off.

The next morning, I heard voices in a slightly conscious state. I rubbed my face and sat up. Flashes of what happened yesterday came, and reality dawned on me once again. I had been kidnapped!

"Why would I fall victim to this? Why should this happen to me, why me?!" I shouted fiercely.

"It is clear and true that men are evil, they are inhumane. Life is crazy and hopeless. The world has been thrown into a mess and now, I have become a miserable victim.

God himself does not care about the world he created. I hear the religious people say, "He never sleeps nor slumbers" but it

is one of the greatest lies. What is he doing right now? Ehnnn? Watching movies, right?"

Soon, it occurred to me that I had heard the voice of an expectant mother the previous night. My curiosity awoke.

"What is going on here?!" I screamed at the top of my voice.

My scream drew the attention of two of the men. They both rushed in and stood at my 'prison' door.

They looked at me with contempt. One of them was the one who brought food to me and the other was the one who brought the water.

"You'd better keep shut!" The one who brought food to me said. His voice was like that of a fierce warrior.

"Kama, e never know anything, you know say e be newcomer?" The one who brought water said calmly.

I wondered if he was ever part of the culprits here. His countenance was never like that of the rest of the criminals. He looked calm.

Kama hissed and left. The other one attempted to draw closer to me. Making a move to have a conversation.

"What is your name?" He asked.

"Why does he want to know? Is he not meant to face his business? My name for what?"

7

The Conversation

"What for?" I queried. I had noticed he spoke English fluently, unlike the others.

"Just to know you." He said with a smile.

There was something unusual about him that I couldn't figure out.

"My name is Sharon," I reluctantly responded.

"Oh wow! What a nice name, it's been a long time since I heard a Biblical name here, " he replied.

"By the way, I'm Seka," he added.

I managed to force a smile even though the mention of the 'Bible' pissed me. Oh! I see, he gets to know every one of the new people there. Maybe he was on an assignment there. But his warm aura said more.

"Uhmm… just to inform you about how this place functions," he said coldly, his countenance failing him.

I stretched my ears in anticipation to hear what manner of mess I was in.

"Ok?"

"Just as you must already have known, misfortuned people are abducted and brought down here…."

The word 'misfortuned' echoed in my ears. He was right, I was indeed misfortuned. I felt bitter, but I listened keenly as he continued.

"So, ladies and women are here to reproduce babies for the desperate men who require them for rituals. The infertile ones are used directly for the rituals in another category."

As I listened to the most fearful news of my life, I exclaimed, "My God!"

I wailed with the same name I despised. The neurons in my brain tried to do some analysis. My mental balance shook…I knew I was done for.

My life had been a great mishap. To me, life was not worth living.

"I am a misfortuned being, right? Yes, I have accepted. They say it's fate but I call it a waste, for why would a supreme being bring misfortune on the ones he created?"

I spoke steadily, nodding my head in affirmation, trying to pull through the tears swelling up.

"But I think life was just unfair to you," he cut in sympathetically.

"Yes, life has been unfair. But I wonder why the one who gave

it would choose to make it that way. Uhh? They said He is in control of everything and at the same time good. So, what is he doing right now watching people suffer?
God is wicked!"

At that utterance, he stared at me.

"Look, God is not wicked. Every evil manipulation came from the devil. It is never from God. He is good and just, just as we've always known. Let's just say, life happens." He said every word confidently.

"Really?! Life happens?
Who made it happen?
Is he, not the one?" I replied, provoked by his statement.

"Well, if you ask me, I would say the fault is not with God but with the humans he created. It is men who are wicked. That's why when God saw how great the iniquities of men was, he regretted making man. Can you see that the fault is on us?" Seka replied, defending his notion.

I knew the common story of how grievous the sins of men was that made God destroy them with a flood. Seka's words came like a revealer. For the first time, my belief was challenged, I had always viewed God as the one to blame.

"Men were indeed wicked, but why would a good God let the innocent suffer?" I asked rhetorically. I needed an answer to solve the puzzle that'll support my philosophy 'love does not exist.'

"The earth has been cursed, that's why the innocent suffer. It was as a result of men's atrocities. This exposed man to the disaster the enemy had to bring," Seka responded.

"It's enough!" I screamed aloud.

"If you had an idea of what I have gone through, you will agree with me that God has never been good to me. The fallacy of love killed me. Love does not exist." I said with utmost bitterness.

"Oh wow! Life throws many stones at us, I also never desired to be here…"

"Wait!" I cut in.

"Who are you? Are you not one of them? Were you hired or what? I asked desperately, spewing the questions without a pause.

"Hmm…it's a long story." Seka heaved a sigh that expressed the deepness of his intended explanation.

It was evident that we both had a long story to tell, but what baffled me was how I became open-minded to speak with him.

Our short and critical discussion challenged me, I had never had a long talk with someone that way.

It was unusual!

8

Could There Be Love?

"It was never my intention to be here. Life happened and I found myself here…

I am from a very wealthy home. My father was a budding politician who diligently aimed for political success. My father desired to be known." He began.

"Hmm," I responded sharply.

"Together with my mum, we all lived happily and comfortably. My mum is a Nurse, so dedicated to her work. She is also versatile and…."

"Wait! Your mum is still alive?" I asked curiously.

"Yes, hopefully, she should be, but I am unaware of what might have happened to her since I was taken from her."

"I see! So, how were you taken from her?" I questioned.

"My father had a lot of political friends and acquaintances then but the closest of them was Mr. Acheme. They partnered in many projects which mostly ended in success, until a terrible event occurred which turned their friendship upside down." He continued.

"Hmm…what happened?" I asked.

"They carried out a particular project which did not turn out well, and Mr Acheme contributed the biggest amount, seventy of hundred percent.

He was dissatisfied with the fact that the project was not successful hence he started threatening my dad. He claimed that all the projects they were always involved in were mostly successful but the one he took upon himself (contributed greatly) was not. 20 million was a huge amount of money." Seka narrated pitifully.

"Wow! What did the situation result into?" I asked further.

"We later discovered that Acheme had a skeleton in his cupboard. He was diabolic, he killed my dad mysteriously. Ahh…my dad's death was such a painful one."

"Ah, humans can be so wicked, I'm sorry about that," I said, with an unusual sympathy.

"How did you get here still?" I asked with much curiosity.

"He came for me too…" He responded.

"Are you serious? After he did all of that?" I lamented angrily and bitterly. Wishing to fight for justice.

"After my secondary school, I was helping my mum out, at home as I awaited my higher studies. My mum was always busy. Sometimes she does not return home on time. One of those days, this man came to our house with hefty and rigidly built men to abduct me. That was the end, here I found myself. It's almost three years now." He said.

"What?" I opened my mouth agape. I had never heard of such cruelty. The degree of wickedness was alarming.

"It was until I got here that I found out about what he was secretly involved in. Aside politics, he sold babies to desperate politicians like him. As you can see, he put young men in charge which I unfortunately I'm part of. But I do not involve in having sexual intercourse with the women because my conscience would not allow me. The other men do that." He concluded.

