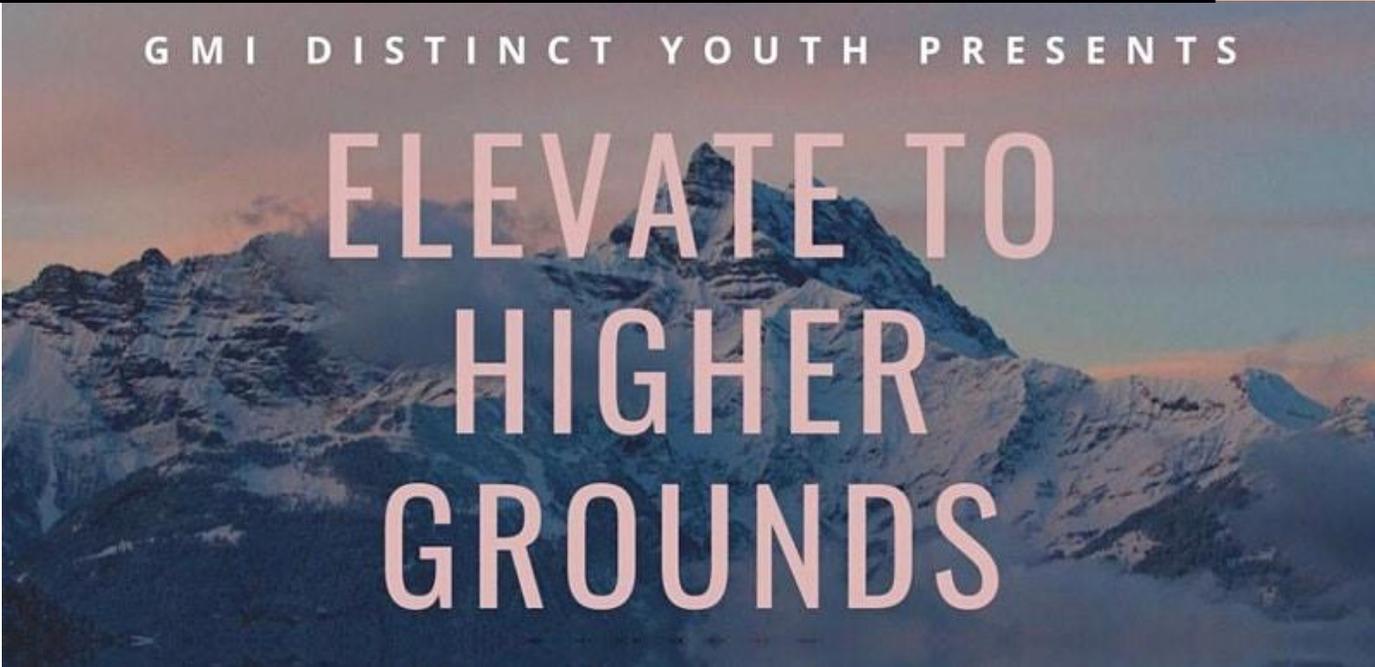


2020

# A 5-Day Bible Devotional Plan

(Written especially for Teens & Young Adults)

G M I D I S T I N C T Y O U T H P R E S E N T S



ELEVATE TO  
HIGHER  
GROUNDS

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Edited by:

Sis. Precious Alino & Sis. Bukola Somide

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# DAY 1

## Are you successful?

Written by David Uba

### Bible Scripture Readings:

Ecclesiastes 10:10

Isaiah 41:10

Jeremiah 29:11

Jeremiah 17:7

Luke 16:10-11

Matthew 16:26

Nehemiah 1:11

Philippians 4:13

Philippians 4:6-7

Psalms 118:25

Proverbs 3:1-4

Proverbs 3:5

Proverbs 2:7

Proverbs 1:1-10

1 Timothy 4:12

Hebrews 11:1

Habakkuk 2:2

2 Corinthians 2:9-10

## DEVOTIONAL:

### What is success?

Success for some people means gaining their wishes through no effort whatsoever. Success in a general definition is the attainment of desired aims or prosperity. For a child of God, success comes from achieving a goal through your faith in God and hard-work. It does not mean you won't face any challenges or failures along the way, but you are able to overcome every obstacle that comes your way while on the journey to success, through Christ. So, **don't be afraid of obstacles. Success is around the corner.** The bible encourages us by saying, *"Fear not, for I am with you; Be not dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, Yes, I will help you, I will uphold you with My righteous right hand."* (Isaiah 41:10 NKJV)

