

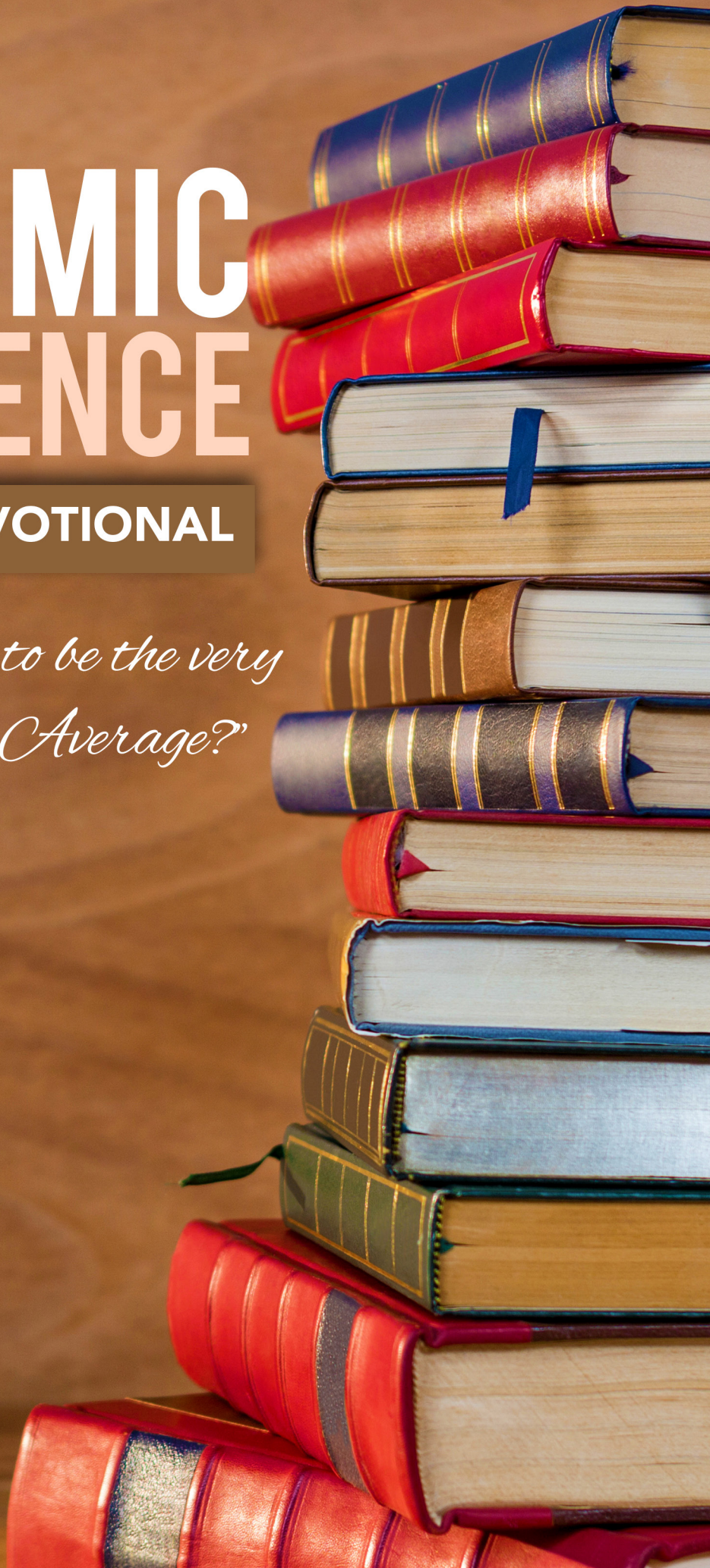
ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

DEVOTIONAL

"...God wants you to be the very best, why settle for Average?"

**Morenike
Vincent**

Forward By Dr. Folashade Ayinde



ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE DEVOTIONAL

...God wants you to be the Very Best, why settle for Average?

Academic Excellence Devotional

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What I love about this book is the simple way in which powerful truths about academic excellence is communicated. The author herself has always excelled academically. You can be sure you will get great value when you read this book.

-Jimi Tewe (Career Success Catalyst)

Someone once said “if you want to destroy a society first destroy the educational system”.

Academic excellence is not the same thing with passing exams. We have more students who passed exams and are either in the Universities or have graduated, but sadly can't defend what they read or studied.

I'm excited about this great book because it will serve as a guide that will help our teenagers and young adults achieve maximum success through excellence and hence become world class youngsters.