"What a pity!" I said, shaking my head.

I had always believed my experience was the worst any man could have, but Seka's story proved me wrong. It was so tragic… I could imagine what he must have gone through and going through in serving cruelty unwillingly.

Seka smiled, like he was expressing his acceptance of fate.

"And what about yours?" He threw at me.

"Hmm! My story…"

I heaved a sigh. Seka was the first I would be sharing my past

with.

"My hopes were shattered by those who proclaimed they love me. Love does not exist!" I said and chuckled a little.

I was going to share my strong belief about humans and life.

"Do you think so?" He interrupted.

"What? Oh, you mean my statement that love does not exist? Of course, yes, I know and strongly believe that love does not exist." I replied confidently.

"Can you go on with your story?" He responded with so much interest.

"Oh yes!"

I began my story. How it all went. Narrating my story to Seka brought alive fresh memories which made me pour out my emotions uncontrollably.

I couldn't hold the tears back, they flowed freely like a fountain of water.

He watched me intently. I couldn't comprehend his facial expression, until he smiled at me.

"There surely is love!" He broke the silence.

"After all I have said?" I replied in shock.

"That paedophile who harassed you does not know what love

is. The men you sold yourself to do not love you. Those friends who supported you do not love you. All you have encountered can never prove love to you." He said emphatically.

"Does that mean Love does not mean all of that? Like they were all lying to me?" I asked, like a child who just discovered something new.

"Love supersedes men. God is love. He who knows God loves genuinely. The world is where it is today because men do not regard God. They do not love him! They do not fear him!" He said, stressing his last two statements

Strangely, every word he said made sense to me. I felt fooled by those who wove my past into the lie it turned out to be, I felt like I was never loved.

"You mean I was never loved?"

"No, you were and are still loved." He replied with a compassionate look.

"You have always been loved by your Father." He added.

"Which Father?

I know my biological father loved me. He was nothing like the new dad I later had, but he had passed on. His death was the first bitter pill life gave me." I said, unsure of what he meant.

His lips parted slightly revealing his beautiful diastema, as he gave a sincere smile.

"Which father are you talking about?" I asked.

9

On His Palms

I looked at him intently, wishing I could get the words out of his mouth. Who cares about me when those I trusted disappointed and failed me?"

"Your Father, the one who created you does." He said with an allayed seriousness.

I chuckled ridiculously.

"Are you serious? Do you mean God? Oh I see." I said, expressing disinterest in anything else he had to say.

"Can I make a short illustration?" He asked calmly.

"Go ahead," I responded reluctantly.

"A man has many sons from different wives. Every one of them becomes an adult and goes in search for greener pastures. Meanwhile, the man did not have the opportunity to see his children regularly before they scattered abroad. But, he knew

all their names, and he inscribed it on the walls of his special room so, whenever they come home, he'll check to verify 'who was who'. He would check his wall to find the name(s), if he found it, he'll let the individual in. Now, that is about a man who does not know his sons physically but by names." He illustrated.

"Now, can you create a valuable entity after your image and dump it? If you would, what then is the need of creating it?" He asked.

"I would not do so, I cannot create a thing and dump it away, that would just make my effort futile." I said, finding his question relatable. I hated misplacing valuable things.

"Now, the first story I narrated to you does not straightly explain how God is to you. God sees, he is not ignorant and he does not turn back. But just to remind you that if you feel he does that, he knows your name, he has it in a special place.

Your name is graven on the palm of his hands and your walls are continually before him." He ended.

I reasoned with those words. God knew my name and every piece of information about me. Emphatically, he knew me truly? His last statement sounded familiar.

Then I recalled where the similarity sprung from. The content of the comment on my post replayed in my mind.

"Can a woman forget her sucking child…?" I quoted, trying to remember the words vividly.

"That she should forget the son of her womb, yea, even these

may forget, I will not forget thee. Behold your name is graven on the palm of my hands and your walls are continually before me." He completed the quote to my surprise.

"Oh, you know the Bible so well?" I asked, blown away by his ability to say what I once encountered perfectly.

"That's Isaiah 49:15-16, I'm a Christian. My name is Victor," he replied.

"And you are bearing Seka here?"

"My name was changed when I got here." He responded, displaying a countenance that showed he didn't want to talk about it.

"Well, I think I prefer your real name to Seka," I said. Just then, it dawned on me what the actual meaning of Seka was. How on earth would someone name another something that denotes wickedness?" I asked rhetorically.

"Why would they give you such a name?"

"See, it's nothing to worry about. When they discovered I had no heart to commit evil with them, they imposed that name on me and informed our boss about it. And that was how it became my name." He explained.

"But I do not believe that is your name, why did you accept it? When I asked you, you should have said your real name." I challenged him.

"Hmm…it's fine. I do not believe it either, but what can I do?. Can we go back to our pending discussion?"

"Yes! Yes! But I would be calling you Victor, okay?" I said jokingly. I picked a rare and unusual interest in his name.

"Okay, fine," he replied.

"Now, God knows your name, He knows you and He…" Victor continued, but was interrupted by a call from one of the men.

"Seka! Waka come here now!" He ordered.

"Bye! We shall continue some other time." I said.
As he left, I resolved to think about all he said.

10

The Light

I felt my heart strangely unsteady while I was brooding over what Victor (Seka) discussed with me. I found it unbelievable that God knew my name, of course, He is the omnipresent who knew all things, but…

If He knew me, what was He thinking about me? What were His thoughts towards me? If He knew my name and every piece of information about me, why didn't He offer a helping hand when I needed it? Did He really care about me?

I knew I messed up too, I went all around with the young guys who were only interested in my body. Well, was it my fault? No! My aunt didn't care about me, she treated me with so much hate which made me lose my self-esteem. And yes, I wanted to feel loved, I believed those men and betraying friends I had loved me.

The God who knew me watched me go through all that and they call Him good? Hell no! He has forgotten me, I am not

counted as one of his creations.

My mind kept ruminating. It felt like there was something I was missing. Somehow, I felt Victor's words would unravel the puzzle. His words came with an unusual force, like a sword piercing through my soul. I patiently anticipated our next meeting.

Bumbo

"Seka!" Bumbo called out.

"I dey come (I am coming)." Seka (Victor) replied from the bush close to the last hut. After pulling out the last raffia plant, he dusted his body and went to meet Bumbo.

"Guy, how far, wetin they sup? Why you dey meet that new girl with slender stature and a full beautiful lips in the dark hut?" He queried.

"Uhmm…nothing much, just a chat." Victor replied.

"Ehen ehen, well I hope you know say na just 17 days she get before we get her to do the main thing she was brought here to do?" Bumbo added.

"I know! E don do." Seka replied him. With that, he walked away.

Victor

"Like seriously, was I preaching to her?" He asked rhetorically shaking his head.

