

# God's Vineyard Ministries

## G-ezine: Electronic Newsletter



Empowering Lives,  
Building Society

August 2012 Edition

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# 2012

## Theme: Thy Kingdom Come

### The Treasures of the Kingdom in the Parables of Jesus

by Dr Ezekiel Alawale

God has made treasures available to all citizens of His kingdom. There are great treasures in the Kingdom but to many, they remain undiscovered, a mystery, an elusive dream. Jesus said 'again, the kingdom of Heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which when a man has found it, he hides it, and for the joy of it goes and sells all that he has, and buys that field' (Matt 13:44). Discovering the hidden treasures of the kingdom serves as great motivation in our journey with God. Once discovered, you will hold nothing back in appropriating them in your life. Jesus explained to his disciples that the keys to secrets of the Kingdom are embedded in parables (Matt 13:11). The parables of Jesus are therefore crucial to anyone desirous of unlocking the hidden treasures of the kingdom.

*"Jesus spoke all these things to the crowds in parables, and He did not speak to them without a parable, so that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, 'I will open my mouth in parables; I will utter things which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world.'" (Matt 13:34-35).*

It has been said that a parable is an earthly story with a heavenly meaning. Jesus often used parables as a means of illustrating profound divine truth. The stories He told were easy to remember and to relate with and the symbols used were rich in meaning. Jesus used parables to teach practical lessons about living and pleasing God; He used parables to answer questions and to respond to those who confronted Him on different issues. In situations

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where the meaning of the parable was not obvious, He took time out to explain further to those who sought deeper understanding.

While studying the scriptures, therefore, whenever you come across the expression, 'the Kingdom of God is like'; remember that you have just found a hidden treasure that needs to be dug out. Digging out the treasures requires quality time of meditation and checking out other passages to catch the full revelation of what Jesus intended!

Let us use this opportunity to explore the hidden riches of God's kingdom.



### Editorial

This edition of G-ezine brings a range of perspective to the move of God in the God's Vineyard Ministries' (GVM) family. The articles in this edition present our writers' unique and personal insight into their experience of God's ministrations in our churches and gives a personal feel of what has been happening within the GVM family. From 'Thy Kingdom Come' theme for the last prayer conference to thought provoking articles on 'What's Wrong with Being Single', the reader will be treated to down-to-earth stories of how GVM is empowering lives within the kingdom of God and making impact in the local communities. It is our expectation that these narratives will bless and enrich your lives as you read it.

#### Editorial Team

Inyang Udosen  
Bukola Ogunkeyede  
Rinnelle Lee-Piggott  
Juliet Atune  
Lekan Fakeye  
Simeon Olowoyo  
Olaitan Adelakun  
Owajiony Frank  
Anthony Udueni

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**Publisher:**  
Gods Vineyard Ministries

## Prayer Conference

David said I was glad when they said to me let us go into the house of the Lord *Psalms 122:1*. This was our experience each day of the twenty one days of prayer that GVC family held in June. The twenty one days came and rolled by so quickly, it was indeed a time of refreshing in the presence of God.

To crown it up, a prayer conference with the theme, **'Thy Kingdom Come'** was held from 21<sup>st</sup> to 24<sup>th</sup> June. Rev. Friday Bekee, the guest

**'...the flow of God's power in my direction is controlled by my prayers.'**

minister at the prayer conference gave expository messages on the What?

Why? When? and the How? of Thy Kingdom Come during the four day conference. His messages on God's kingdom came with such a mind blowing revelations. One might ask 'What is the Kingdom of God all about? It is about manifesting the presence of God in our lives and around us. If this is so, then why is it necessary for the kingdom of God



Rev Friday Bekee, the guest minister at the prayer conference

to come into our lives and in our midst? The answer to this question is that the will of God be done in our lives. When the Kingdom of God comes, the power of sin in our lives is

broken. This leads to the next question of how is the kingdom of God prosecuted? It became clear to me that prayer is the only means of prosecuting the Kingdom of God. It was really an opener for me to know that the flow of God's power into my direction is being controlled by my prayers. God is powerful and ready to do the miraculous for His children; but this will be only to the extent to which we can lay hold on His power through intense prayers. Rev. Bekee further explained that God operates by principles; and one of such principles is prayer. God has chosen to limit Himself to the prayers of His people because He has given us

