

# VICTORY AT LAST

How I Conquered Low Self-esteem



Prayer Nwagboso Ikegwuonu



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## **RANDOM DESPACHES**

*Victory at Last: How I Conquered Low Self-esteem*

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# Preface

If someone had told me or shown me a glimpse of me writing a book and inspiring others across the globe 10 to 15 years ago, I would have laughed at them and said it's impossible. I couldn't have conceived the idea to write a book like this, even though it has always been my desire to write something that will touch lives and inspire others.

In the first week of November 2023, I was excited about the new month especially because it's my birth month. On Sunday, 5<sup>th</sup> November, I was in church worshiping and praying when I whispered a prayer to God about my desire to give a birthday present to others, especially teenagers, sharing some life challenges I encountered. Shortly afterward, I got the idea for this book, the topic, and other relevant information needed for the book.

It was truly an answered prayer because after I conquered the challenge of low self-esteem and self-hatred, it has always been my desire to write books that will heal, inspire, and help people. One thing I didn't want to do was to write a book because others were writing theirs or to be put under any pressure to write. And this is the right time and at the right season.

Dear reader, I am about to take you on an adventure, sharing deeply personal experiences and lessons I had passed through while facing the challenge of low self-esteem and self-hatred.

It has been and still is my desire to help anyone especially teenagers facing this deadly pandemic of self-esteem issues. I had a painful experience with it while growing up, and I don't want anyone else, especially teenagers, to go through it. Teenagers have the most tendency to deal with self-esteem issues, and if not treated well, it gets to affect their life in the future.

You need to know that, for you to fully express all that God has deposited inside of you, you need to conquer the challenges of low self-esteem.

This is the first of other parts of my story. There will be subsequent editions, released in bits like this.

The world is waiting for your manifestation and I look forward to seeing your full self-expression.

I would love to hear from you when you are done reading. My contact details are in the bio section.

With love,

**Prayer Nwagboso Ikegwonu**

*This book is dedicated to every teenager on the verge of giving up. I want you to know that there's hope for you!*

# Chapter 1: The Quest

Growing up, I hated myself. I didn't see any value, beauty, or intelligence in myself. I always felt something was missing in me whenever I looked at another girl. I always wanted to be like her but never myself. I wanted to be slim, tall with straight legs, light-skinned with very long hair, beautiful eyes, and white teeth.

But Prayer Nwagboso Ikegwonu wasn't created by God to be light-skinned. Prayer was crafted wonderfully by God but she wasn't in love with herself. The old Prayer will pour out her heart, time, resources, attention, and love to everyone around her except to herself whom she hated the most. Yes, that was what Prayer was doing consistently to herself; demeaning God's special gift to humanity.

Worse, I had neighbours around me who would tell me to my face, "Oh Prayer, you are so ugly and I don't

like you.” Imagine telling that to an eight-year-old, someone struggling to accept herself.

They’d ask why I wasn’t as fair as my elder sister.

“Why do you look like an outcast in the family?”

“Why don’t you have a pointed nose like your sister?”

“You are the ugliest in the Nwagboso’s family.”

It was so traumatizing. I’d ask God why He created me the way I am. I’d tell Him how much I hated myself and wanted to end it all.

One of the worst things anyone can do is compare a child to another child, especially if they are from the same family. It’s terrible and dehumanising to compare a child to another. Every child is special, every child is unique, and every child was created by God for a beautiful purpose on earth.

Help children build their self-esteem so that they are not easily broken by demeaning or harsh remarks thrown at them anytime, anywhere.

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One day, I took my three beautiful daughters out and someone said, “Oh, your first daughter is so beautiful as well as the second, but your third daughter looks so different. I don’t understand who she looks like. She’s not as beautiful as your other two daughters.”

Immediately I heard that, I didn’t even wait for the person to finish talking, I fiercely told her never to say such to children and I walked away. When we got home, I took my three beautiful daughters to the mirror and taught them how unique they were.

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When I started understanding what friendship is, if anyone came around to be my friend, I’d always feel it was a great privilege. I’d go all the way to please that friend to the point of displeasing myself. I’d sacrifice my time, my resources, and all at the expense of my

happiness all because I didn't love myself and didn't know my worth. It was so painful that those friends would still bully me even though I was giving my best.

I suffered from their maltreatment because I didn't know my worth, I didn't have any value for myself, and most importantly, I hated myself. I always felt they were doing me a favour by being friends with me, or that there were even talking to me. I never saw any worth in myself.