"Since I was brought here, I hadn't thought so much about God. I think this is where I got it wrong. I never offered my prayers. I did not remember God in my wilderness like David did," he said soberly reflecting on how he has lived since he was brought to that evil camp, and even before.

Victor loved Jesus. He was so committed in the school's fellowship that he was made the evangelism coordinator. His falling however, began after he graduated. Most of his Christian friends relocated out of the town. He got trapped in pornography after that first unintentional click.

He had wrapped himself in guilt many times. The devil used that opportunity to turn him away from God until he encountered a powerful post on a Christian blog.

He had read and absorbed those words like his life depended on it. He realised where he fell, repented and found forgiveness. It was on the day after his reconciliation with God that he was abducted. That event shook his spiritual stance.

It happened after a Bible study at the local church he attended. He wore his mini-bag which contained his Bible and jotter. That was the only possession he had with him when he was taken.

Reminiscing on everything, he went to his hut and brought out his Bible. The sight of it stroke a big emotion that made him shed tears. His hands trembled as he picked it up.

Flipping through the pages of the Bible, he searched for Jeremiah 31:3. "The LORD hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee."

He absorbed those words as he saw light. "I have been loved with an everlasting love. Jesus still loves me," he said with a feeling of comfort.

He recalled a familiar passage of the Bible: "You are meant to shine light in the dark."

"What light? Am I really shining?
Dear Father, help me. Would I be free at last? Would I get to leave this place?" He asked sorrowfully.

"Keep on reading my words, you have to save her soul from the captivity of the devil. That is where your freedom lies." He felt those words deeply impressed in his spirit. This must be the Holy Spirit.

"So, I am here for a purpose? But, how do I achieve it? I need strength." He said under his breath.

"Read My Word and pray!" He heard. Now, he knew the Lord was ready to use him, God has finally opened up!

11

Zion's Story

Victor waited on God all through the night, it was time to ask God for direction, he gave himself diligently to prayer. While he was going through the Bible, the Lord directed him to Isaiah 60:1-2.

"Arise and shine, for your light has come and the glory of the Lord is risen upon you. Behold, darkness shall cover the earth and thick darkness over the people but the Lord shall arise and his glory will be seen upon thee." He picked the word 'light' and focused his prayer on it.

"I am made to shine. The Lord has called me for a purpose here, I will shine." He kept confessing, till he slept off. He was ready to witness more of God to Sharon and others as God wills.

* * *

Sharon

It was a new day.

I sat up from where I had slept. I had adapted to my new life. Nothing much to do, I sat alone and began to reflect, pulling my head calm. I so much expected Victor to come around but didn't understand why.

After a while, Victor came, my spirit was lifted. I now saw him as someone I could share my burdens with.

"Sharon, you are likened to Zion." He began.

"Zion? Who is Zion?" I asked.

"Yes, Zion represents the people of God whom God delight in, but then some circumstances came up and they concluded that God has forgotten and forsaken them." He continued.

"That's in the Bible, right? Then what happened?" I asked with much interest.

"Just like those circumstances that messed you up. Your dreams shattered, sense of living gone. All you just wanted was to survive, that's all. You have come to the conclusion that you were never loved and can never be loved. But I think Zion went through something similar to yours."

I stretched my ears forth. Hearing that someone went through what is similar to mine awoke me.

"Yes, go on."

"You see, we are humans and we go through some ordeals that we are unable to control, some surround our birth, others as we are growing up. And that has made us believe in the gloomy side of life, never believing that the good is meant for us. Many choose to let their lives be defined by what they've gone through. But no, God has a bright plan for everyone's future." Victor continued.

I heaved a sigh.

"When Zion was saying that, her Maker interrupted and answered her. An answer that could challenge anyone. The verse we said yesterday was the answer." He said.

"Can a woman forget her sucking child…?" I quoted.

He completed it and made some elaborate explanations on the passage which sent strong chords of conviction to my soul. He spoke with passion more than I have ever known.

"And yes, Jeremiah 29:11 tells us about what God is thinking of us". He went further.

"What God has in mind for me?" I said, pointing to my chest.

"Yes, Jeremiah 29:11 (KJV) For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end." He quoted.

"Hun, hun." I said calmly.

"You see, God has great plans for us even though life shows us the other side. Tribulations are just the devil's tool to make men never hope in God. Regardless of what happened, God still has beautiful thoughts for you but the enemy does not want you to know them and align."

"The enemy, the devil you mean?" I asked.

"Yes, the constant enemy of mankind is the devil, he never wants any man to fulfil destiny. He caused the fall of man from the beginning but he has been defeated."

"Oh! He has been defeated? But why does he still have the power to trouble mankind?" I threw the question I was able to come up with from his statement.

"Yes, he has been defeated on the cross but only those who know the cross shall be free from him." He explained.

"Oh, I see the reason a man needs to be born again and accept the life of Christ." I said almost unconsciously, even though becoming a Faith person was the least I ever bargained for.

"Yes, for we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. We have victory." He continued more convincingly.

"Hmm…" I heaved silently.

"Yes," he responded sharply.

"But do you think I can have this victory? Am I worthy to know

the cross?" I asked.

"Hey! His love made us worth it, Sharon. Let's see Rom. 8: 35." He said.

Just then, I discovered he has been with a Bible. He opened it and gave it to me to read.

"Romans 8:35 (KJV) Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?" I read aloud.

"Very good, I want you to go through it again, meditate on it, digest and absorb it till it get rooted in your Spirit." He said with a coach's approach.

I cast my eyes at the verse again with more interest.

"Holy Spirit, open the eyes of her understanding." Victor muttered.

I focused on it as instructed, tuning my heart to proper meditation.

"What does this mean?"

"I am ready to behold the light of these words. What do they mean?"

Just then! My heart became flooded.

I began to see an interpretation I had never been able to come up with in my mind.

I saw the Light…

12

True Love

The verse became real to me, it came alive. It found its root in my heart. Unworthiness played in my head while the feeling of acceptance flooded my heart.

"…shall tribulation?"

It echoed in my heart. This significantly means my tribulation is insignificant in the ocean of his love for me.

It occurred to me that whatever happened in my life never stopped His love for me. I can imagine the cords of love binding us together and even when other things tried to indulge, the cord was just so strong to allow separation.

"Is that how strong it is?" I asked with a shaky voice, remorsefully.

"Yes, it is. That is how strong His love is. Sharon, I just want to let you know that nothing, absolutely nothing can ever separate you from the love of Christ." He furthered.

"Like, I am still loved, even when I couldn't feel it?"

I asked with soft sobs this time. Comprehending was just impossible, how can that be? Jesus knows me when I don't know him? I'm a sinner."

"Sharon, you do not need to understand now but the best you can do is to believe. For we are saved through Faith, not by works." He retorted persuasively.

"My heart believes, I can sense his love in there. But my head don't seem to comprehend…." I said.

"Then it is okay that your heart believes. Sharon, leave the dark shade of guilt and condemnation and accept the light of his love and acceptance." He cut in.