**'...the will of God, in the heart of God in heaven concerning us, will not be done unless we pray.'**

dominion through the avenue of prayer. This is why the enemy opposes us from praying most of the time. At this, I wondered how so many times we have allowed laziness, lack of persistence and fervency in prayers to actually hinder God from establishing His kingdom in our situation and circumstances. God really wants to intervene in our circumstances and He has chosen to do this through our prayers. As the conference progressed, Rev Bekee further taught on the role of prayer in bringing to reality the will of God in our lives. God has a will in His heart that He wants to manifest in our lives and in humanity in general. But the will of God for our lives will not be manifest unless we pray. In order to have the will of God, we need tenacity in the place of prayer. Jesus prayed that *'Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven'*. Therefore, the will of God, in the heart of God in heaven concerning us, will not be done unless we pray. Prayer brings the supernatural to bear on the natural. It makes spiritual

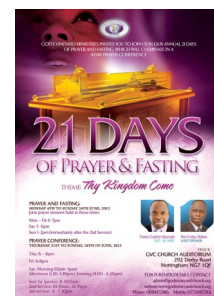
realities become physical realities. If you are not a person of prayer, you don't have respect before God. It

**'Prayer brings the supernatural to bear on the natural. It makes spiritual realities become physical realities.'**

shows that you are independent of Him. Independence is an act of insubordination. When you pray, you declare that you can do nothing

without Him,

you declare His Lordship over you and that He is your Shepherd. It is prayer that establishes the will of God on earth, *'O thou that hearest prayers, unto thee shall all flesh come'*, Psalm 65:2. When you come into the place of prayer, God empowers you to exercise the authority that Jesus has given to us to stop the operations of the enemy over our lives. These were part of those powerful revelations revealed to us during the prayer conference. Truly, every child of God needs to work hard at developing a lifestyle of prayer with fasting. This requires from us real determination and discipline. I left the prayer conference provoked within me. I could see how I have allowed the enemy to subtly substitute every other thing for prayer in my life. I now have a better understanding that by God's principle, there is no substitute to prayers. As for me, I have decided not just to pay more attention to prayers but to also improve on my personal prayer life. I have decided not to allow any substitute. I am determined to get my priorities right. What about you?





## MOR Annual Business Conference

The 2012 edition of the Annual Business Conference of the Men of Radiance (MOR) which held from 13<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> July was really a time of life-changing experience. We were given lots of insight on how to make wealth in a Godly way.

It is God that opens our eyes to ideas and empowers us. He is the One who gives us power to make wealth (*Deut. 18:18b*). One might ask 'what has being rich got to do with God's Kingdom?' The bible says through prosperity the kingdom will be spread abroad (*Zech. 1:17*).

On the first day of the conference, Pastor Segun Kingsley, the of RCCG City of David, London talked extensively on the possibilities that God has made available for us.

He expounded that wealth creation is about getting the right information and using it to make wealth. It is about discovering its principles in God's word and God to connect you to the right place.

One of the most astonishing discovery during the convention is for us to

**'God is the most important factor followed by self, and then vision. Whatever you cannot see, you cannot achieve!'**

make it in business. God is the most important factor followed by self, and then vision. Whatever you cannot see you cannot achieve!

The second day of the conference began with a morning session on how to market business ideas. The importance of designing business websites and using search engines for products and marketing were particu-



A cross-section of men at the business conference

larly emphasized. Pastor Segun Kingsley began the afternoon session by drawing inspiration from *2 Chronicles 1:11*. This gave me insight into how to generate wealth from multiples sources. According to Him, "business is anything that one does and still makes money from it even when one is absent." On the third day which was the worship service, the Senior Pastor of GVM, Dr Ezekiel Alawale, gave a

message that addressed the need for men to attend to the needs of their homes. He asserted that home should take prominence over our ministry and careers so that the enemy will not take advantage of us. He used the report from four different research studies to drive home the point in our minds that it is father who primarily determines the moral and the spiritual development of the child. To crown the weekend of the business conference was a dinner with our spouses at an Indian restaurant. It was wonderful to see men and their spouses relate with each other in a friendly manner.

