

I Say A Little Prayer For You

Devotional and Prayers for Lesbian, Gay,
Bisexual and Transgender Christians

By

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Preface

Hello People, Love to you in the name of the Holy One.

As I listened to music/songs, I have come to appreciate much secular, classic and modern day music, which spoke to the heart and core of my being in addition to the hymns of my traditional Christian background, such as Mariah Carey's "Hero", Gloria Gaynor's "I Will Survive", Queen's "I Want to Break Free", King Sunny Ade & Onyeka Onwenu's "Wait" and many more.

The inspiration for the title of this Monthly 'Prayer and Praise' messages for you and me was ignited by the Holy Spirit through the song by Aretha Franklin, "I Say A little Prayer for You".

Every month with Bible references, we would pray for each other and our world. You are welcomed to this

inclusive assembly, please be free and let the Holy Spirit guide you, lead you into the presence of God.

I focus in prayers as the Holy Spirit leads me in my thoughts, convictions, and teachings, I am thankful for the gifts of grace and mercy bestowed upon us. I am indebted to you for joining us, your passion and contributions by your faithfulness and for being part of this 'Prayer and Praise' meeting. God the Holy One, with numerous names and indefinable love continue to be with you.

I began to explore the idea of studying "The Message" KJV, NKJV, TNIV, NIV and NRSV versions of the Bible, what leaps out of these passages are amazing, sometimes harmony and other times conflict. What I am experiencing is the struggle and joy of interpretation by the authors and writers of the Bible.

My determination to work on devotions may be unrealistic, I wanted the Holy Spirit to lead and there are days I surely do not feel neither ignited nor passionate about writing anything, yet, some days, when I pray, feel a connection in my spirit and I am overloaded with information and over pouring of thoughts that my pen flow gradually with these inspiring thoughts, for this I am grateful.

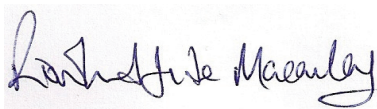
I have also heavily focused on issues of injustice, spiritual development, reconciliation of spirituality and sexuality for Lesbians, Gays, Bisexuals, Transgender and Intersex (LGBTI) brothers and sisters. I am also compelled by the Holy Spirit, to widen the scope of my exhortation to include other people and subject areas which can only be a blessing. I believe there are links in all the areas and matters raised.

I am determined to share my personal and spiritual experiences as original as they are, these has led me to be mindful of the low days and high days, I am also admit ably learning to relax and not over burden my mind, heart and thoughts.

This tool is aimed at empowering all people of faith, who believe in inclusion, to rise and claim their place in the religious communities without an apology. It is my hope to develop more volumes as this is the first book of many to come.

I want to encourage you to take time as regular as you are able to pray and study. God bless you, God bless our universe, Amen.

More love, more power,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Rowland Jide Macaulay". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'R' and a long, sweeping underline.

Reverend Rowland Jide Macaulay

Chapter One: Because of Your Little Faith

Matthew 17:20 – ***“Jesus said to them, ‘Because of your little faith. For truly I tell you, if you have faith the size of a* mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, ‘Move from here to there’, and it will move; and nothing will be impossible for you.’”***

I have sat, spoken, chatted, exchanged emails with many Lesbians, Gays, Bisexuals, Transgender and Intersex (LGBTI) people over the years. When the issues of our sexuality hits the conversation followed by any suggestion of “Coming Out”, many have defended by retorting “what is the purpose, why do we need to come out, why do we need to make a statement, why do we need to wear the rainbow colour badge, why do we need to make it obvious that we are LGBTI people?”

I want to remind you that the fear of being ourselves is as a shortage of our faith in God, a sabotage of the diverse impressive creation in the image of God. Yes people get killed for saying they are Lesbians, Gays, Bisexual, Transgender and or Intersex, people get

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fired from their jobs and evicted from their homes, however we are not excluded from the presence of the Almighty God, we need to live the truth and I encourage you to do so without fear.