"There has to be a translation, if I must indeed leave that place of guilt and hate web to be in the place of love and acceptance then there had to be a translation."

"Yes, there has been a translation, you just have to walk in the reality." He replied.

"And you know this because…?" I asked curiously.

Because Colossians 1:13 & 14 says, "For he has delivered us from the power of darkness and translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son in whom we have redemption through his blood even the forgiveness of our sins." He quoted.

"I have been delivered even now?" I asked with my face beaming

with unexplainable hope.

"Yes, on the cross long ago before you came. And you are not just delivered but secured into a realm of life and freedom. You just need faith to walk in this reality." He answered with clarity.

"Faith, just to believe?" I asked sharply.

"Yes, for it is written that whosoever believes in his heart and confesses with his mouth that Jesus Christ is the Lord shall be saved." He replied emphatically.

"Oh yes, I believe that Jesus is the Lord and I confess with my mouth…Jesus save me!" I exclaimed with total submission. I couldn't hide my sincerity, I needed true love. Tears flowed down my cheeks.

"Thank you Jesus! Thank you Jesus! Thank you Jesus…" Victor kept saying and also waving his hands in the air.

I had never felt that way before, my heart was suddenly at peace. It then occurred to me that I didn't know Love, what I experienced was men's cruel show of love in real sense of wickedness and selfishness.

I allowed the tears to flow…they needed to now. Oh, how I wished I knew this when I was deserted. How I wish I knew this man who loved me and made me free in real sense. I wished I had known him then, I would not have sold myself out cheaply because of low-self esteem and lack.

I had always known the fellowship in secondary school then

but I never gave attention to it. And yes, I remembered the last time some witnesses came to me, telling me about the Love of Christ. All they said that day began to make sense.

"Now, I accept that Love truly exists." I said, smiling like a child who just got a gift.

"Yes, for God is Love," he said, his face shinning with true satisfaction and joy.

"God is Love…." I repeated, recalling the words of those preachers.

"Yes, He is."

"Can I just see it in the Bible?" I asked with full enthusiasm. I was eager to see those words myself.

"Ok, just some seconds…" He said, flipping the pages of a particular section. He must have been going through the Bible per se.

"Yes, here we go: 1 John 4:8 (KJV) He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love." He opened, quoted and handed the bible over to me.

"I see, those people never knew God, that is why they sapped life out of me." I said in confirmation.

"Yes…he who knows God will love his neighbour in truth (deed)." He answered.

"Uhmm….can I ask you a favour?"

"Go on."

"Can I study your Bible? Probably just this 1 John?"
"Oh yes, you are free!"

"Thank you very much," I said.

"You're welcome. Let us pray!" He requested.

I closed my eyes and bowed.

13

Not Forsaken

Since Victor gave me his Bible, I couldn't get my eyes and attention off it. I studied like a child preparing for an important examination. Though, I didn't understand some verses well, but the writings were just so beautiful.

I saw the truth in God's word right there, it broke me and left me in tears severally. The tears were for two reasons: seeing how ignorant I had been and the joy of coming to behold the Word of Life. Words which were not just letters put together, but Spirit and life.

I read about the nature of God's Love, the place of God's children, grace and truth in all areas.

As I studied, I came across a passage; 1 John 3:1 (KJV) "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not."

"I am God's own child, because of what Christ did for me on

the cross. This is the love Christ chose to bestow upon me even though I wasn't worth it. I am not defined according to what I have gone through."

I began to see myself through the lens of His word.

Scales fell off my eyes as I beheld who I was in Christ while reading through Isaiah 62. A verse said, "I am a crown of glory and a royal diadem in his hands." I realised how much I meant to Him.

As I ruminated over it, I encountered another verse that appeared to be specifically written for me. My heart leapt in awe. I couldn't contain the joy from the fountain of life. Tears streamed down and the Holy Spirit took over: Isaiah 62:4 (KJV), "Thou shalt no more be termed Forsaken; neither shall thy land any more be termed Desolate: but thou shalt be called Hephzi-bah, and thy land Beulah: for the LORD delighteth in thee, and thy land shall be married."

"I am no longer termed Forsaken, God knows and loves me. He delights in me, therefore I am married to him. Married to him on the Cross, meshed together with him. I am an entity he is intentional and mindful about. Oh, how great is his Love!" I exclaimed.

The Word became a voice that kept piercing my spirit. I was loved! I could testify it was the Holy Spirit taking over, my soul was convinced.

I read down, till I got to the last verse which said that I am the redeemed of the Lord, Sought out, a city not forsaken. I have been sought out from the wilderness and placed on a treasured

place in Christ.

"Right from your mother's womb, your God has anointed you for greatness. God has chosen you above all storms, you are Sought Out!" Those words were strongly impressed within my Spirit. It must be from the Holy Spirit who has been guiding me to see the truth. The truth that can never be found anywhere else.

Above every circumstance that surrounded my life, I had been sought out. Joy from the Holy Ghost sprung up from within me. As I smiled and shed tears at the same time, a song burst into my mouth. A common song sung back then in our children church.

"Yes, Jesus loves me.
Yes, Jesus loves me.
Yes, Jesus loves me.
The Bible tells me so."

I meant every word in the lyrics, as I sang like an infant with a better understanding.

While doing that, Victor came in. He smiled and joined me, sitting on the floor. After singing, he talked more about the Love of Christ to cheer me on. He narrated the Good Shepherd story, the man who lost a sheep out of the hundredfold. How he did not hesitate to look for the lost one leaving the rest behind.

I was amazed about how he didn't just continue his journey and overlook that lost she.

"Why didn't he let go of the one sheep and focus on the 99?" I asked curiously.

"He didn't, because he cherished every one of the sheep." He replied.

"Did he eventually find it?" I asked mesmerized.

"Yes, he did after much effort, he risked his life, climbed mountains, lightened up every shadow." He said

"Oh, wow. What love!"

"That is exactly how Jesus loves you. Now, you have been found by him." Victor said even though he knew Sharon found Christ in her darkest season. She found light in the dark.

"Aww! I'm blessed to be loved by him. He looked beyond my worthlessness and made me his prized possession."

"Yes, that's who you are. You are priceless in his sight, His Beloved."

I nodded in affirmation.

"So, I have a song to teach you." He said with a brightened face."

"Yea, I'm willing to learn," I answered cheerfully.

"Oh, the overwhelming, never-ending, reckless love of God.
Oh, it chases me down, fights till I'm found, leaves the ninety-nine.
I couldn't earn it, I don't deserve it.
Still, you gave yourself away.
Oh, the overwhelming, never-ending, reckless love of God!"

He sang beautifully.

My heart connected with the message of the song. Boom! I keyed into it and we both sang together in uniform.

With his baritone and my lovely soprano, we rocked the song. After a while, he left me to sing the chorus alone having sung the solo. Graciously, I began to see myself in the message of the song. I am the lost sheep and Jesus is the good Shepherd who found me! I wrapped in the warm arms of his liquid love.