Most times, if anyone called my name in the crowd to get my attention, I'd be too shy to walk from point A to point B, where the person is. When I was in junior secondary, one of my classmates called my name so loud that it attracted the attention of my other classmates. I was so angry with her.

At the same time, I was timid, and it took so much courage to stand up and answer her. When I met her, I warned her never to call my name out loud again, that I



was shy of hearing my name. She was so shocked that she burst into laughter. It sounded strange to her.

I remember asking my parents why they had to give me the name Prayer. I said they should have named me Becky or Sonia or Lily or Anna . . . just any other name that sounds sweet in the ear. Thinking about it right now, I am laughing so hard, because it's very funny. This is what happens when you don't love you.

Today, I am more than grateful to my parents for giving me such a beautiful and unique name that has made so many waves for me. I am grateful to God that they didn't listen to my laments and change my name. My name Prayer has opened doors for me, and I always stand out wherever I go because of my unique name.

My parents gave my siblings beautiful and unique names. Our names are Faith, Gospel, Prayer, Divine, and Holiness. God blessed my amazing parents Pastor and Deaconess Jonathan and Chioma Nwagboso.

You need to love yourself and accept who you are. If you don't, no one will. Always remember that you are beautifully and wonderfully made by God almighty (Psalm 139:14-15). You are loved by God and you are complete.

### **Ways to love yourself**

1. **Accept who you are.** When you accept how God made you, you will have the ability to maintain God's beautiful creation, value it, and love yourself. Stop wishing to be someone else. If that person you admire tells you what he or she has been through, you will be super grateful to God for your life and love what God has given you.

2. **Take care of yourself.** Maybe someone told you that dark-skinned girls aren't beautiful, or any stuff like that. During counselling, I always tell anyone that no woman is ugly. The only problem is the lack of self-care. The woman that you see and are admiring is taking care

of herself.

3. **Stop being hard on yourself.** Most people are so hard on themselves and wallow in regrets. Being hard on yourself isn't part of God's plan for your life (Jeremiah 29:11). He has given you His free gift of righteousness to have a right standing with Him, without any feeling of guilt or sin (2 Corinthians 5:21). Yes, you did what was wrong. Yet, forgive yourself because God has forgiven you if you accept his gift of salvation and justification in Christ Jesus (Romans 3:23-24). Ask God for mercy and forgiveness, then move on.

Some People are so hard on themselves that they have even refused to be happy. They tell themselves that they aren't worthy of love and attention or anything good because of the mistakes or wrong choices they have made in the past.

Some even go as far as refusing to associate with anyone or even starving themselves in order to gain God's forgiveness and love. You cannot earn such; God's

gift to mankind is free, all you need to do is to accept His love plan for you: “For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life” (John 3:16, NIV).

4. **Don’t believe those lies.** Most times people tell you what they see only from their perspective, often only focused on the physical. So, they tell you or ask you why you aren’t like this or like that or why you don’t look like this person or that person. Just tell them you love the way you look and that you are beautiful in God's eyes.

Whenever you hear anyone asking you any of the questions above, stop them immediately. Don’t believe nor accept such nonsense. They are all lies.

5. **Speak God’s word to yourself.** Psalms 139:14 says you are fearfully and wonderfully made by God. After His work of creation, God saw that everything He made was beautiful (Genesis 1:31). Remember you were made in God's image (Genesis 1:26-27).

The Bible should be your best friend. When you speak to yourself what God says in His word about you, you become exactly as He had planned it to be. The more you behold the word of God, the more you get transformed and become a better person who loves and accepts yourself just the way you are.

Try this out. Take your Bible and read it out loud to yourself daily for one month and see the difference it will make in your life.

**6. Change your friends.** Always have the right set of friends and circle of influence that speaks the right words to you, that can correct you in love; those that believe in you, not those that will talk you down. It's so painful to see beautiful, intelligent, and hardworking ladies and gents influenced by the wrong set of friends. It's not mandatory to have numerous friends.

Frequently ask yourself these questions: Why is this person my friend? What are the values or principles he or she lives by? Are we going on the same path? Can I

trust this person to influence my life? Who is his or her mentor? What kind of music, books, and messages do they listen to? If you can't honestly answer these questions about anyone you call a friend, then he or she shouldn't be your friend. Your friends reflect who you are and have a significant influence over your life.