It's important that we rely on God in all things. Remembering that, *"[you] can do all things through Christ who strengthens [you]."* (Philippians 4:13 NKJV)

Attaining success may be difficult when relying on the individual's wisdom, so here is how to gain success through God's wisdom:

### Praying your way to success

In your areas of weakness, that's where God does the most for you. *"My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness"* (2 Corinthians 12:9 NKJV). Some people pray to God for spiritual guidance while others may be praying for what they want from God. Pray your way to success literary! *"...O Lord, I pray, send now prosperity."* (Psalms 118:25 NKJV)

### Working your way to success

What some people don't realize is that God does not just want us to pray and fold our hands. He wants us to pray and also do the work. When working towards success, it helps to have a goal in mind. Since God has the power to make your work a success, all you have to do is to keep the Word of God in your heart, do the work, and He will give you the wisdom that you need. *"He stores up sound wisdom for the upright; He is a shield to those who walk uprightly."* (Proverbs 2:7 NKJV)

Remember, don't trust in your own wisdom/understanding alone, instead *"Trust in the Lord with all your heart...in all your ways acknowledge Him, And He [will] direct your path."* (Proverbs 3:5-6 NKJV)

### **Faith-ing your way to success**

Faith is like a muscle that you need to exercise and you often have to make it a habit to strengthen it. Whatever you find yourself doing every day, do it well. *“He who is faithful in what is least is faithful also in much; and he who is unjust in least is unjust also in much...And if you have not been faithful in what is another man’s, who will give you what is your own?” (Luke 16:10, 12 NKJV)* Know this – that your prayers for success/prosperity is wasted if you’re not diligent in everything that you do for others and yourself.

Faith-ing your way to success requires that you know your goals, you have the will to achieve your goals, you write them down, and you put in the work to achieve it. *“Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.” (Hebrews 11:1 NKJV)*

Those who truly believe in their goals, do not allow anything to get in their way. Faith makes you overcome the obstacle in your path towards success. Faith is how you connect your life with God’s purpose for you. With Him, all things are indeed possible and purposeful but without Him, life has no meaning.

If you’ve lost your way, it’s not too late, get back on-track to success today.

### **PRAYER FOR SUCCESS:**

*Lord, I thank you that I’m still alive today to fulfill the purpose and plan that you have for me. I choose to no longer rely on my own understanding, so I invite you God into every area of my life. You know the things I struggle with so please come and shine bright in these areas to drive out the darkness. Turn my weaknesses into an asset for your glory and to achieve success. Forgive me my sins, Lord. May I not repeat the same mistakes again. I am determined to change my bad habits and cultivate good habits by faith. Put me on the right track today, Lord, in Jesus name – Amen.*

# DAY 2

## Words Matter

Written by Elliot Opara & Broderick Opara

### Bible Scripture Readings:

Proverbs 1:10  
Psalms 139:14

1 Corinthians 15:33  
Proverbs 12:26

## DEVOTIONAL:

### Who are you listening to?

It's a fact that in life we all face challenges, you may be dealing with one or more right now. Whether it is finding a new job or going through a long year of school or even finishing out that one last repetition in your workout; but **one challenge we all face is people and the words they say to us**. Not all people have good intentions towards you but please remember that hurt-people hurt others. Think back to the last time someone said something bad to you or about you. How did you feel? How did you react? Well first of all, let me tell you that Jesus makes no mistakes and if someone says anything negative about your physical appearance, intelligence, background, or other, they are blinded towards the real you and cannot comprehend all of the varieties of perfection that Jesus is able to create. *"I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; Marvelous are Your works, And that my soul knows very well."* (Psalms 139:14 NKJV)

### God's Word about you is all that matters

If you are going through virtual bullying or any sort of verbal abuse, always keep in mind that the things they are saying is worthless and that's their judgment of character. Their opinion has no power and those words should mean absolutely nothing towards you (shut them out of your mind, don't let them manipulate you). Do not allow negative words from others (including your inner-voice) to push you to lower your self-esteem, change yourself or behaviors in an ungodly manner. The Lord said in Proverbs 1:10, "My son, if sinners entice you, do not consent". The only opinion that should matter is the one of the Lord, and what he says is true. That is what you should believe in.