* * *

Victor watched Sharon sing heartily. She found splendour and came to behold the Light in her dark. He wondered if she would ever be free and serve Christ in Freedom.

Will she ever be free?

14

The Unbelievable

Victor

Brooding on what God had told him about how the salvation of Sharon was connected to his freedom, he asked rather unconsciously: "How can this be possible?"

"For my thoughts are not your thoughts neither are my ways your ways. For as the heavens are higher than the earth so are my thoughts than your thoughts and my ways than your ways. Worry not, keep trusting." The words of that verse rang in his heart, and the Holy Spirit ministered to his inner man.

"God, you are the Most High. There is nothing you cannot do, I believe." Victor muttered in total submission and faith.

Later in the day, as he stepped out for fresh air, he saw his colleagues engrossed in a conversation. They were seated under the only tree in the environment. He drew near to know what they were talking about.

"Guys, what's up?" He interrupted their discussion.

"Na boss o, e go come next tomorrow." Lango replied him.

"Mr. Acheme dey come?" He asked again.

The information made him shiver. How would he face the same man who has made life miserable for him and his mother? That would be the first time he'll show his face since he was brought there.

"Yes o, e even shock me sef (I'm surprised as well)." Mambo said.

"Na true. You never meet oga for here. I don forget say you be newcomer (It's true, you have not met boss here. I've forgotten you're still new here)." Bumbo responded.

Sharon

I heard some indistinct voices outside my room and went closer to find out what was happening. The sounds were as that of people welcoming someone who had just arrived.

"Who could it be? Was it the wicked politician who abducted Victor? God save me." I muttered as I stretched my ears to eavesdrop the conversation from outside.

Suddenly, there was a prompt in my spirit, "Open the door, go out to see who it is."

I jerked with fear. Watching my hands touch the door, dragging it open, I stepped out not sure of what I was doing.

As I drew closer to the voices, I paused and gave myself a short pinch, to be sure I wasn't dreaming. I couldn't believe my eyes, as I hid myself behind the other hut closer to the voices. I could see everyone clearly from where I hid.

I rubbed my face with my palms to be sure my eyes weren't deceiving me.

"It's really not a dream? Is this truly real? Uncle Ahmed?" I muttered under my breath almost at once.

My feet trembled, my hands shook. He looked so different that I feared what he'll do to me on finding out I had seen him.

I still couldn't tell what was happening.

*What was he looking for here? Has he also been kidnapped?" I was terrified.

I could remember how my mother lost contact with him. We had no idea of his whereabouts. We thought he had died. We had mourned him and moved on, before my mother's death.

He drew closer, walking majestically. His appearance had changed. He looked like a man swimming in the pool of wealth.

"This is not the Uncle Ahmed I used to know," I muttered.

From the scene that played out before my eyes, it was obvious my own uncle was the perpetrator of the evil activities in that den of wickedness.

"So, this was the Mr. Acheme that Victor told me about?"

But how come? Uncle Ahmed was such an accommodating soul with an open heart. He was jovial, too. He had a special name with which he teased me back then. I loved him and found it easy to relate very well with him.

On the contrast, what I now saw was a man full of wealth, with desperation in his eyes. He sounded authoritative unlike him. His wealth was evidently conspicuous from all the expensive accessories and clothing he had on.

I took some steps further with my heart pacing speedily, leaving my hideout.

Fear gripped me!

"What on earth am I up to, what if this man becomes fiery and deals with me cruelly?" I thought.

At that point, I had gone too far to go back.

"Uncle Ahmed!" I called out boldly.

Immediately, he raised his eyes obviously surprised. He looked towards my direction, gazed at me with a display of shock on his face.

"What? Ayam alive!" He exclaimed, trembling.

That was the name he loved teasing me with then. As a young child, I called every drink I came across '5 alive'. It was from there Uncle Ahmed coined that name.

"Yes, Uncle!" I answered.

"What… wetin you dey do here? (What are you doing here)?" He asked, his voice shaking remorsefully.

"I was kidnapped!" I answered sharply, to see his reaction. I wanted to be sure my thoughts weren't wrong.

"I….I…am…sorry." He stammered.

It was true after all. Really? My uncle was the one behind all these? The politician who used women and sold babies?

"Na who kidnap my niece?!" He asked fiercely, turning towards each member one after the other

"None of us did. Just as it has been arranged, the driver who is in partnership with us brought her, together with two ladies." Victor answered grudgingly.

My heart burned within me, seeing that the lovely and accommodating Uncle I had could turn out like this. What happened? What went wrong? I heard him speaking in another language, where did he learn it from?

"Uncle Ahmed, you're behind all these?" I queried, still trying to find my foot.

"Sharon, please calm down.

I had to…" He replied defensively.

"You had to do what? Just to become rich?" I retorted, this time unafraid.

Though I was much younger then, I still remembered how Uncle Ahmed struggled to survive. He lived from hand to mouth. He was however determined and always mentioned to whoever cared to listen, that he'll make it someday. I saw that as a hope for a better tomorrow. I had no idea this was what he meant.

"Was went wrong?'

15

Freedom

I had already stayed there for ten days. Those ten days weren't totally dark moments, it was a blessing in disguise. But, seeing the man who had initiated everything in pursuit of wealth made my heart burn with anger.

"Uncle, how did you get into this?" I asked with soft sobs.

He had sent the young men away to speak with me alone.

He sat on the wooden chair beside me and gestured for me to sit on the second one.

"First, I…I…wan beg you say make you forgive me (I plead for your forgiveness)." He stammered, placing his palms together to show his apology.

"Tell me how you got into this, Uncle, please," I repeated, forcing the tears back.

"Uhmm…my aunty nko? Aunty Murewa?" He asked.

I sniffed at his attempt to dodge my question.

"Maami is dead," I uttered sharply.

"What? Aunty Murewa don die! (Aunty Murewa is dead?)" He wailed.

"Yes, it was after you left without any information that she died." I replied without blinking.

My mother's death undoubtedly hurt me, but at that moment all I wanted to know was what drove my uncle into such a cruel lifestyle.

"Ah…I know say Aunty no go dey happy in heaven with wetin I do (I know she will not be happy in heaven with what I did)," he lamented.

"Uncle Ahmed, how come?" I said, this time looking straight into his eyes.

"Na love of money push me. After I comot for our town—Iremoja, where I dey hustle, I meet one big man ni. (It was love of money that pushed me into this. I came across a wealthy man after I left our town).

E tell me say I go make am if I follow am. So e carry me go place where I go learn his language and some politics, I gree. (He told me that I'll be successful if I follow him. He made me learn his language and taught me the system of politics.)

After that, e con take me enter politics and show me business. Soon, when I con enter deep, he con initiate me into ritualism. I no fit turn back again cause e don late. Some years later, he died and before he died he don take me enter oath so that I no go stop carrying the rituals..

