

BY PASTOR WALE AFELUMO

YOU MATTER TO GOD

SCRIPTURAL REFERENCE

Matthew 8:1-4

ADDITIONAL STUDY

Philippians 4:8, Ephesians 4:22-24 and Jeremiah 31:3

CONFESSION

I'm no longer a slave to negativity!
I am who God says I am; I am the apple of His eye, I am more valuable to God than many sparrows, I am God's special possession, I am His workmanship created for good works, and I am accepted in the Beloved. Hallelujah

Jesus reached out his hand and touched the man. "I am willing," He said. "Be clean!" Immediately he was cleansed of his leprosy. Matthew 8:3

One battle we all often have to fight is to overcome that voice that says, "You are not good enough; you don't qualify." It is the voice that speaks from a deep place in our past; childhood memories. Voices that have come to turn you into a timid, afraid and pessimistic person. It's the voice of the teacher that termed your inquisitive mind a nuisance, it is the voices of parents who told you that you were too forward for asking questions for enlightenment, voices of friends who told you that your giving attention to your studies was a show-off, and the voices of elders who said your confidence was sheer rebellion and rudeness. They never encouraged you to try new things. They may not know it but they killed something in you.

You also may be a victim of faulty parental upbringing, streaked with emotional and physical abuse, and these experiences have come back to haunt you at different stages of your life. They have made you afraid to dare. Sometimes you may even mouth big things and venture to dream, but these voices from your past intimidate you with the goal to stifle you and impede your progress. These voices speak from your pain, your childhood, your past failures and from your fears. Now, you grapple with the fear of failure, the fear of being alone, the fear of never finding a person who values you.

It may in fact be the voice of an actual person in your life right now; a psychologically and emotionally traumatizing relationship that you have indulged for too long. Prolonged verbal abuse from a mentor or a loved one has a way of settling into the deepest parts of our being and holding us bound to the whims of our jailer.

God wants you to silence those negative voices... Learn to shut it down! Jesus said, "My sheep hear My voice and they follow me." As Christians, we must know the voice that is NOT the voice of God. We must learn to address those voices. Don't let the seed settle in the soil of your heart. Rake it out at once. Learn to answer back with the Word of God written about you in Scripture.

Jesus, in touching the leper in spite of his 'leprosy,' affirmed him. Beyond his healing, it was Jesus telling him through His touch that, "You matter. You are not what you went through. You are a son of Abraham." Remember: You are beautiful within and without, educated, gifted, skilled, uniquely talented, you are loved by many, you are privileged to be alive and you have a great future. Life may have termed you leprous but God sees you differently. Don't let the devil switch God's 'price tag' on you. You matter to God and you matter to me.

CONTACTS

PHONE: +234 9082222222
EMAIL: INFO@INSPIRED2GO.ORG

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