### Let the Light shine through

I remember, when I was in junior year in High School, I had this one friend who was an outcast. We got to know each other when we were paired to work in a group for a class assignment. He approached me at the courtyard during lunchtime one day and proceeded to ask me what I thought about him. I, of course, told him that he was a smart and funny guy that seems easy to talk to. At first, I thought it was an odd question to ask me, but later that evening, I saw his SnapChat (social media platform) post saying that he was told he was a worthless weirdo, that has no friends. The moment I read that, I texted him immediately asking if he was alright and if he wanted to talk? He said he was fine but part of me did not believe it. So, I sent him a voice message telling him that those people do not know the real him, and if he is a Christian (I did

not know if he was because we were not that close friends) he should pray about the situation and ask Jesus how he should feel about the words they said and of what he should do. I read to him, 1 Corinthians 15:33, which says that **“Bad company ruins good morals”**. I explained that if he is around bad people, it could mess up his moral beliefs and thoughts that can affect him and the ones around him.

### **Full circle! Positive words heal**

The next day at school, as we walked to the next class, he thanked me for what I said and explained how he was no longer affected by what people said to him; because they do not know the real him. I told him to keep his head up and never let people tear him down. From that moment on, he became a more confident person. I learned to take my own advice and understand that harsh words don't mean anything to me, but the only thing that truly matters is the words that come from the Lord, Jesus Christ.

### **PRAYER FOR HEALING:**

*My God, I thank you for Your positive Word that affirms my being. I receive healing from every negative word that I have allowed to hurt and change me. I choose to use my words to heal and not destroy others or myself. Holy Spirit, please remind me of this message whenever I am tempted to repay evil for evil or meditate on lies told about or to me. You know me the best, Lord, as you have created every fiber of my being so magnificently for your glory. I repent of any self-hate I harbor within. Help me to see me as you do which is fearfully and wonderfully made, in Jesus name – Amen.*

# DAY 3

# Peer Pressure: What would Jesus do? (WWJD)

Written by Lincoln Opara & Prince Alino

## Bible Scripture Readings:

Proverbs 1:10-15

Exodus 23:2

Psalms 1:1-2

Proverbs 4:14-15

Matthew 5:37

## DEVOTIONAL:

### Freedom at last but life gets real

For most of my life, I would say that I have lived somewhat of a sheltered upbringing. I was fortunate enough to not be exposed to many of the dark evils of the world, but with the spiritual guidance from my parents, I was still skilled to maintain a strong moral standing. Then I turned 18...then I had to go to college. When I left home for college, I understood that this was the first step to becoming a man and being on my own. I understood that College would be a place where I was able to become who I truly wanted to be and wanted to do, with no one there to stop me except for me. However, I also understood that this would be a place where I would be exposed to the world and all of its colors. Therefore I made a promise to myself that in College I would not change who I am at the core and my morals, and College would sure test me in doing so.

### Take a stand or someone/something else will, for you

During my initial week at College, I met another peer, and he told me to hang out with him and I did because I was trying to make friends in a place where I didn't have any. Unbeknownst to me, however, when I went with him that night I saw him and other people inhaling a particular herb. The peer, next looked at me and said "you want some... I know you do man", right then and there, I had to make the decision, do I travel the road that is not meant for me or travel the road that I, God, and my parents have laid before me? I told him "I don't smoke, never have and never plan on doing so and that it's not in my nature to do so." Luckily he said "fine you don't got to". **I was proud that I owned my own and was able to stand up to the peer pressure and make the soundest decision for myself.** Now the people around me understand my true character and who I am as a person and what I stand for as a Christian.

Throughout my teen years, I have found myself in many scenarios in which my morals and beliefs were challenged by others. Whether it be being pressured to partake in actions that challenged me & my fundamental beliefs that make me a Christian. I always turn to the Word of God to provide me guidance through these tough times. I have found myself in such a situation in my freshman year of College. For many, College is a place where individuals' morals and priorities are tested and these decisions could affect you for the rest of your life. During my first year, I have been in many of these situations that have challenged my morals and principles, not only as a Christian, but as a person.

## **Influence is a powerful weapon used for good or evil**

Whether it be from partaking in drugs, alcohol, partying, or just poor decisions in general, the influence of others around me has challenged me to my core. I've already witnessed many in my first year of College, who simply dropped out due to peer pressure and trying to fit in to the crowd. When presented with these dilemmas whenever I'm out with friends or testing my academic integrity, I always turn to them (negative influencers) and say, "I don't want to partake in this, it goes against my priorities of why I am here". Despite the pushback, I always stand firm in that assertion. This shows to others and yourself that you won't compromise on your beliefs and who you are as a Christian. **At the end, they will always leave you alone and respect your decision.**

### **Keys to overcoming Peer Pressure:**

**1) Avoid situations in which you may be pressured** into doing things that you know don't align with your beliefs. Don't get caught in wrong place or at the wrong time. As teens or young adults, we all have an understanding where we are supposed to be, and which crowd is wrong/right for us. However, if you find yourself not being able to avoid being in a situation where peer pressure may occur, as we are human and do make mistakes, remind yourself who you are, what you stand for, and who you believe in; which is God.