Indeed, this business conference has changed our orientation about business. Our eyes are now opened to so many opportunities around us which we allow to pass us by.



A cross-section of men during the conference dinner outing

## GVC Alpha Courses

Since this year began, God's Vineyard Church (GVC) ran a number of Alpha Courses, which have experienced great success. The Spring Alpha session, which was launched on Monday 15<sup>th</sup> April, 2012 in Notting-



A cross-section of participants at the Alpha Course session

ham, ended recently having touched many lives.

Since then these sessions in GVC has grown leading to other decentralised sessions of the Alpha Course at group fellowship levels in its Loughborough branch.

During the summer break, a number of postgraduate students at the University of Loughborough have teamed up with Pastor Joseph Nipah, the local pastor, to run the course for students who are working on their projects. This initiative has proved very effective; the group has grown from five to about 15 in three weeks. This has indeed been the doing of the Lord. The course, which includes a series of talks and discussions, is designed for

anyone who wishes to explore the Christian faith and for those who would like to rekindle their faith in the Lord.

For further details on joining any of our current or future courses please contact us on 07734957502.



The Lenton Work Club (LWC) was opened in Nottingham on the 20<sup>th</sup> of June. This marked the beginning of a better future for people in Lenton community and other surrounding environments. I was glad to see ordinary people come together to make a difference in their community. The LWC is a grass root project run by Vinefruits CIC, the community enterprise of God's Vineyard Ministries (GVM). The club is designed to address unemployment and lack of skills that local people experience on a daily basis.



An Instructor speaks to participants during a training workshop at the work club

As I listened to Dr Ezekiel Alawale, the senior pastor of GVM talk about the church's vision of empowering lives and building the society, it was refreshing to see charities like GVM striving to contribute to the lives of ordinary people in her community. His concluding speech reinforced this point home in my ears that **"the impact of the church is not within her walls but it is in her community..."** How true those words ring! We all as individuals or groups can only make real impact in our communities by adding value to the lives of people. My train of thought was reinforced as speaker after speaker shared their personal stories and experiences of working with the young, the old, the disengaged, and the unemployed. Councillor Steph Williams, Bishop Tony Potter, Randeep Singh, Ade Aderogba, Yazmin Shar all shared stories of how they addressed unemployment challenges that reassured me that unemployment and poverty can be over-

come.

Initiatives like the Lenton Work Club need partners from within and outside the local community. They need the support of other charities, public and private institutions, local



A cross-section of participants during a training workshop at the Lenton Work Club

businesses and people working and collaborating together for the greater good. It needs support with your time and skills. Remember that we have not truly lived until we touch the lives of people around us, friends and strangers alike!

## Partnering with the BME Community

This initiative was a learning experience for me when representatives from different Black Minority Ethnic (BME) groups gathered in Nottingham on the 26<sup>th</sup> of June this year. The meeting was an occasion for the church to rub minds with other like-minded people to tackle problems in the BME community and to provide solutions for these problems.

I was particularly struck by the assertion the Senior Pastor of God's Vineyard Ministries, Dr Ezekiel Alawale, that only partnership and collaboration can tackle unemployment and skills challenges in the Nottingham BME community. He challenged participants to adopt a unified approach to solving these challenges. The thrust of his message that struck the point home in my consciousness was when he stated 'his belief that the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Church is not to sit within her four walls but to make impact in her local communities'. This belief, he asserted was the inspiration behind the establishment of Vinefruits Community Interest Company (CIC) in 2007.

He drove his message home by pointing out that the group's strength lies in the unity of her purpose.

Unemployment was identified as a major challenge to be addressed by the group. Another thing that caught my attention was the level of disconnection between BME groups and the government when it comes to accessing supports provided for the group.

**"...the 21st Century Church is not to sit within her four walls but to make impact in her local communities."**

Indeed, it was an eye-opening experience for me as I learnt a lot about why BME people became redundant in jobs. Specifically, little things that people take for granted such as details on how to conduct oneself in a work environment could make a difference between one retaining a job or being put on a performance review.