I pondered on the above text, and resulted that we are afraid and filled with fear because we have so little faith to make that claim, and make ourselves visible for the world to see, and to be the light of the world, even if it meant waving our rainbow flags.

Our heterosexual brothers and sisters already have a place of acceptance at the world's table, all of us have a place at the table of our Creator, and we need to show up at the earthly table with our identity of comfort, the truth about who we are. Yes I know this will create some pain for you, your parents, your children, your work colleagues, but the truth also remains, how long are we going to hold on to our little faith, embroidered with internalised fear?

Let me also remind you today that nothing is impossible for you, if you feel that the support of your family is more important then you need to know that we are rejecting God who made us. Have faith in Jesus and know that all will be well for you. I have been through the pain myself and wish it less on my enemies but I

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tell you the liberation and freedom with God is far more assurance of love.

I pray and call on LGBTI people today to say to this mountain, “Move from here to there and it will move, because nothing is impossible for us to do”, when we apply faith in God. God bless you, God bless our universe, Amen.

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Write down your thoughts:

What will you do differently today?

Now write your prayers: (For yourself & the world)

Memorable Quotation: *“Know therefore that the Lord your God is God, the faithful God who maintains covenant loyalty with those who love God and keep God’s commandments, to a thousand generations, and who repays in their own person those who reject God...”*

Deuteronomy 7:9-10.

Chapter Two: All Authority in Heaven

Matthew 28:18-20 – “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

When the Bible speaks to the people, it is often inclusive in many ways, many theologians whether conservative or liberal often identify the specific text which spoke in time bound and to specific peoples. However there are texts in the Bible we can agree that spoke to all people and never discriminated in any way, for example, John 3:16; “For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life”.

This verse spoke to the lives of all people regardless of race, nationality, wealth or health status, the key point is “everyone who believes”. For me and many people

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who identify as Lesbians, Gays, Bisexuals, Transgender, Intersex (LGBTI), we are mainly excluded by popular religion from the opportunity or chance to express our beliefs as “anyone”. It is poignant to note and be assured from the same text that God loved the world and if that is the case the world includes LGBTI people and I conclude that the scripture is in no wise discriminatory.

The opening text in this devotion and prayer is non discriminatory, Jesus was not selective of who he will grant the power and authority, he went through death and hell to ensure we all have it, and I invite all people, Lesbians, Gays, Bisexuals, Transgender, Intersex, and heterosexuals to claim that “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to us too, because we are believers and must step out to save all people and all nations. We do not need any specialised church, “us and them””.

Let us go therefore and make disciples of all nations, regardless of race, or sexual orientation baptizing them in the name of the Creator and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that we have been commanded.

I pray for many that feel they are not included in the

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love and call of God, that our creator will bring understanding and compassion to each heart to understand the will of God for humanity. God bless you, God bless our universe. Amen.

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Write down your thoughts:

What will you do differently today?

Now write your prayers: (For yourself & the world)

Memorable Quotation: *“When the righteous are in authority, the people rejoice, but when the wicked rule, the people groan.”*

Proverbs 29:2.

Chapter Three: Blessed be the God

Ephesians 1:3-4 – “Blessed be the God and Creator of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, just as God chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless before God in love.”

I recognised a pattern in the heterosexual communities and some parts of the gay communities that continues to create prejudice and pain for the welfare and being of Lesbians, Gays, Bisexuals, Transgender and Intersex (LGBTI) people. What they have in common to some extent is that as long LGBTI people confess Christ with little or no publicity of our sexual being and or expression of same sex, then it is okay if we serve in their churches, mosques or synagogues. It is okay if we raise our hands in praise together, but what they have asked us to do is deny who we are, both to the world and to God, that for me is not acceptable, this idea and pattern of denial is encompassed in confessions and statements which seeks to deface all of the creativity of the selfless creation of God.