Do you know that some of those so-called friends that you keep are envious of you? Some of them will give you wrong advice so you end up making wrong choices so they will mock you. Some of them are wolves in sheep's clothing. One of the major prayer points for you to make consistently is to ask God to reveal the purpose and the mission of all those who come around you especially those you call your friends. If only you are discerning to see their intentions, you will know those to keep close to you and those you should keep at arm's length (far from you).

Do you know that as a young person, you are largely influenced by your friends? It could be by what

they say, how they dress, how they respond to a situation, and even the choices they make. So, choose the right friends to keep.

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**Confession:** Say this out loud to yourself before the mirror.

*I love myself; I accept God's love for me. I love how I look because God made me beautiful. It doesn't matter if others see me in a different light, I know that God made me beautiful and I accept His love plan for my life.*

*I am making the right choices. I will keep the right set of friends, those who are focused, hardworking, caring, supportive, kind-hearted, friends that are Godly, and will give me good advice. I reject every spirit of comparison, envy, or jealousy. I have the fruits of the Holy Spirit at work inside of me. Every day, I work in love, joy, peace, patience, kindness,*

*goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.*

*I am sensitive to God's leading for my life, I am discerning to know those to keep close to me and those I am to avoid. I don't look down on God's creation, I love God's creation and I believe that everything is working out for my good because I love God. Amen.*

**Prayer:** Pray and ask God to help you get the right set of friends, friends that are not envious of you, friends that will help and support you. I pray that God disconnects you from every evil friend. I pray for you in the name of Jesus Christ that as far as the East is from the West, so shall God forever keep bad friends and bad influences away from you. Amen.

**Action Points:** Take a notebook and a pen. Write down all the names of your friends. Ask yourself questions:

1. Why is he or she, my friend?
2. What value does he or she bring to the table?



3. What are his or her values?
4. What value am I adding to them?
5. Where can I make changes in this friendship?
6. When should I stop this friendship?
7. How can I improve my friendship with him or her?

These questions will help you save your friends. Secondly, when you are done with the friendship lists, take time out to pray for them. Tell God to reveal their identities and why they are in your life, the purpose for the friendship, and his original intention for the friendship.

## Chapter 2: The Search

Challenges are bound to happen, but what makes the difference is how you handle them, and how you react when faced with challenges. Most times, the challenges we face are what God will use as a reference to others facing similar challenges in their own lives, and then He alone will take all the Glory.

When I was in senior secondary—SS1, to be precise—I had this Mathematics teacher who was a great terror to me. Whenever it was time for his class, my heart started to beat, I'd sweat profusely in a cold classroom. Most times when you tell him that you need further explanation on the subject, he won't oblige. To make matters worse, he will always call my name to answer his questions. Sometimes I'd purposely hide my face with the maths textbook, but he would always fish me out. It seemed as though I was the only student in the class. I hated maths because of that.

One day, we had a special annual event in school called the African Cultural Day Celebration where every student was expected to be dressed in their cultural attire instead of our school uniforms. I was so excited about that event because that was the one opportunity I had to dress uniquely. That year my parents got my sisters and me beautiful Indian saris and their accessories. I made up my mind to stand out, even though I was still battling with low self-esteem and shyness. I wanted to look good.

After assembly, we marched to our various classrooms. To my surprise, our first subject for the day was Mathematics. His class was initially scheduled for a later time, around the time the cultural event would begin. He had a lot to cover and wouldn't just allow that day's period to go like that.

As soon as I saw him, I was tensed, I almost peed on my pants, and I was trembling. Then he approached me and said before all my classmates, "Prayer you look

beautiful but your brain is empty. You are only taking your time to look good but you will not go far in life because you are dull; beautiful on the face but foolish in the head.”

As soon as he finished speaking, my heart crumbled, and some of my classmates laughed at me to scorn. I was so ashamed; I couldn't even concentrate anymore. My body was physically there but my mind was gone. I kept asking myself why I was so dull and not appreciated by my maths teacher. I felt there was something incomplete in me. I couldn't even look up in the class, I just bowed my head.

It was time for lunch break but I couldn't stand up. I was emotionally shattered; my bladder was full and hurting but I couldn't stand up. I had gotten one of the worst public humiliations. That day, I couldn't even participate in the cultural event. I just stayed in the class; I didn't move to get lunch at the canteen; the last thing

on my mind was food. Most times because I was shy, I'd ask my friends to help me get lunch from the canteen.