(I became so involved in politics, so he initiated me into ritualism. After some years, he died, after making me take

an oath to keep on with the act.)" He narrated with tears and a shaky voice.

"Hmm…this is so serious but you for no gree in the first place," I said with pidgin, touched by his story.

My uncle wasn't so fluent in English.

"I know, but money enter my eyes, I bin wan make am. Suffer tire me." He replied.

"But, are you fulfilled with all this?" I asked, not knowing where my question was headed.

"Hmm…I no go lie to you, Sharon I no get peace of mind. I no dey fulfilled at all. Sometimes I just think say God for just kill me, I waited for death but e no come." He said, shaking his head pitifully.

"I get! Jesus still wants to save you, too," I said gleefully with a sudden change of mood.

"Jesus? You no say I be Muslim now?" He replied me.

"See Uncle, there is one life God wants us to live and it is the Life of Christ. You entered into all this because the world is in the power of the evil one and ein dey look for person wey go perish with am. You know say all this na the work of devil?"

"Yes, I know say na the work of the devil." He answered.

"Ehen, to escape the trap of the devil, living the life God wants

us to live dey very important. You know wetin him word say?" I asked.

"The enemy comes to steal, to kill and to destroy but I have come that ye may have life and have it more abundantly." I quoted God's word emphatically.

"Are you the "I"? Abi, who come give eternal life when I suppose go hell as the sinner wey I be?" Uncle Ahmed responded.

"Exactly, person don give you eternal life, you just need to accept am." I answered.

"Me? Who be that person sef?" He asked.

"It is Jesus, the Son of God who came to die for you on the cross," I read those lines out from my heart.

"For me, I think say na only all those Christian people. How e con be say na me?" He asked ignorantly appearing sincere.

"Na every body wey believe in Jesus, na in dey saved." I replied him convincingly.

"Ah…me I no deserve am o. You see Sharon, I go stop all these shady life I am involved in. I am ready to face the consequence. I no fit live this life again not even when I don see you here. I no fit," he lamented.

"Hmm…which consequence are you talking about?" I asked him.

"Boss tell me say, if I stop all these, police go arrest me no matter how I hide." He replied looking determined.

"So, are you ready to do this?"

"Yes, I am." He said.

"This life I don dey live all through these years has been in regret, as I see you here na the greatest regret. I no even know how you get mind to talk to me like this," he explained.

I watched him with so much emotion. "So Uncle Ahmed will finally end his life in prison after wasting his years all through?

Will God still have mercy?"

"I am ready now, every of the guys I brought here and every kidnapped woman will be released. Enough is enough! Las las, I go face the penalty." He said as he stood up ready to take action.

I looked at him intently.

"Dear God, so I would be free? I pray Uncle finds you too even in prison." I prayed silently.

"Yes, he will. My mercy stands. And as for you, you shall fulfill purpose." The Spirit whispered to me.

"Thank you, Jesus. Thank you!" I muttered joyfully.

16

Renewed Hope

Seeing each captive of my uncle regain their freedom brought me so much joy, even though I couldn't tell what Uncle Ahmed's fate would be. He had taken it upon himself to see everyone in that camp of doom safely back to their habitat, whatever it may cost him. The thoughts of seeing Victor reuniting with his mother gladdened my heart. Uncle Ahmed granted my request to go with him and witness his reunion with his mother.

It was a very long journey and exhausting ride from the camp to town.

At the junction, the bus stopped for everyone to alight and find their way home. We all parted ways; the young men, the ladies and the women. I was specially dropped together with Victor at his junction, as instructed by Uncle Ahmed. For security reasons, he didn't join in the journey. I discouraged him from the idea until he was ready to surrender to the police.

The street boomed with jubilation, as every corner beeped with the news of Victor's return. Some stared at him like they've

seen a ghost it, others called out his name, however, Victor just walked quietly to his destination.

I watched intently with feelings of pity and happiness as Victor's mother ran out from the house like an insane mother who had just seen her kidnapped only child. Before we could go further, she pounced on her long lost son like a wounded lioness and held him in a hearty embrace.

She had cried, prayed, reported to the police and hoped for the return of her son since the past four years.

"Thank you Jesus, Thank you, Jesus!
Thank you.
Thank you, Lord.
Thank you, Lord.
Thank you, Lord for everything you have done." She sang as she rolled on the floor.

Victor on the other hand couldn't stop the tears as he muttered praises under breath. Reuniting with his mother, Mrs Akinola meant everything to him. Indeed, God is good.

I was grateful as well. Grateful that I went through the dark that brought light to me. Grateful that I found love in the most unlikely place. The rays of the light of his love beckoned upon me right in my cave. While I was bound, my soul was loosened from the eternal damnation that ripped me off. I found the greatest gift.

It was just like a dream when Uncle Ahmed released us as free men. He mysteriously brought a bus to pack us out of the crooked place. He apologized and did a lot. At last, I was free

and everyone else.

After the emotional scene, Victor's mum finally settled down. I noticed her gaze on me and quickly greeted her with my knees bowing.

"Good afternoon ma."

"How are you, my dear?" She asked softly, not really like the woman we first met while coming in. She had a gentle spirit.

"I'm fine. Thank you, ma." I responded.

She turned to Victor for a clue on who I was.

"That is Sharon, one of the victims there. We later became friends and she encountered Christ," he said gleefully.

"Oh…wow!" She said sharply.

"Yea, yea," Victor said playfully to lighten everyone's mood.

We all smiled but then, Mrs. Akinola's countenance changed as she turned to her son.

"I am so sorry, please forgive me," she said, stressing the word 'so' and displaying a pleading gesture.

"Mother, it's fine. I understand." Victor said.

I watched them closely.

"It's just unusual to know that I found the Lord even in my darkest moment. I came to understand how I had left him behind, been busy pursuing the things of the world. All I just

wanted was to acquire wealth and when I lost your dad, I was pushed more. I didn't find time for you my only child, I am so sorry my son." She added.

"Mumsy, it's okay. I am glad you have realised that and walking with God," he answered.

"Hmm…during those times, I began to see my strength in Christ. It is amazing to know that he came through when I was weak. I found him in my darkest season. Though it was a trial time, it birthed a gold in me." Mrs Akinola continued.

I nodded my head, as I could relate. I smiled realising how Jesus dealt with us differently and perfectly. She found healing and the Word, she has become better, stronger and more faithful. God is good!

Moments later, Victor's church members came around too and it was a lovely and lively day all through. I met some amazing ladies who were so passionate about Christ, we talked and shared experiences. Narrating mine blew their mind away, they were amazed to see how the saving grace could come through for me.

"Wow! I'm so glad to hear this, Sharon. I believe God has a great plan for your future, that you might have never imagined," Ayo said.

"And from your story, I discovered that you were unable to further your education. Would you love to?" Kenny asked.

"Yes, I would if I see the opportunity!" I jumped at it with my

face brightened up.

"Ok, our church has an established foundation that helps the less-privileged to get education by sponsoring them." Faith explained.

"Oh, wow!"