**2) Think WWJD, What Would Jesus Do?** If you don't think Jesus would be proud, or would find Himself in such a situation, then you should not partake in it! That's the way I look at life and perceive all my actions. It is an effective reasoning tool when you're debating on whether to participate in an endeavor or not. So remember, whenever you are in a difficult situation, think: WWJD?

**3) And if you don't know WWJD, then ask Him. Simply pray about it!** Trust me, He'll speak to you in a way you'll understand to help you make the best decision at that moment. Look onto God and ask for His wisdom whenever you are forced to make a difficult decision. Pray continuously that God will offer you the guidance and knowledge to navigate through this world and help you associate with the right people that have your best intentions at heart. God will give you the strength to overcome their temptations, God will show you the person He wants you to become, and God will protect you always.

### **PRAYER TO RISE ABOVE TEMPTATION:**

*Father, I know you got my back. You are forever looking out for me and for that, I just want to say, thank you! Please, forgive me for my past decisions that I had put me in a peculiar ungodly situation. I am wiser now, and I pray You will continue to lead and strengthen me in the truth of your Word and in taking a stand for righteousness. It's not easy navigating life as an independent adult, but I choose to remain dependent on You, daily. You are my ears, my eyes, my nose, my mouth, my arms, my legs, you are everything to me. I will go only where You lead me, in Jesus name – Amen.*

# DAY 4

## Called to Lead

Written by Benny Uba & Kingsley Alino

### Bible Scripture Readings:

Heb 13:7

1 Thess 5:14

1 Tim 4:12

Exo 4:11-13

Exo 4:15-16

James 4:6

1 Sam 16:7

## DEVOTIONAL:

### Don't be afraid to respond to the call to lead

Many times, in life there will be moments where you will be called upon to lead. You can attempt to avoid it but in the end it will happen. Leadership builds great skills like determination, resilience and understanding. Moses was put in the same position; he was called upon by God to lead, and after giving excuse after excuse he finally gave in and did God's work. *(Exodus 4:11-13) "The Lord said to him, Who gave human beings their mouths? Who makes them deaf or mute? Who gives them sight or makes them blind? Is it not I, the Lord? Now go; I will help you speak and will teach you what to say. But Moses said, Pardon your servant, Lord. Please send someone else."*

### The Lord loves you as you are (flaws and all)

*(Exodus 4:15-16) When God asked Moses to lead the Israelites, he told God that he did not have good communications skills to be a leader. God knows that Aaron does have good communications skills. He tells Moses to speak to Aaron and put the words in his mouth. God will teach them both what to do, and Aaron will speak for Moses to the people.* When Samuel anointed David to be the next king, he was replacing King Saul who was anything but humble and became full of pride and we know that **God resists those who are prideful.** God clearly does not look at appearance, height or stature of a man when he calls. He looks at the heart, *(James 4:6).* Consider David whom God chose over Saul. He is the least likely to be chosen in the eyes of man. However, David's heart toward God made him the best choice, a supreme leader and the greatest king that Israel ever had (1st Sam 16:7).

### Anybody can be a leader

There have been many times in my life that I have been led to success, that I would not have found on my own. From parents to teachers to youth leaders, I achieved success through them. Without them I would not have the teachings to become the person I am today. We as humans are born into assisted living, whether we like it or not. Somebody to tend to our needs and show us the path to hopefully grow into a well-rounded contributor to society. Anybody can be taught, and anybody can be a teacher. God appoints us as needed, which may vary in each situation. Being someone who is fairly young, I have been appointed today to teach you about leadership. God would have chosen someone else, maybe somebody older with more knowledge. But he chose me, he wanted me to give my perspective, and let my experiences be a learning experience as well as a lesson to guide you. Maybe it's just one or two sentences or

even a word they say which can change your life. That's why God does not want us to look down on any of our leaders, old or young, rich or poor, etc. You may think that you cannot teach, however God has a different plan. He and only He will give you what you need, whether it be courage, confidence, or any skill required. The Lord never gives us a situation we cannot handle, and when we feel He has, He always places some sort of guide, whether physically or spiritually through His word. All we need to do is look to Him first.