-Chichi Umeseaka (Special Adviser Teen Matters to Governor of Abia State / Teenage Coach / Founder Nineteen)

“This devotional took my mind back to my secondary and university days and I am so glad to say it has aptly captured principles God taught me that produced results for me as a student. It is practical and very relevant to every academic setting. I encourage everyone who wants to excel in life not just academically to devote time to stay on this great resource. The sky won't be your limit, it would be your starting point. Go in this your might! Christ has already given you all you need for life and godliness. God bless you Reni for obeying and shining your light for the next generation.”

– Oluwabusola Majekodunmi (Founder, Steer to Greatness Foundation)

“Where else can you find the truth about academic excellence but in the word of God? This is not a regular self-proclaimed or head-knowledge book, it's a revelation; a light in darkness and action-driven book that sets any academic-captive free. Academic Excellence Devotional is THE TRUTH you need to know for a wholesome academic life. “And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall set you free (John 8:32) ...If you seek clarity and liberty in your academics, read and shelve a copy of this book.”

- Ola Olaleye, the Headlamp (Founder, Life on Purpose Network and the Elaloe Academy)

Why settle for less when you can have more? Morenike's must have educational devotional will transform you into the excellent student you were destined to be. This book should be every teacher's, parent's and student's favourite book. Love it!

- Mercy Akamo (TEDx Ambassador,Organiser & Curator TEDxGbagada and TEDxkidsGbagada)

This is a great devotional, to say the least. I was privileged to go through it in less than a week and it became clearer to me that God wants all of his children to excel, even in Academics!

Now this is My definition of Academic Excellence- doing the best I can with the gifts and abilities God has given, without the spirit of competition or seeking to excel simply to be better than others, but ALL TO THE GLORY OF GOD, this expresses to the world how Excellent our God is!

-Raquel Jacobs (Founder, Beyond the Classroom Foundation)

This book is heaven sent! The underlying message of this book is for each person reading to understand his/her God-given right to Academic Excellence. It is thoroughly enriching, with every single chapter backed by sure promises of God.

Written in an easy to understand way, so everyone can relate, this book is more than an academic devotional, as I believe that it was designed to bring it's readers closer to God.

- Oluwakemisola Osho (Chartered Accountant)

A Teen Behavioural Coach had this to say...

Have you ever seen your results and you know they could have been better?

Yes, it has happened to me so many times. What about you?

I can say that Morenike showed me in this book what my attitude should have been concerning my academics. She exposed the lackadaisical attitudes of many young people. She is talking about you and me in this book. As I was reading the book, I saw all the mistakes I made as a student.

I didn't like school at all; reading was a burden and exams were night mares for me. I just wanted to go through school because that's the norm. There was no desire in me and consequently, no corresponding action. Even in pharmacy school, all I did mostly was to cram because I was lazy and nonchalant.

From my experience as a pharmacist and teen behavioral coach, I know that there are so many teens and young adults that have challenges studying and achieving academic excellence.

There are many teens that have complained to me about disliking school and I understand because I was also like that.

A teenager once said to me, "Aunty Tosin, reading is boring".

Parents have complained to me, "Tosin, my teenager doesn't like reading".

Teachers and school owners have said to me, "Tosin, students these days aren't serious. They don't like education".

Therefore, the Academic Excellence Devotional is coming at a good time!

I love how Morenike challenges you and me to evaluate ourselves with questions like:

- **What perceptions do you have about your academics?**
- **What subject/courses do you feel are far beyond you?**

Also, this devotional charges us with strong words of inspiration such as,

- **Do not settle for anything less than the best, because God wants you to have nothing less than the very best.**
- **To change your grades, you must change your mindset.**
- **Friends are like elevators- they either take you up or bring you down. This just blew me away.**

This lady is full of the word of God. She gave scriptures to back up every topic.

You cannot read and apply the words in this book and remain the same. It is not possible.

The Academic Excellence Devotional should be in the hands of every teen and young adult. It shows what God is saying about you and me. You see yourself through God's word and not just your circumstances.

You know that we young people love stories. Yes, Morenike has got us covered with real life stories of people that achieved academic excellence.

Simply put, you should read this book because it is filled with timely godly wisdom, instructions, inspiration and calls to action.

I am a student for life. Therefore, I am super excited about what this book has done for me and will do for you. I need to regularly read this book, and you should too. Get yours now and be transformed forever.

I am humbled to write this. This book shows that diligence and hard work pays. It has been a beautiful journey of coaching, inspiring and working with teens. I am glad Morenike is doing the same.

Fight and take hold of your academic journey now.

-Oluwatosin Fatungase (Teen Behavioural Coach)

To every teen and young adult who desires to glorify God in his/
her academics and life generally.