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Once I was told that effeminate homosexuals are evil, how about effeminate heterosexuals? And people argued why do effeminate people have to snap their fingers and tap their feet, why do we have to roll our eye balls a million times and why are these boys trying to be girly and or why do they behave like women? What I know is that many of the effeminate people cannot change their expression or bury it for the sake of pleasing others who feel uncomfortable.

What I also know is that since we cannot control who we are in terms of our sexuality, regardless of race, culture and other factors, then we must bless God our creator, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places. We are chosen by Christ from the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless before God in love. That love I know has multiplied for the gay community as they have learnt through the horrendous experiences of hostility.

When we confess that we believe in Jesus and accept Christ Jesus as our Lord and Saviour, we are not supposed to change from black to white, or white to black, we are not supposed to change our good nature and character, we are expected to be more like Jesus Christ, after all, the artist portrait images of Jesus, conceived, showed Jesus with long hair in immaculate

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flowing outfits.

When we accept Jesus Christ, we continue to grow in the strength and love of God, then we can snap our fingers and tap our feet, roll our eye balls and say “Blessed be the God and Creator of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, and that we are chosen by God before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless in love.” God bless you, God bless our universe, Amen.

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Write down your thoughts:

What will you do differently today?

Now write your prayers: (For yourself & the world)

Memorable Quotation: *“Those who are unspiritual do not receive the gifts of God’s spirit, for they are foolishness to them and they are unable to understand them because they are spiritually discerned. Those who are spiritual discern all things and they are themselves subject to no one else’s scrutiny. For who has known the mind of the Lord so as to instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ.”*

1 Corinthians 2:14-16.

Chapter Four: The Elders addressed me

Revelation 7:13-14 – “Then one of the elders addressed me, saying who are these robed in white and where have they come from? I said to him, Sir you are the one that knows. Then he said to me, these are they who have come out of great ordeal, they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.”

I want Lesbians, Gays, Bisexuals, Transgender and Intersex (LGBTI) people to come with boldness to God just as they are. I want people to know that they are not a freak of nature, I want people to know that God's love is not reserved for any one because they are a special group of Christians or heterosexual people. In fact God's love is for all people, regardless of our faith, our Muslim, Jewish, Buddhist, Traditional worshippers brothers and sisters must also recognise this fact, people of other faith and religion must know that God loves them.

Many religious leaders in all faith movements are aware of the existence of LGBTI people, despite this

knowledge, they persist in extreme denial of our being. It is my hope that we would recognise our way of life as one that is legitimate and pray that religious communities and leaders quit denying that we are real and of God.

In my study of the Bible, the book of Revelation clearly informed me of this fact and I want to share this with you.

- a) **Then one of the elders addressed me;** Like many religious leaders today, the account in scripture testifies to the knowledge of our leaders, they know that LGBTI people are real but have a way of concealing this fact. They often raise the subject in obscurity asking how this can be.

- b) **Saying who are these robed in white and where have they come from;** In order to be robed in white, this is a spiritual acclamation of success, triumphant victory, a celebration of jubilation. We are reckoned in our success from isolation to visibility, from sadness to joy, sorrow to happiness and these changes are often the experience when we reconcile our spirituality and sexuality, we

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are therefore significantly robed in white.

- c) **I said to him, Sir you are the one that knows;** Once we gain strength through perseverance of getting closer to God and affirming that we too are children of the most high God, we would be able to say “Sir you are the one that knows” thus breaking down the barriers that included fear and authoritarianism. We would be able to say to the church or religious communities that exclude us that, you are knowledgeable to recognize we are children of the living God and so it shall be.
- d) **Then he said to me, these are they who have come out of great ordeal, they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb;** With this affirmation, the spoken word with the power of the Holy Spirit, the open gate to reconciliation will begin, when the same people and community who have for many centuries and decades rejected LGBTI people, will now verify in a pronouncement that, *“these are they who have come out of great ordeal, they have washed their robes and made them*

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white in the blood of the Lamb” this can only come about with our own effort to work and pray towards inclusion.