Additionally, it became clear that there is a trust issue when it comes to

attracting government funding for BME programmes. This is the challenge that Vinefruits CIC representative, Simeon Olowoyo, had promised to address by liaising with other groups to establish the trust needed to win the confidence of funding agencies for BME projects. Furthermore, he suggested to the group on the need to establish a work academy to cater for the skill acquisition needs of the group of which the Lenton Work Club is a subset of it. Other solutions proposed by Vinefruits CIC representative at the meeting for tackling BME problems included employment database and setting up organisation to fund small and medium scale enterprises.

Kevin Price, a member of the board of Trustees of the God's Vineyard Ministries used his personal story of being an Irish in the 60s and 70s to challenge to group to be more inclusive by reaching out to other groups.



## Community Development Project with Bluecoat Academy

As an outreach team of the God's Vineyard Ministries to the secondary schools, the school outreach team, have hosted 25 students who were posted to God's Vineyard Church (GVC) in Nottingham. The students were involved in community development projects in the Lenton environment where the church is located. This project was performed by the team in partnership with Bluecoat Academy as a part of Curriculum Enhancement



Students with a facilitator during craft & design session

Programme. The aim was for the students to see their participation in the project as making a difference in the community.

I was indeed encouraged by the enthusiasm and passion the students brought into the community project. The streams of projects the students were involved in include: coffee shop, craft and designs, painting and card making, computer project, tree planting, litter picking and sessions with the elderly at the Marcus Garvey Centre in Nottingham.

The most prominent of these projects was the coffee shop. Through this project, the students have raised a total of £60 for charities such as the Cancer Research, Red Cross and Water Aid. The last group of students who were posted to GVC for the Curriculum Enhancement Programme

were able to raise a sum of £33.02 for the charity Water Aid.



Students with a facilitator at the Coffee Shop

It was wonderful to see our young people bringing their passion into our community projects and being so engaged in it. We are hoping to engage more of the students in schools from Nottingham in the forthcoming academic year.

## ROC Nottingham Leaders Event

With around 200 leaders from across Nottingham gathered for the 'ROC Nottingham event' which took place on June 27<sup>th</sup>, our team was able to interact with several community leaders and representatives of various organisations.

So, what is ROC all about? Redeeming Our Communities (ROC) is a national charity founded in 2004. The charity's main aim is to bring about community transformation by creating strategic partnerships which open up opportunities for crime reduction and improved community cohesion.

How is this lofty idea achieved? ROC brings together community groups, churches, the police, the fire service, local authorities and voluntary agencies to encourage them to work together in positive partnerships for practical 'on the ground' change. The event was attended by many civic leaders from the Council, Police, Fire and Rescue Service and other agencies as well as leaders from churches. This evening event was hosted by

Emmanuel School, Nottingham. Debra, the Director of ROC, reminded everyone of the urgent challenges being faced by communities and the importance of finding creative solu-



A cross-section of GVC team with the Chief Constable of Nottingham at the ROC event

tions to some of the social issues. She appealed to local partners in Nottingham to help develop the ROC model in their own community, such as the successful ROC Café youth project. Bishop Tony Porter, a member of the ROC National Steering Group, was the main organiser of this event. He led us into a series of exciting local projects addressing social issues like homelessness, debt, and unemployment. Organisations Framework,

CAP, Betel and Positive Futures gave a brief report. A warm atmosphere was created by praise and worship session and musical presentation by the combined group of pupils from the school and the choir from God's Vineyard Church.

ROC is an avenue to pursue the vision of God's Vineyard Ministries of "empowering lives building society." Through it, the church is involved in more community focused activities to



GVC choir and pupils renders a song to the ROC participants

practically share the love of Christ with young people, families, the homeless and those that need help.

## GVM Trains and Empowers Youth Leaders

It is a annual event that we all look forward to; the coming together of both the new and the outgoing executives of the Radical Youth (RY). This training is to equip the new leaders of RY from different Universities for the task ahead of them. This year's annual Radical Youth Leadership training took place between the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> of June. The topics discussed include: **developing and fulfilling vision, integrity, the dynamics of planning young people's events, the leaders prayer life and the vessel God uses.**

Pastor Joe Owusu-Nipah, the first speaker, spoke on integrity. He defined integrity as "exhibiting an outward character that reflects who you truly are inwardly". Most importantly, integrity builds trust, has high influence value, and facilitates high standards. Integrity is also a must for

us if we want to have a solid standing. In order to develop and maintain integrity, emphasis was laid on accountability to God, one's self, with one another and to fellow leaders.