So, you can imagine how I felt that day. The painful part was that I didn't even say a word after those derogatory words. That day, I sat for hours, fixed in a position, from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m., the school closing hour. It was probably my longest day in school. Only God knew how I survived.

My junior secondary school days were awful. I was hurt by a lot of people, bullied, and blackmailed. There was a time in my class that no one was talking to me aside from a new student that came to the school. My classmates and seniors were spreading rumours that I was a witch and I wanted to kill them. The news went around that I should be avoided at all costs, or else I'd initiate them. I was only around sixteen at the time, you can imagine. Oh, I was hated in that school.

Much later, I got to discover that my seniors were jealous of me because I could sing. I remember our

principal would call me to the assembly ground to lead the students in Praise and Worship. I manage to climb the stage, but as soon as I started to sing, an unusual boldness and confidence came on me and I sang so well. But as soon as I stepped down from the stage, I'd resume my timidity.

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When I was around fifteen, a school friend met me after school and said, "I noticed that your breast isn't growing and I want to help you. There's something that you aren't doing that's why it looks so tiny." When she said that, I almost melted. I summoned the courage to ask her what I was doing wrong and what was preventing it from not growing as it should. She said, "Prayer, once you start allowing boys to be touching your breast consistently, it will start growing and increase in size. No man will marry you if you have small breasts."

She then made another suggestion, that when I am bigger, I can opt for breast enlargement surgery and have big breasts which will make me more confident. “Prayer,” she said, “can’t you see how my own is so full and a lot of boys in the class are admiring me.” I was so shocked; my lips flew apart.

I told her that I couldn’t do such a thing. Worse, she knew how timid I was, and I couldn’t even say a word to a boy not to talk of doing such a thing. She told me I wasn’t ready to have big breasts, that my breasts would remain like that forever, and then she left me at the school gate. I was like, “Oh Lord, I don’t want this. I can’t do this.” At the time, I was dealing with so much already.

After some weeks, I figured she was spreading those ideas among other girls in the class. Immediately I noticed, I disconnected from her. But I became more conscious that I had tiny breasts. To make matters worse, my elder sister was busty, so I felt there was something wrong with me. I came up with the idea to put

some clothes under my dress to give the impression that I was busty too. So, with that, my self-esteem became better a little because I was still very timid but no longer worried about having tiny beasts.

A few weeks after that conversation with my school friend, I dressed up for school with socks and foam packed under my dress to help my self-esteem. My father usually dropped me off by the school gate before leaving for work. That day, he said to me, “Prayer, I know that you are not busty. You must have put something inside your clothes to look this way. But that is deceit. Any man who loves you will love you just the way you are, no matter your height, your complexion, or any other requirements. Stop deceiving them by putting those things on your beasts. If a man marries you because of your physical appearance, wouldn’t he find out eventually that you deceived him? Be real, don’t live a fake life. Be yourself.”



He said he was training me to be bold and to accept myself the way I am. He then sent me back to remove all those things I put under my clothes and warned me never to put them again. After my conversation with my dad, I took the courage to start going to school without those foams, no matter how tiny my breasts were.

Thinking about that incident, I am most grateful to my father for his kind words and correction in love. My parents were my first mentors. They played a major role in shaping the woman that I am today. I wonder what would have become of me without their guidance. I have heard of cases of so many girls who made terrible mistakes because they were misled by bad friends and became sexually active at a very tender age.

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**Confession:** Say this out loud to yourself before the mirror.

*I live above challenges; challenges do not define me. I overcome them and they become a testimony for me. This present challenge I am facing is meant for me, just like every other challenge and obstacle I have encountered. I'll overcome this with the help of God.*

*I love my body and my growth over time, I don't live a fake or pretentious life. I live a life of peace and joy. I accept how God made me. I'll eat healthy, carry out exercises, and sleep well. I am proud of every milestone in my life and I don't compare my growth to that of my friends.*

*I take only wise counsel and advice. I am conscious of who I am in Christ Jesus and all that He has made me to be. I rejoice every day. Glory to God!*

**Prayer:** I pray for you today, that you will experience God's boldness and strength to say no to people who try to intimidate you, and may you receive the ability to speak up when you are oppressed and bullied. I pray for

you that God will help you navigate all life's challenges and problems and that you will find ways to overcome them. Receive the ability to accept yourself the way God created you, and receive the power to say no to various forms of body enhancement that will distort your body and your structure. There's supernatural help from God coming to you right now, believe it and you will receive it. Amen.