After all another fact is that God does nothing unless it is first revealed to the prophets, which are the religious leaders, then why are they failing to acknowledge the existence of LGBTI people? An inclusive church can only contribute to a positive image of Christianity.

The church leaders historically have claimed that LGBTI people are from the devil, they will say we are given to perdition, all the Bible passages quoted to condemn homosexuality when re examined does not condemn homosexuality. A new conclusion and closer examination is for LGBTI people to pray and study the Bible, for such a trivial matter Jesus said nothing about it. In that case there is a new awareness to open dialogue with our religious leaders who are indeed misleading us and also denying our existence.

The Bible text clearly tells us that our religious leaders have failed to acknowledge our existence, I pray they will stop denying LGBTI people, I also pray that LGBTI people will re-examine their faith in God and take a step of faith to reconcile their spirituality and

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sexuality with God.

I am a homosexual and I am exhausted of the denials that many of my LGBTI brothers and sisters go through every day, self denial, societal denial, and religious denial. The confession of our existence according to this Bible text is a clear indication that religious leaders know we are there, the same will apply to other marginalised groups of people. I pray for the spirit of liberty and freedom to understand that we have always been a part of the love of God, even though the denial is wide open. God bless you, God bless our universe, Amen.

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Write down your thoughts:

What will you do differently today?

Now write your prayers: (For yourself & the world)

Memorable Quotation: *“For not in my bow do I trust, nor can my sword save me. But you have saved us from our foes, and have put to confusion those who hate us. In God we have boasted continually and we will give thanks to your name forever.”*

Psalm 44:6-8.

Chapter Five: I am not Ashamed of the Gospel

Romans 1:16-17 – “For I am not ashamed of the gospel; it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who has faith, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed through faith for faith; as it is written, ‘The one who is righteous will live by faith’”.

When you step out in faith to do the will of God, someone is bound to say something, however, I often ask a question, who takes the messages or good news to the Lesbians, Gays, Bisexuals, Transgender and Intersex (LGBTI) people? Who will answer the call of God to reach out to the people on the margins? Now there are many Christian denominations rethinking and changing their theology, amongst them are the Unitarian Church, the United Church of Christ, some Methodist and Anglican parishes, but not all will be open and welcoming to LGBTI people overnight, but we believe in the move of the Holy Spirit to make the radical shift of minds for us. So that when we show up our names will be mentioned, we would not have to hide who we are and or feel that we have to keep the

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inclusive gospel hidden.

As a homosexual person who loves Jesus and has faith in God, I come boldly knowing the dangers and ramification, but I no longer make apologies for the unconditional love and inclusive gospel of Jesus for LGBTI people, which is why I am not ashamed.

The Bible scriptures above speak volumes, and again I emphasised that the Bible is non discriminatory. If LGBTI people can say the words of this text and believe it, then we are working towards our freedom, salvation, redemption and liberation in Jesus, yet, you must have faith in the power of God

Personally my faith as a homosexual equally rest on these verses, I have come to a place of no shame for the gospel truth about who I am, and the radically inclusive gospel of Jesus and the ineffable love of God. I believe that by persistently sharing the gospel of truth and inclusion, I trust that many people will come to reconciliation and healing of being LGBTI person of faith. Our families, relatives, allies and colleagues will also receive healing on account of any past shame and refutation.

I pray for LGBTI people to have confidence, be

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righteous and live by faith, I pray that the burden of any shame, stigma and secrecy placed upon us will be lifted, I pray for forgiveness for denying that we are LGBTI loving children of God. God bless you, God bless our universe, Amen.

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Write down your thoughts:

What will you do differently today?

Now write your prayers: (For yourself & the world)

Memorable Quotation: *“And without faith it is impossible to please God, for whoever would approach God must believe that God exists and that God rewards those who seek God”, “But without faith it is impossible to please God, for whoever comes to God must believe that God is, and that God is a rewarder of those who diligently seek God.”*

Hebrew 11:6 (NRSV & NKJV).