Thereafter, the Senior Pastor of God's Vineyard Ministries, Dr Ezekiel Alawale, talked on Developing and Fulfilling Vision. He spoke extensively on the difference between mission and vision, and on the mission of RY. According to him, strategy is very crucial in fulfilling and expanding a vision. Communicating a vision, assessing the unique gifts and talents of our members were among strategies he encouraged us to use as we take on the leadership role of the RY in the next academic session. The dynamics of planning young people's events was presented by Labi Mebude. He gave guidelines for it

which include: identifying the main objective, planning way ahead of time, create a budget, considering logistics, resource persons, execution, monitoring and evaluation.

The Prayer Life of a leader was another topic presented by the senior pastor Dr Ezekiel Alawale. He stressed the importance of prayer to leaders and the benefits of being a leader with a consistent prayer life.

Using Joshua's life as an example, Pastor Muiyiwa Olubowale implored us to make ourselves vessels God can use. He mentioned the various qualities God is looking for in us and they include the leaders prayer life, passion, character, obedience and submission to the will of God. This was followed by impartation, prayers and anointing by the Senior Pastor.

## Radical Youth Annual Ball: A Red Carpet Affair

Radical youth's annual ball is the second most important event in the radical youth calendar after the radical youth weekend away. It took place on

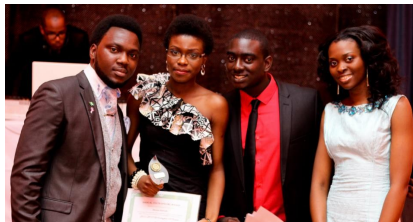


Some of the youths at Radical Youth ball

the 15<sup>th</sup> of June 2012 at the Britannia Hotel Nottingham to mark the end of a successful academic year. It was a time where winter boots were swapped for heels and T-shirts for tuxedos.

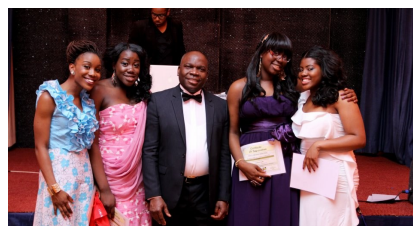
This was the first Ball of its kind as members from other regions such as Manchester, Norwich and Leicester also attended the event. The famous comedian AY dot was the master of ceremony and as expected the evening

was a night of glamour and laughter. As part of the event, special awards



Youth Pastor Labi with some of the youths

were presented to the members of each region in attendance that showed passion and commitment towards Radical youth over the year. Awards



The Senior Pastor with radical youth at the ball

were also presented to the leaders of each region to recognise the hard

work and dedication they had put into radical youth. Our Senior Pastor, Dr Ezekiel Alawale was also in attendance and presented the awards to the recipients. At the end of the evening he shared a few words on passion and dedication to God's work and encourage all the youths to do more for God



Youths at the ball enjoying a 3-course meal

and draw closer to him in anticipation of the new academic year. Where two or more young people are gathered in the presence of a DJ, there must be a dance! So it was that the red carpet affair became a night to remember.



## What's Wrong in Being Single?

Some time ago, I woke up in the morning, got up from my bed and looked through the windows. A thousand thoughts went through my mind: when will an end come to loneliness in my life? when will people come to rejoice with me because I am getting married? when will I leave this 'cubicle' that is called a room to live with my spouse in a good and well-furnished house of my dream? It is so difficult to plan for the future when the future partner is nowhere to be found! When will I allow this singleness to have a toll on me? There should be more to life! I then stood in front of my mirror and asked myself a sincere question, "What is wrong with being single?" Incidentally, this was the theme of the tenth edition of the Singles Forum which was held on the 16<sup>th</sup> of June 2012. The objectives of this edition were to: review our perception to life as a single person; make new changes; make new choic-

es; and to encourage the down-hearted.