**Action Point:** God alone pulled me through that season of my life. Brace up, not everybody will accept you, not everyone will like you. Learn to speak up when people bully you or say derogatory words to you, please reject them and don't keep quiet. Don't compare your growth with others, you are on your stage so enjoy it, and don't let anyone make you feel inferior.

## Chapter 3: The Interactions

We live in a world that requires constant interactions. In the process of these interactions among human beings, offenses occur. In most cases, some people may deliberately or unintentionally hurt or cause you pain. What do you do? How do you handle such a situation? Do you bear the hurt forever? No. Forgiveness is the way forward, for your healing and health.

The more you interact with people, the more you experience people hurting you. The more people step on your toes—the more betrayals, lies, deceit, and more hurtful things. But we are compelled by God’s Word to forgive (Matthew 5:23-24; 6:15; Luke 17:3; Ephesians 4:32; Mark 11:25; Romans 12:19).

So many people have gone to their early graves because of unforgiveness, bitterness, and pain caused by people they might have loved, trusted, and even depended on. That’s why it is very important that we put

our complete trust in God Almighty alone. He gives us grace to forgive (Ephesians 4:32; Matthew 18:35).

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So, you see, we forgive people. We forgive our children, our spouses, and anyone who offended us. However, we forget to forgive ourselves. We carry the hurts, the pain, and the burdens of the past for several years. We bring into adulthood many painful experiences of our childhood or teenage years. This carriage messes up our relationships, our self-esteem, our level of impact, and our growth. We keep brooding over how we messed up opportunities, we go on to hurt more people, living in regrets, and so become unable to bring out the best in us.

Are you not tired of holding on to that pain? Aren't you tired of reminding yourself how you messed up and how undeserving you are of any opportunity? Please forgive yourself, let go of the hurts and pain. In doing so,

you are giving yourself the best care you can ever get elsewhere.

The Bible charges us to love our neighbour as ourselves (Matthew 22:37-39). But how can you love your neighbour as yourself when you don't even love yourself?

### **What is forgiveness and why is it very important?**

When you hear the word *forgiveness*, what comes to your mind? For me, it suggests letting go and releasing from your mind anyone who hurt you. However, forgiveness means different things to different people and is interpreted in different ways. Some people see forgiveness as a favour given to the offender, while others consider it as any act of kindness to their offender.

According to the American Psychological Association, "Forgiveness is wilfully putting aside feelings or resentment towards someone who has committed a wrong, been unfair or hurtful, or otherwise

harmed you in some way.”<sup>1</sup> It’s imperative to note that forgiveness brings peace of mind and freedom from emotional bondage. Also, forgiving the persons or persons that hurt you doesn’t mean that the person is right or their actions are justified. But when you forgive, it is for your own good, for your healing and your health.

### **How do you heal?**

#### **1. Trust the Holy Spirit to heal you completely.**

This is the best remedy anyone can give you. I know this from experience and what I have witnessed. The Holy Spirit knows you well, He understands how you were made, and He knows your pain no matter how deep it is or how long it lasts (Romans 8:26-27).

Sometimes, we go through things we can’t even explain to our loved ones or family members. Sometimes, no matter how hard we try to explain

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<sup>1</sup> American Psychological Association. “Forgiveness.” Accessed November 21, 2023. <https://www.apa.org/topics/forgiveness>.

ourselves, it just doesn't make sense to them. But the Holy Spirit knows you better (1 Corinthians 10:11-11; Ephesians 3:20). He saw how that person broke your heart, He saw how that person you trusted betrayed you, He saw how you were molested, and other dehumanizing things that must have occurred. He knows everything that happens to you. The Holy Spirit understands every pain and challenge you are going through or encounter. It's important to note that, unlike human beings who will condemn and castigate you, the Holy Spirit will never do that. He will hold your hands and walk you through every process. Trust Him, in this world; there will never be anyone that best understands the pain or challenges like He does.

Most times when people are hurting, they look for others to hurt back, to make them feel what they felt or what they are feeling. But even after carrying out such an act, the pain doesn't go away completely. It might leave for a while but will return after some time—sometimes,



even worse than before. Some go as far as engaging in drug abuse, prostitution, pornography, and other forms of vices in order to reduce or subside the pain and hurt. But it doesn't just go away. Why not trust the one that is able to heal you completely without causing more damage? Run to the Holy Spirit for help. I don't even know how I would have done this life without the Help of the Holy Spirit.