Chapter Six: Children of the Living God

Romans 9:25-26 – “Those who were not my people I will call “my people”, and those who were not beloved I will call “beloved”. ‘And in the very place where it was said to them, “You are not my people”, there they shall be called children of the living God.”

We are all God's People, heterosexuals and non-heterosexuals including Lesbians, Gays, Bisexuals, Transgender and Intersex (LGBTI). Many of us are not informed by our families or religious communities that we are God's people, often we are told that we are corrupted by the devil, we are labelled an abomination, an outcast, disgrace, detestable, despicable, wrongdoers, and many LGBTI folks and our immediate families believed that lie, many fell to illness, suicide, death and destructive behaviours.

I am a homosexual and I am British-Nigerian, I have the great privilege of coming to and accepting Jesus Christ as my Lord and Saviour. Many times (in the past), I denied my homosexuality for the sake of pleasing people in my society, in my church and in my

family.

Now, I no longer make apologies, because the Holy Bible, the word of God that have been used in beating and battering me, and hurting many people, is the same word of consolation that I am also using to bring the good news to many people, if we care enough to read the Bible we would find comfort and peace just like this text of Paul to the Romans.

In many societies and cultures, homosexuals were not people, we were casted to the end of the margins, we are denied any basic human rights, we cannot marry our lovers, countries like Senegal in 2008, jailed nine men because they are gay, Nigeria in 2009 is debating on passing new laws that will criminalise gay marriage and other same sex amorous relationships, Uganda in 2009 are head on in advocating death penalty for any homosexual union, these are clear messages that homosexuals are not people.

Can you image a time in history when Black people were not considered people but merchandise for wealthy tycoons and products of slavery? Can you imagine a time when women were considered properties and measured in financial terms and not able to vote? These imaginations are not far from the rhetoric

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of discrimination and dehumanisation of homosexuals by religious communities and policy makers.

The Bible speaks differently regardless of race, culture, sexual orientation or gender identity. Romans 9:25-26 *“Those who were not my people I will call “my people”, and those who were not beloved I will call “beloved”. ‘And in the very place where it was said to them, “You are not my people”, there they shall be called children of the living God.”* There is a positive affirmation of God children in Paul’s message, this is indicative of the call to freedom of marginalised and ostracised people, we need to step forward, we need to stand up, speak out and make the bold claim that we are God’s people and whether the place is North America, Europe, Asia, Africa or elsewhere, that very place where it was said that homosexuals are not the people of God, there they shall be called Children of the living God.

I pray that Lesbians, Gays, Bisexuals, Transgender, Intersex and other marginalised people will know that they are called *“Beloved, Children of the living God”* regardless of the hostility towards them in their land and where ever they go. I pray that LGBTI people will come to the knowledge and truth that we are beloved. God bless you, God bless our universe, Amen.

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Write down your thoughts:

What will you do differently today?

Now write your prayers: (For yourself & the world)

Memorable Quotation: *“See what love God has given us that we should be called children of God and that is what we are. The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know God. Beloved, we are God’s children now, what we will be has not yet been revealed. What we do know is this, when God is revealed, we will be like God, for we will see God as God is. And all who have this hope in God purify themselves just as God is pure.”*

1 John 3:1-3.

Chapter Seven: Your Redeemer formed you

Isaiah 44:24 – “Thus says the LORD, your Redeemer, who formed you in the womb: I am the LORD, who made all things, who alone stretched out the heavens, who by myself spread out the earth.”

Many days of my life, I was victimised on the grounds of sexual orientation, I was a shame to the society, and headlines of national newspapers castigated me as the enemy of the state in Nigeria, religious brothers and sisters failed to think of the goodness of God before they spoke. Many millions of people are threatened by the actions of the ignorant few, families are scattered, there is a surge in suicidal tendencies and the health of the people declined.