Life is an adventurous journey which could lead people to a destiny of purpose, success, fulfilment, achievement and joy or the reverse, depending on some factors such as choices, personality, life experiences, attitude to life, education and spiritual level. But the original purpose of God is not for us to get the 'reverse' out of life. This is why it is very important that we have a positive attitude to life no matter the situation.

We were encouraged by a quote from Abraham Lincoln, **"People are just as happy as they make up their minds to be"**. And with this, I know I can enjoy singleness as a life on the way to my destination. I can choose not to suspend my life's activities.

The various sources of pain for singles were also identified. They include 'games' from the opposite sex, others perspective of singleness, fear,

wrong advice, rejection, hormonal challenges, pressure from parents and

**'...have a right attitude about your singleness...'**

friends and observing others in relationships. We were advised to enjoy our singleness by spending more time with

one's self and with God especially in the place of prayer and study to enhance personal growth; have a right attitude about singleness; being busy with the right things; exploring new options in life; learning to relax and being oneself.

Those like me who have been so down-hearted among the audience were encouraged by *Psalm 30:5* to focus on the joy that is ahead of us rather than the pain. The forum ended with an interactive session on concerns such as balancing career/ministry with marriage and moving on from hurtful past relationships.

## I Will Bless the Lord

Charged with the atmosphere of God's presence, I knew that the concert was not going to be just another concert. The expression on the faces



A cross-section of worshippers during the concert

of everyone that came into the auditorium seemed to confirm what I felt. I then thought within me 'Surely the Lord is in this place and I know it'.

On the 30<sup>th</sup> of June, GVC London held her first concert with the theme, **'I will bless the Lord'**. The programme took off with a powerful

praise and worship session led by GVC mass choir. The choir led with a sequence of inspiring gospel songs which immediately brought the congregation into heartfelt worship. Had the service ended after the praise and worship, nobody would have said that was not the concert.

Immediately after the praise and worship, the Senior Pastor, Dr Ezekiel Alawale came onto the stage for a brief welcome and introduction. After this, the GVC mass choir came on



Dayo Bello, the guest minister leads the congregation in praise & worship

stage again to render special numbers. Dayo Bello, the guest artist came onto the stage. The church was sent into high praises unto our God as he led a selection of popular choruses in French, Ghanaian and Nigerian languages. This got everyone present into the praise mode. **There was cheering, dancing, jumping and joy in the Holy Ghost.** The atmosphere was transformed into one of celebration of God's glory through praises as he rendered songs from his album *'Fruit of my lips.'*

As the concert was coming to an end, I felt like it should just continue. Thank God for the Senior Pastor who came up to announce that GVC London will henceforth host praise concert every three months. This was a great relief for all as we now look forward to having another concert come 29<sup>th</sup> of September.



GOD'S VINEYARD MINISTRIES PRESENTS  
THE EXCELLENT WOMAN CONFERENCE 2012



THE Seasoned King's Daughter



DR. FUNMI ALAWALE  
EXCELLENT WOMAN'S MINISTRY (HOST)



PASTOR YEMISI ASHIMOLOWO  
WINNING WOMAN'S MINISTRY LONDON, UK



PASTOR (MRS) DOLAPO ADELAKIN  
VICTORY INTERNATIONAL NIGERIA



PASTOR (MRS) YEMI ADELEKE  
THE TOTAL WOMAN MINISTRIES LONDON, UK

**FRIDAY 21ST SEPTEMBER 2012**  
(EVENING RALLY)  
TIME: 7PM-10PM  
@GOD'S VINEYARD CHURCH, AUDITORIUM, NOTTINGHAM

**SATURDAY 22ND SEPTEMBER 2012**  
(BREAKFAST MEETING) - TIME: 8-10.30 - 1PM  
@THE INDIAN COMMUNITY CENTRE ASSOCIATION (THE ICCA)  
99 HUCKNALL ROAD, CARRINGTON, NOTTINGHAM NG5 1QZ