**PRAYER FOR LEADERSHIP:**

*Lord, help me to rise over my fears and take the responsibility to lead whenever I am called to. I know that you will be with me all the way and that you will help me acquire whatever skill or skills that may be required of me to have. I repent from my fears and rely on you as my best friend to help me at all times. Thank you for helping me see the strength I have within me and thank you for helping me improve upon my weaknesses. Help me to recognize when you call and to also recognize that whatever I may need to fulfill the call to lead has already been made available by you. In Jesus name - Amen.*

# DAY 5

## It's "All" or "Nothing"

Written by Favour Alino & Precious Arinze

### Bible Scripture Readings:

Deuteronomy 30:9

Revelation 3:16

2 Timothy 3:4

Romans 12:2

Exodus 20:5

Matthew 11:28

Psalms 119:10-11

1 Thessalonians 5:17

## DEVOTIONAL:

### Don't seat on the fence! Be all in with Christ

As Christians we often struggle with worldly demands and what God demands from us as his children. Pressures from social media, academics, work, friends, and family can make it hard for Christians to fully devote their lives to Christ. It is asked of us to surrender daily, which means casting aside worldly pressures and giving our fears, our worries, our concerns, everything to Christ. **Don't you feel the pressure?** The burden is too much for you alone to carry, so just hand it to God in prayer. *"Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."* (Matthew 11:28 NKJV)

### Know God for yourself

God does not have any grandchildren so we cannot expect to make it into the Kingdom of Heaven by solely following our parents to Church. It is essential that all Christians (young or old) build their own unique relationship with Christ. **It's easy actually!** Just study/read His Word (the Bible) so you get to learn His character/nature, His thoughts, His advice, His commandments, and His plans. *"With my whole heart I have sought You; Oh, let me not wander from Your commandments! Your word I have hidden in my heart, That I might not sign against You."* (Psalms 119:10-11 NKJV)

### Are you a Christian in name only?

A good way to communicate with God is through prayer so do it as often as possible. *"Pray without ceasing."* (1 Thessalonians 5:17) God is able to communicate with us in many ways: while meditating, through His Word, through other people, through dreams & visions etc. However, when we are consumed by the world and are not willing to let go of societal demands, it is difficult for the Holy Spirit (God in Spirit) to dwell in us because there is hesitation in our hearts (Genesis 19:22-26). When we live our lives in sin and simply rely on God's forgiveness, you are cheating yourself. **Be Christ-like in spirit and in truth, always.** Is this you? No worries. Repent today and fully devote yourself to God, wholeheartedly! You can't have your cake and eat it too, some would say. And when it comes to sin God does not compromise. Our God is a jealous God (Exodus 20:5). He wants all of us or none of us; hot or cold, not warm! (Revelations 3:16)

### **Not easy but possible**

It's not easy at times because what the world demands from us is completely different from what God wants from us. For instance, demands from academics and extracurricular activities can slowly begin to deter one from God. You may find that these things start to become harder to balance in your own, and that's because God is not at the forefront.

### **Are you still seating on that fence?**

Say this out loud with me, "Is God my closest friend?" No matter your answer, this question serves as somewhat of a reminder as to how we should treat God. We should go to him for everything no matter how big or small. Tell Him what's on your mind (even though He already knows LOL but He needs you to confess it else He can't help you). Laugh & dance with Him, cry out to Him, thank Him, worship Him, and obey Him. He wants to be our first option in any decision we make and not the last resort. And not simply-remembered only on the Sabbath day at Church. **We must live for Him every single day, your life depends on it.** When you surrender your life to Christ, His will is supreme over yours or anyone else's; and when obeyed, you are able to elevate to higher grounds.

### **PRAYER FOR ELEVATION:**

*Lord, I come to you with a humble heart. You are so gracious and kind to me even when I am wavering in my faith-walk. I thank you for this opportunity to confess my lukewarm nature and I choose again to be hot for you: morning, noon, & night; in my going-out and my coming-in; in Church and outside of Church; Online and in-person; 24/7 all the days of my life. Help me, Holy Spirit, when I stumble, for your Word says that the just though they fall seven times shall rise again. May I continue to rise above all challenges, temptation, and distractions so I may elevate and breakthrough to higher grounds in my faith, in Jesus name – Amen.*

# THANKS FOR READING

HOPE YOU'VE BEEN BLESSED.  
NOW GO AND BE A BLESSING TO OTHERS.

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