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I know you will have several questions going through your mind right now. Who is the Holy Spirit? Why is He the only one that can heal my hurt?

The Holy Spirit is the third person of the Trinity (2 Corinthians 3:17; 13:14; John 14:16-17). He is one with the Father and the Son (John 14:10-11; 1 John 5:7). He is neither less important nor less powerful; He is God and equal with the Father and the Son. The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God—He made you and so you have to trust

Him. In the same way, you can't operate a new machine without the help or supervision of the company or a manual, it's the same way you can't properly function in life to the fullest, without the help of the Holy Spirit. Yes, we don't see the Holy Spirit, and we can't touch or relate with Him through all our senses. But His presence, impact, and ministry in us, through us, and for us is so real and profound.

The Holy Spirit is God; He is the voice of God. Sometimes, even when He ministers to us, we don't realize He's the one.

### **How can I receive the Holy Spirit?**

Firstly, you need to accept the Lordship of Jesus Christ, believe that He died for your sins, and then confess His Lordship over your life (Romans 10:9-10; Ephesians 1:13-14). Thereafter, you are saved and then you receive the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 1:13-14). Other ways are:

**a. Through the laying on of hands.** When someone

filled with the Holy Spirit, especially a man of God, lays hands on you by faith you can receive the Holy Spirit (see Acts 19:1-6).

**b. Through asking in prayer.** The Lord Jesus said, “If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him” (Luke 11:13, NIV). Ask the Father in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ for the baptism of the Holy Spirit. (Please check out this book: *Seven Things the Holy Spirit Will Do in You* by Pastor Chris Oyakhilome. It will bless you greatly and answer many more questions you may have.)

2. **Seek help from your loved ones.** In this life, you can’t do anything alone. You need help. Let your loved ones know what you are going through and the pain you feel. They will help you out even if they can’t stop the pain entirely. They will be there all through the process,

giving you all the support and love needed to navigate this painful journey.

3. **See a therapist or an experienced Counsellor.**

They will help you out and seek faster ways to heal and strengthen you.

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**Confession:** Say this out loud to yourself before the mirror.

*Today and always, I have forgiven myself for all the pain I inflicted upon myself knowingly or unknowingly. I forgive myself for the times I should have spoken up and I couldn't. I forgive myself for the wrong steps, the wrong decisions, and the wrong choices I made for myself. I forgive myself for the mishaps I have caused in people's lives, in people's marriages and businesses. I forgive myself and I let go.*

*Right now, I accept the love of God. I trust God to help me. I am helped by the Lord. I live a life of peace. Amen.*

**Prayer:** I pray for you; may the Holy Spirit completely heal you from the inside. May He heal those places that no human being can understand or feel. I ask, O Lord, that you give this reader the grace to forgive himself/herself. For the wrongs, you my reader, have caused yourself. During those times you allowed people to trample on you, believing the lies people told you.

Yes, you fell for those lies. Yes, you made those mistakes. Yes, you weren't aware and the mistake happened. Please, dear beloved, forgive yourself. You have stayed under this burden for too long. It's time to be free.

**Action Point:** Look at yourself in the mirror right now and say these words (personalise it by putting your full name):

*Today, I forgive myself. I love Prayer  
Nwagboso Ikegwuonu. I am accepted by  
God and I accept God's love plan for me.*

Speak up. Don't bottle up the pain, it will only cause much more pain and suffering. Speaking up especially with people you trust and can confide in makes the healing process easier and quicker.

## Chapter 4: The Victory

Every day of our lives we speak to different people from different backgrounds. Have you made out time to reflect on the discussions you had in a day? Have you asked, “Were they beneficial to me? Did they add value to my life? Did they build me up? Did I add value to the lives of the people I met?” Our words ought to build up and not tear down (Ephesians 4:29).

Do you know that your words reflect who you are?

Do you know that your words shows if you are foolish or wise?

Do you know that your words show the content and deposit of your heart?

I can know the kind of person you are and the heart you have when you speak. Some people when angry, they speak terrible words that will trouble you. Words reveal the content of our hearts.