**SUNDAY 23RD SEPTEMBER 2012**  
TIME: 8.30AM-11.15 - 1PM  
@GODS VINEYARD CHURCH AUDITORIUM NOTTINGHAM

SYMPOSIUM - TIME: 3PM-6PM  
TIME: 8.30AM-11.15 - 1PM  
TOPICS: CELEBRATE YOUR UNIQUENESS, ADD ZEST TO LIFE  
LEADING LADIES (LADIES IN THE FORE FRONTS)

TOPICS: THE POWER OF PREPARATION  
OUT OF THE SHADOWS INTO THE LIGHT  
MAXIMISING YOUR POTENTIAL AS KING'S DAUGHTER  
(WITHOUT BEING POMPOUS)

TOPIC: LEGACY OF A SEASONED KING'S DAUGHTER

TEL: 01159472486, MOBILE: 07734957501  
Email: [admin@godsvineyardchurch.org](mailto:admin@godsvineyardchurch.org)  
Website: [www.godsvineyardchurch.org](http://www.godsvineyardchurch.org)

## Couples Forum August 2012

### Theme:

Working together in the home  
(Amos 3:3)

- Do we always have to agree?
- If we don't, what happens?
- How necessary is teamwork?

For answers to these questions  
and many more, join us on:

Saturday 18 August 2012

**4.00 – 6.00**

**GVC Auditorium**

### Hosts:

Drs Ezekiel and Funmi Alawale



This is an interactive session; bring your friends along!

**Refreshments start 15 minutes before the programme**

## TESTIMONY CORNER

With reluctance, scepticism and some indifference, I arrived at the University of Nottingham in 2007. To my greatest surprise, the biomed course I had come to study was under the School of Materials Engineering. I thought 'NO, I don't want to be an engineer! What am I doing here? I went on with the course anyway and excelled as usual, finishing my first year with a first class grade average point (GPA). But little did I know that God was ordering my steps all the way; you see I was a very religious Christian. I knew nothing about having a personal relationship with God.

In my first year, I came across a Christian youth group, 'Radical Youth Nottingham.' All my friends attended the weekly meetings, so I went along. I was a bit sceptical at first because I didn't believe young people could be so on fire for God. All the doubts I had were cleared at the annual Radical Youth weekend away when **I had a personal encounter with God and was baptized in the Holy Spirit. Since that weekend, my relationship with God blossomed** and I got more involved in God's Vineyard Church.

In my academics, I also finished my second year with a first class GPA and was 100% sure I was graduating with a first class honours. My third and final year kicked off and I was excited as I was almost done but after my 1<sup>st</sup> semester, the excitement turned to anxiety and fear when I finished that semester with a 2.1 result despite my hard work. For the first time in my life, I had lost all confidence in my intelligence and I feared that I might disappoint my parents when it mattered so much. I took it to God in prayer and I'll never forget what He said to me: **"I have not brought you this far to let you down; you just do your part and be still and know that I am God"**. So in my second semester, I kept holding on to the word He told me because *He is not a man that He should lie... (Num 23:19)*. So as I worked hard, God kept instructing me on what to do including which modules to pick. When it came to my final year project, He granted me favour with my supervisors so that although I handed it in a day later, no marks were deducted. **The day I was to pick up my results, I had so much peace. Philippians 4:6-7 had a whole new meaning to me.** My module convenor greeted me with a smile, He then proceeded to say "congratulations, you are top on your course and you finished with a first class". At this point I screamed "YES!!! Thank you Jesus" and he went on to add that as a result of my outstanding performance that I was going to be awarded the Cripps materials Prize as the most outstanding student in the department. **At this point I was speechless and I was just in awe of God's faithfulness.** That afternoon as I walked out of his office, I kept thinking "What a faithful God". I then really believed that *"He is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we can ask of him" - Eph 3:20*. More importantly, I am leaving University of Nottingham as a young woman who has found a friend in Jesus. He that began a good work in me will carry it onto completion until the day of Christ Jesus. - *Philippians 1:6*.

I applied for medical school in my final year and I got a place to study Graduate medicine at the University of Southampton. Truly, Delay is not Denial.

-Juliet

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Address: 292 Derby Road, Nottingham. NG7 1QF  
Tel: 01159472486  
[www.godsvineyardchurch.org](http://www.godsvineyardchurch.org)