*“Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good
works and glorify your Father in heaven”.*

- Matthew 5:16 NKJV

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Omobolaji mi, thank you for always pushing me to be better. Thank you for always reviewing every of my writings and ensuring that each is backed by the scripture.

Thank you for being very supportive my dear family. I cannot thank God enough for you all.

Raquel Jacobs, you are a friend turned sister, I remember that chat we had and we both shared our dreams and promised to keep tabs on each other, thank you for following through. Oluwakemisola Osho, thank you for always asking and holding me accountable to this, I am grateful.

To the over 150 teenagers, young adults and educational consultants who attended the online academic seminar held in May 2016 and the #30DaysAcademicExcellence held in June 2016, I was amazed at the turnout and inspired by your participation and God knows you are a testament of His faithfulness.

Because you showed up I realised that this book is a must-write as it is a tool in God's hands for His very own. It was long overdue.

To Alero, Ola and LifeOnPurpose network, thank you for the support and encouragement.

Sheba, Bimbo, SAU and Azeez, thank you for sharing your academic excellence story.

To my DreamTeam, thank for all you did to make this happen.

Oh! My God, my personal Abba, the giver of words; I am thankful for keeping this book burning in my heart since 2009. This is for you Lord, receive all the glory.

INTRODUCTION

2009...

I remember the night vividly; I sat on my bed in the university, penning another “write-up” for my class mates on academics based on scripture, when a thought came to my heart “these write-ups form pages of a devotional.”

I was shocked to say the least and thought – *at least let me get a note book so I can start.*

First, I needed 31 scriptures that are relevant to academic excellence and they were not so hard to get since my dear friend (Ibukun) and I usually wrote out scriptures for different areas of our lives. So I had most of the scriptures and most of the chapter titles and began to write. But other things took centre stage and the years went by but my note book went everywhere with me.

There were many times I gave up, but God kept fanning to flames the dream and kept it afresh in my heart.

In the fullness of time...

In 2016 I felt strongly that God has given me the grace to write, then my friend Raquel Jacobs chats me up, we talk about our dreams and promise to keep tabs on each other.

Later in April, a thought came to my heart to have an online academic excellence seminar and I obeyed. Raquel and I created fliers and people started sending me messages to join in; to my amazement over 150 teenagers, young adults and educational consultants participated in the almost 3-hour seminar. Before we finished a thought dropped in my heart that I should request people to stay as I would be doing a #30DaysAcademicExcellence in the month of June. I was scared because it would mean posting write-ups daily for 30 days but I beat the fear and told the group. More people joined and the 30 days were amazing. I too learnt a lot and added a bonus day of sharing with weekly tips on academic excellence and had people share their academic excellence stories (thank you Sheba Alogbo and Oluwakemisola Osho, I truly appreciate you).

The 31day sharing on the academic excellence group form the pages of the devotional you hold.

I say thank you to everyone who attended the seminar and the #30DaysAcademicExcellence, I am eternally grateful.

WHY DO STUDENTS FAIL EXAMINATIONS?

One of the major reasons is that they do not do their homework. Yes homework.

Many times people just read to pass examinations but they fail to find out the matrices (what is required) that determine their success in the course/subject, what the lecturer/teacher looks out for, definition of terms used in examinations, the list goes on. This process in itself when done brings a lot of focus and clarity to the person writing the examination and in effect makes reading more focused and more effective.

Another reason is many have an Entitlement mentality and as such do not take responsibility for their own success, instead they point accusing fingers to everyone else but themselves. Many do not hold themselves to a high standard of excellence and refuse to settle for mediocrity (Average).

I believe that this book will provide answers to the questions that your heart seeks and yes, even though you did not start out very well, and cannot go back to re-write every mistake, you can finish well – Excellently.

FOREWORD

This Academic Excellence Devotional is apt especially at this time when most students find it difficult to read and understand what is being taught in school. It is written in simple, easy to understand language and the words are straight from the heart of the author who is very passionate about building up teenagers and young adults; and what better way to bring excellence in the academic life of these group of people than to have a daily guide that is easy to follow with scriptures that are relevant, to help especially at times when we are at a loss for words.

When I was asked to review the manuscript, I had thought in my mind that I would tackle the task in phases. However as I opened the manuscript, I was deeply engrossed that I sat and read through for 9 hours non-stop. I was really captivated about the easy flow, the daily topics addressed in the light of scripture are so relevant and any student that wants academic excellence should grab a copy.

There are strategies in the devotional that can be used in planning a study throughout one's academic career from secondary school through to university and even while preparing for professional examinations.