"Yes, so you would have to register, God is so good, Victor is a witness. I believe you're going places, ma." Kenny encouraged.

"Yes, I am a witness." Victor affirmed.

"Wow! Thank you so much, I appreciate it."

"You're welcome Beloved." You can also stay in the church's free accommodation for as long as you want. Abba loves you so much and we believe your story will breathe hope into the dead and raise the Morning Star in their hearts. Blessed are you, dear." Ifeoluwa added.

The sound of accommodation made me leap for joy.

The exhortation was done in God's word, my eyes were opened to behold my true identity in Christ. I learned some gospel songs that were sensational and enriching. We worshiped heartily. I poured out myself and the Holy Spirit took control.

I spoke in other tongues and gave my heart to the one who loved me before I knew his love.

"Thank you, Jesus, Lover of my soul.

You are Love.

You are everything I need.

Thank you, Jesus." I sang with every breath I had.

I couldn't keep it to myself, I had to let it out.

....because out of my belly shall flow rivers of living waters.

17

Purpose Unfolds

Uncle Ahmed later reported himself to the police, as he had decided. He was arrested and probed by the government after thorough research. I decided to pay him a visit one day. I visited him in prison to give him the hope of the gospel. I might have had nothing to give him, but Christ was all he needed at that point, and Christ was enough.

Uncle Ahmed surrendered his life to Christ. My joy knew no bounds. I headed to my former apartment to pack some of my things to the church. I would be starting school soon, the scholarship was almost finalized, I had provided every information needed.

At my former apartment, the Holy Spirit reminded me of the two ladies who were kidnapped with me that day. He had instructed me to take their contacts, which I obeyed.

"Call them now." The Spirit ministered to me.

I took out the phone Mrs. Akinola gifted me and dialed the first contact, after typing from the paper I wrote them on.

"Hello, please, is this Kate or Janet?"
"Yea, who is this please?"
"This is Sharon, the girl kidnapped…"
"Oh, Sharon. How are you?"
"I'm fine. Can I come over?"
"Oh yes, you are free, I'll text the address to you."
"Thanks."

Janet and Kate lived together. I had seen them once since we left the camp. They were both dressed half-naked. From the address, I discovered they were living two streets after mine.

"Knock knock, who's at home?" I called out.

The door bounced open and I was ushered in to the house. Janet offered me a sit, while Kate lay on the bed. I saw humans who were desperate and frustrated. I smiled at them with deep love in my heart. Since I accepted Christ into my life, I had this feeling of loving unreservedly.

"Good evening blessed ladies," I greeted.

"Good evening and welcome," Kate responded.

I could smell the stench of cigarettes.

Janet began spraying the room, while I watched and observed.

As she finished and sat down, I started a conversation immediately.

"So sorry for what you went through…I mean the ordeal you went through in that camp," I said.

Kate chuckled at my statement.

"Hmm… Thank you, but you don't need apologize, we do not deserve it." Janet replied.

"No, you are humans and you don't deserve to be mistreated, you are worth a whole lot. I mean, you are created by God," I retorted.

"You see dear, we don't worth anything," Kate added.

It looked like the two were involved in prostitution.

"Uhmm, can you explain why you feel like that?" I asked pleadingly.

"Eh, the ones you talk don do."

Kate appeared to be the hard type.

"Uh, I'm sorry," I apologised.

"It's fine," Kate replied.

"Well, no matter what happens I want you to know that there is a better life in Christ. Like I do not know what you might have been involved in but I would love you to snatch your life from the devil's hands, because he makes condemnation and guilt to delay and terminate salvation." I said calmly.

"Snatch ourselves, ah ah, we've gone too far to be saved," Kate replied remorsefully.

"But His word says that though your sins be as red as scarlet, they shall be white as snow; though they be red as crimson, they shall be as wool." I quoted.

"We are the worst of all worsts, I do not know why God showed us mercy to be saved from the prison that we were. Sharon, we don't deserve life." Janet confessed.

"Na true she talk o," Kate added.

"You see, he gave you a second chance because there is more," I said.

"More? Like how?" Janet asked with her face brightened up.

"The 'more' you need is Jesus, in fact, he is the 'most' that can give you life. See what Joel 2:13 says, rend your hearts and not your garments. Turn to him for he is gracious and merciful; slow to anger and abounding in kindness and repent of evil," I said.

"Hmm…we still dey acceptable like this?" Kate said and heaved a sigh.

"Omo! No dey whine me jare. Me wey be prostitute." Janet retorted.

"Girls, I'm not whining you, because God no dey lie. I dey tell you say that second chance has disappointed the devil because God has an appointment for you. Please don't miss it."

"Eei, Janet no lie, are we happy as we are? No achievement, no hope. Nothing, nothing." Kate turned to her friend.

She simply shook her head staring at the floor and focusing on nothing.

Kate turned to me,

"I know that we have no excuse. It's just that hardship and peer pressure made us get involved in immoral acts. We are prostitutes of different kind, hook-ups, clubs, and a lot.

As you see us so, we are undergraduates o."

"Hmm…but involving in bad acts to survive does not make it right. Peer pressure was the motive that pushed you and not mainly hardship." I commented.

"No be lie," Janet said.

"Well, God still has beautiful plans for you and you can survive and succeed if only you yield to him. Give your lives to Christ, please. You won't regret it," I preached persuasively.

"Hmm…e no dey easy," Kate said sincerely.

"It is possible. See, believing in him will make you deny yourself. Putting off your old man, the sinful nature. But yes, it all takes a step right now."

"Just a step? Then what is it?" Kate asked.

"Surrender now, make a confession with faith in your heart. God said rend your hearts." I told them.

Without stressing much, both of them surrendered their life to Christ.

I was glad the devil had lost them. More souls to the kingdom of light.

"Beloved, you shall be a light to many, your words shall heal and overall you will fulfill purpose and I will be glorified. You are raising a generation, be prepared." Those words were impressed in my spirit.

"…Yes, my Lord." I responded.

18

Beauty for Ashes

Five years later…

"Oh wow! The plane has landed and you are on your way?" I asked.

It was Victor. He had arrived the airport and was on his way to the Royal Diadem Hall which housed the event for the launching of Jesus' Foundation.

It was just a few months after I graduated from the university. The Lord has been doing a lot of wonders on the project he gave to me, SOUGHT OUT FOUNDATION. A foundation that changes the youths' and young adults' perspective about life, drawing them close to God and enlightening their hearts to discover purpose in Christ.

It is a project that I have been carrying all along with my colleagues and friends, including Victor even though he was abroad. He went abroad to study Computer Engineering, his

mother sponsored him. Now, he has come back home to establish himself and do some other things.

He volunteered to design the brand personified logo and unique stereotype. I was glad when he informed me about the website that has been launched. Coming about the website has been an amazing and challenging journey so far.

Presently, everything and everyone was set…

Miss Tomisin lead the spontaneous songs of worship. The atmosphere became heavenly as lives were touched, and the Holy Spirit took over.