Luke 6:45 says, “A good man brings good things out of the good stored up in his heart, and an evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in his heart. For the mouth speaks what the heart is full of.” (NIV)

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One day, I was listening to some teenagers talking. Their words were mostly vulgar filled with insults. There was hardly any positive remark in their conversation. I was surprised and wondered about the future implications of their words. Proverbs 18:21 tells us that we will face the consequences of our words.

Every word that we speak is a seed, spoken consciously or not. That’s why we have to be careful and speak the right words in order to get the right results.

### **Why you should speak the right words daily:**

1. People are going through a lot of challenges and the right words can be just the encouragement they



need. Speak only the right words and watch how it unfolds into something beautiful.

2. Your words help you think. Speak the right words, and you will inevitably think about the right things.

3. Your words help you build relationships. Nobody wants to have a friend who always uses negative words. So, when you speak the right words, it helps you to build good relationships.

4. Choosing the right words affects your emotional health, reduces stress, and makes you look fresher and happier.

5. Using the right words brings about conflict resolution and prevents misunderstanding. It fosters peace and unity.

6. Your words influence others positively or negatively, whether you like it or not there are people who look up to you and they are observing your sections. Please be a positive influence on them by speaking the right words.

7. It helps you build a positive attitude toward life that will last a lifetime. When speaking the right words becomes a habit, you speak them more even in challenging times.

8. It builds a legacy for you such that even when you aren't there, people can stand up for you in defence of what you can and cannot say. It builds trust and integrity in your character.

### **Have you eaten today?**

Are you hungry? What you would like to eat is often the next question. Different cultures and traditions have different dishes, but there's a particular kind of hunger that can't be quenched or solved by eating physical food alone. There is hunger that can only be quenched by the word of God.

Jesus said in Matthew 4:4, "Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of the father." Referring to Deuteronomy 8:3,

Jesus was implicitly telling us about this hunger that I told you cannot be satisfied by physical food. The word of God ought to be daily bread for a child of God. That means daily reading of the word of God, memorizing it, and meditating on it.

If I speak only what my heart is full of (Luke 6:45), I'd be on the safe side if I take in more good words. The Bible is where to get myself filled up with good words. To supplement that will be other good books written by men who honour God and His word.

While growing up, my dad would ensure we read at least a chapter of the Bible every day before we could get any meal. Then it looked like a punishment, it wasn't easy. But today we are better off eating the Bible first before any meal is served in the house. The challenge about this was that, years after, we didn't maintain that practice. But I can tell you that in those times we learned from the Bible insights that shaped me and my siblings.

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**Confession:** Say this out loud to yourself before the mirror.

*The words that I speak bring healing and health to my body, and also to those who listen to me. Before I speak, I think through my words. I don't speak out of anger bitterness or jealousy or hatred. The Holy Spirit controls my tongue and how I speak each word to those around me. My words are anointed, my words bring miracles and testimonies to my life and to that of those around me. I speak only the words that God directs. I don't speak words that will tear people apart or bring pain. I am passionate and consistent in studying God's word. I read God's word each day just as I read other books. I eat God's word each day just as I eat my food every day.*

**Prayer:** I pray for you in the name of Jesus Christ, that your words will bring Glory to God, and your words will bring healing and peace to your hearers. If by any chance you spoke an idle word, that has directly or indirectly affected your hearers, I speak forth the mercy of God for you. I pray for total healing for you and any of your hearers who got affected by your words, actions, or deeds that you caused. Receive your healing right now from every hurtful word, action, and deed, in Jesus' name. Amen.

**Action Point:** Speak only words that will bring healing and wholeness to people, and most importantly, to yourself. Don't speak words of bitterness or hatred or any negativity. The same way that you eat food every day, that is how you should eat (read, memorize, and meditate) on God's word each day.

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# About Author

Prayer Nwagboso Ikegwuonu is an experienced humanitarian aid worker with about six (6) years of experience. She is the founder and CEO of Naza Agape Foundation, leading a team of about 500 volunteers across the globe (Pakistan, Ghana, India, Cameroon, Zambia, Cyprus, and Nigeria), daily providing solutions to four out of the 17 UN SDGs: Poverty, Zero Hunger, Quality Education, and Partnership for the Goals. From 2017, 18,000 lives have been impacted across the globe. She is also the co-founder of Girlified Ltd, a sanitary pad company that produces eco-friendly sanitary pads made from banana fibres in a bid to reduce plastic pollution and fight period poverty.



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