I recommend that you read and practice the Academic Excellence Nuggets after Days 4, 11, 21 and 28. The information there is priceless, and for those who are afraid or believe that they cannot excel and get A's then Day 5 would help in solving the problem. Stories shared by those interviewed on their journeys to academic excellence would also encourage you to be steadfast and not give up.

This devotional will help you make a difference in your academic pursuit, in my over 30 years in the academic field as a lecturer, I would say that there are valuable lessons to be learnt from the use of the daily guide of the Academic Excellence Devotional. I believe the book will help you achieve academic excellence.

Dr. Folashade Ayinde

Chief Lecturer, Food Technology

Lagos State Polytechnic, Ikorodu Lagos State Nigeria

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THE FOUNDATION ESTABLISHED.

DAY 1

Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth."

– Genesis 1:26 NKJV

The first command God gave man was not to compete but to have dominion. There was no form of negotiation, God was clear on the mandate of man – to have dominion.

Why then do we, God's own children, think that being in charge or in control or being the best is not for everyone? I have not seen any part of scripture where it was written that God's command for domination, or His promises are for a select few. All I see is that God created man, both male and female and he commanded every man to have dominion – including you. There are several promises and blessings for God's children that we fail to tap into. A blank cheque has been given to us all. Promises to the "whosoever" of this world that is not limited by age, class, gender, tribe or nationality.

"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future"

–Jeremiah 29:11 NIV

Friend, GOD WANTS YOU TO SUCCEED. He is a God of results and He wants same for his children.

Psalm 82:6-7 says *you are God's child, but you shall die like mere men, why? Because you do not know who you are and what you carry.*

If you knew who you are and God's mandate upon your life, you will demand more of yourself, so you can deliver more to the world and glorify your father in heaven.

So, I charge you, DO NOT SETTLE for anything less than "best" because God wants you to have nothing less than the very best.

Question: Now that you know God wants you to succeed, what will you do differently?



WHEN FAILURE HITS TIME AND TIME AGAIN...

“There is no time to feel bad about failing this examination, shake it off and start to prepare for the next one,” – words I spoke to a friend who had seen his result for an examination he wrote and did not pass.

As I remembered these words, they resonated deep within me because this is what I practiced too and it has helped me time and time again.

You see, I have had my fair share of failing examinations too; I vividly remember lying on the rug and trying to check online the result for some professional exams. I was already rejoicing because three of the four papers had loaded and I had passed them but then the fourth loaded and it was a failure, God knows I wept.

It was painful; I had put in my best. I did not stay there, I went back to my box and offloaded my books once again, the dream was farther than I hoped it would be but I knew I needed to keep at it if I wanted to reach my goal. There was no time to sulk, no time to feel like the examiners had been cruel to me (even though I felt so). I went back to my books, I went back to my drawing board and I re-strategised and worked at it till I passed that examination.

Failing an examination does not make you a failure, just as sitting in a car garage does not make you a car. Too often we define ourselves by momentary situations that can be changed.

When failure hits, do not spend your time feeling bad, blaming the world, sulking or being angry. No, instead re-strategise, find out why you failed and address it. For me I realised the particular course I failed required hands-on experience which I did not have, so I searched and asked people for lecturers and tuition centres which taught that course well. I found one and as I sat in class while my lecturer taught, I kept saying to myself, “No wonder I did not pass this paper,” I had seen that by gleaning and learning from the experiences of those who taught me (my lecturer for the course had hands-on experience), I got the missing part of my preparation and of a truth I passed the exam at the next attempt.

So find out why you failed, but do not term yourself a failure. Re-strategise, keep at it and excel.

If you have been operating at or below average and you are wondering if you could ever do any better, I would say, you can, just pass once, just get an A once and then you will see that it would be difficult for you to be average again because something would have changed on your inside.

I'm excited about this great book because it will serve as a guide that will help our teenagers and young adults achieve maximum success through excellence and hence become world class youngsters.

-Chichi Umeseaka (Special Adviser Teen Matters to Governor of Abia State / Teenage Coach / Founder Nineteen)

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***-Jimi Tewe
Career Success Catalyst***

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***-Oluwatosin Fatungase
Teen Behavioural Coach***

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Morenike is a lover of God and people, a graceful speaker and a heart-writer. She loves to help people become awakened to the lives they have been called of God to live and achieve their God-inspired dreams.

Her heart for family life led her to start She's Connected Family Life Network, for ladies to grow together in God while mirroring the phenomenal woman in Proverbs 31.

With a burden for education and the next generation, she started the Academic Excellence Campaign and held online seminars for Academic Excellence in 2016. She regularly speaks at events where she inspires her audience to strive for academic excellence and to make wise career choices.

Morenike is a Chartered Accountant.

She is wife to her best friend and King, Omobolaji.



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