"With breath that brings the dead to life
With words that pierce the dark with life
Only by the blood that we're set free
With mercy strong to carry shame and nail it to a tree, you alone hold the power to redeem."

The song rolled on every lip in the hall, hands raised. With sincerity of heart, everyone sang. Everywhere became charged up.

It went on and on…

Till it came the time for me to speak with them. There is no definite preparation for the speech, it came from my heart. This is me relating to the youths and young teenagers, having had the experience of what it feels like to be dumped and forsaken.

I mounted the stage, wearing a lovely but captivating smile to spread the aura of the divine love.

"A special welcome to you, God's Beloved."

Before I start, can you just say this: 'I have been Sought Out'." I began.

"I have been Sought Out…!"

They responded and it gladdened my heart.

"Very good. I want you to know that that was not just a mere statement, it is a confession of the truth. Because that is what God's word says about you, that is who you are.

If you've ever felt unloved before, can I see your hands?"

Many hands went up and I continued.

"Thanks for your sincerity. Yes, at every point of time in our life, there is every tendency that we feel deserted. This is what I went through as I was growing, even to my youthful age. Sexually molested, lost my mother at a tender age, I was maltreated and lashed with harsh actions, engaged in immorality, contracted an STD, chased out and abandoned all alone. This is the story of the lady standing right in front of you." I shared heartily.

I got different expressions of surprise from the congregation, as they listened.

I continued…

"But, little did I know that all those things did not define who I was. I grew up to hate the word 'love.' Never believed that I am part of the creation God ever remembered. I mean, I went through a lot beyond what words could explain. But while I was seeing myself as forgotten and forsaken, there has been a

better and lovely definition for my life even before I was born."

"What perspective could ever describe your life if not your circumstances?" A young teenager asked.

"Ok. Humanly speaking, my circumstances and ordeal should be attached to my personality. Like who I am, an unfortunate creation with unreserved ill-luck. Right?" I responded, expecting answers..

The responses from the congregation were affirmative and I was satisfied with those responses. Was it because they believed the lies of the enemy? Of course not. But, because the truth was about to be unveiled, scales were about to fall off. I saw the Word of God about to illuminate their hearts.

"Well, I never knew my belief was wrong all along. Like, there has been a sealed word for me. There is a God who knew me even before the foundation of this world. He had me in mind for so long, before my existence. Now, why would he forget me when I got to the earth he created me to be and to fulfil his purpose?" I asked rhetorically.

I saw puzzled faces, trying to decode what they were figuring out. Thoughts were amiss.

"Not until I encountered his word in real sense for me, Isaiah 49:15&16. 'Can a woman forget her sucking child that she should have no compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, even these may forget you, I will never. Behold, I have graven your name on the palm of my hands and your walls are continually

before me.' Those words were for me," I said.

"See, life billows and storms might seem overwhelming but God is saying you are Sought Out. God has made you for a purpose from your mother's womb." I went further.

"But why do we still face some challenges we are unable to control when God means good for us?" The young girl asked again.

"This is because the world is in the power of the evil one. As we journey through life, some bad occurrences happen, some even surround our birth, like being born without a father to cater for you, and so on.

But God wants us to know what our life holds in Christ. Enough of the lies the enemy brought so far, this is time to believe God's report for your life. And walk in it, also remembering that you've got to fight to become all God wants you to be. For those who know the cross shall be made free." I said emphatically.

"Hmm…"

I heard deep sighs from everyone.

"Yes, somebody read out Jer. 29:11" I said.

"For I know the thoughts I have towards you, saith the Lord, thoughts of good and not of evil to bring you to an expected end." A young boy read out.

"So, yes, this is what God has in stock for every one of us here, plans of good. So what other lies from the enemy should you

believe?

Dear Child, you have been Sought Out and nothing, I mean absolutely nothing can ever separate you from the love of Christ.

Walk with him to know who you are.

Amen?" I concluded.

"Amen," they all said.

"I believe we were all blessed."

"Yes…yes…yes." Everyone responded gleefully.

"So, shall we pray?" I said.

Everyone closed their eyes and prayers were poured forth with voices soaring onto heaven.

As I prayed in tongues, the power of God was manifested and I felt the Holy Spirit doing works and discharging faith into the wearied hearts.

It was indeed a special moment.

And this was not the end, it was just the beginning of God's purpose for my life. The light must illuminate lives and bring sons and daughters to the Kingdom.

I am Sharon, the one who was Sought Out and made to seek out lost souls.

THE END.

Afterword

Dear Child, above all storms and billows, you have been chosen. Out of the wilderness, you have been sought out.

You were made God's own before your birth.

Right from your mother's womb, you were anointed for greatness. Those pain, shame, rejections, despair, mistakes, and unfair circumstances do not define you. You have a better definition.

You are defined by God's love. Accepted in Christ and placed in a treasured place. You have never been forsaken or forgotten. Your Maker is mindful of you, he who holds the heaven and the earth upholds your future.

Start walking the light of who you are, see yourself through the lens of God. Put aside the lies of the enemy, knowing that he has been defeated.

"And you shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free." Your liberty lies in God's Word. Read it, meditate on it, speak it, and pray it. You overcome by becoming a child of God; accepting the love of Christ.

Unsure? Unsaved? Confess to accept Jesus Christ as your

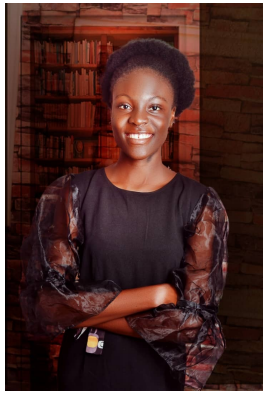
personal Lord and Saviour.

Dear God, I confess to you my sins, I'm sorry for the way I've lived. I am ready to accept the life of Christ and give myself to you. I confess that Jesus Christ is my personal Lord and Saviour. Now by Faith, I become adopted into your Family.

Help me never stop knowing you. Fill me with the Holy Spirit and have your way in my life. I surrender to you at this moment. Thank you, Lord, in Jesus' name. Amen.

Congratulations, you are always welcome.
Start or continue your walk with Him.
You are forever God's own, Hallelujah!
Be blessed.

Letter from the author.



About the Author

Moyinoluwa Sharon George is a Christian teenager. Having being saved by the gospel, she is passionate about bringing souls to Christ. And writing became one of the way God worked through her.

She is a lover of good Christian books and music. An aspiring Spoken word artist and more. Her vision is to become all God wants her to be, devotedly following God's blueprint for her life.

She is an Executive in a godly community, Teens Made For MORE. Ever willing to embrace growth and creativity in all areas. She loves learning and sharing knowledge.

She is currently an Undergraduate in the prestigious Federal University of Technology, Akure, Ondo State and based in

Akure also.

You can connect with through:
09076215355.
Email: georgesharon269@gmail.com
Facebook: Moyinoluwa George.

God bless you real good!