Reverend Solomon S. Seay, former head of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, in the United States of America and also a civil rights campaigner alongside Reverend Dr Martin Luther King Jr, said following a fight for equal rights for African American during the Montgomery bus boycotts *“If a person doesn’t want to sit beside me because I am dirty, that is my fault. If a*

person doesn't want to sit beside me because I am loud, that is my fault too, but if the person doesn't want to sit beside me because I am black, that is not my fault because God made me black" I dare to add to this note that "If a person doesn't want to sit beside us because we are Lesbians, Gays, Bisexuals, Transsexuals and Intersex people, then we need to know that it is not our fault, God made us Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transsexual and Intersex people."

I take refuge in the word of God, I am not stubborn, but I refuse to allow the negativity of these ignorant actions to get through my heart, mind and skin. It is not an easy place to be, however, when people ask me where in the scriptures does it say that God loves or indeed creates homosexual, I want to let you know that this verse in today's devotion tells me so, please add this to the list of growing evidence of the love of God for all people. Our redeemer formed us in the womb, the Lord who made **ALL** things single handed, so there are no attributions or credit to another creator or the devil as they often claim. God is responsible for LGBTI people and it is only God that can love us as we too are the original imprint of God's love and never a secondary group of people.

- I say a little prayer of courage for you this day

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that you will love, honour, cherish and accept who you are in the eyes of our Creator God.

- I pray that you will be able to say it is not my fault, but the discriminators have failed to acknowledge the love of God who had the final say in our creation.
- I pray that many people that have been displaced by religion will know that it is not the religion but the people behind religion.

As we seek reconciliation we would be empowered knowing that God's love was given to us when we were formed in our mother's womb, God bless you. God bless our universe, Amen.

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Write down your thoughts:

What will you do differently today?

Now write your prayers: (For yourself & the world)

Memorable Quotation: *“All things came into being through God and without God not one thing came into being. What has come into being in God was life and the life was the light of all people.”*

John 1:3-4.

Chapter Eight: Walk in the Way of the Good

Proverbs 2:20-33 – “Therefore walk in the way of the good, and keep to the paths of the just. For the upright will abide in the land, and the innocent will remain in it; but the wicked will be cut off from the land, and the treacherous will be rooted out of it.”

I often wondered that if the level of hatred vetted towards Lesbians, Gays, Bisexuals, Transgender and Intersex people had been responded to in likewise manner, there will be another kind of war in the land.

The Bible passage at the moment raises pertinent issues as follow;

- a) Therefore walk in the way of the good; When we focus on responding with goodness and love there is no doubt that we claim the victory at all times over hate and pain, there is goodness in all humanity regardless of race, religion, background, wealth, health and so on, only if we choose to uphold them.
- b) Keep to the paths of the just; Keeping to this

path is a continuous awareness that wrong does not meet wrong, but often we must learn to meet all wrong with goodness, responding to hate with love is the only just path.

- c) The upright will abide in the land; It may come as a surprise to many but the fact is that we are all called to be a blessing when we are upright, this way we are able to settle amicably in the land.
- d) The innocent will remain in it; No matter what the violence is towards you or any one, remain innocent in your dealings with people who seldom accept they are wrong, innocence in righteousness always have an upper hand.
- e) The wicked will be cut off from the land; And God will be the judge, it's often the case that it takes too long for justice but it is always sweet love, victory to glory overcome hatred.
- f) The treacherous will be rooted out of it. Those who vet anger towards innocent people will be cut off, as long as we stand our grounds in faith, honour and respect.

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There is no doubt that if we as people with so much experiences of negativity can move from a place of denial and rise from the ashes of pain to the roses of liberation, we can enable the tables to turn around for people to see not just the bigotry of the world against homosexuality, but also engage the world in a lesson of love. God bless you, God bless our universe, Amen.

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Write down your thoughts:

What will you do differently today?

Now write your prayers: (For yourself & the world)

Memorable Quotation: *“The nations have sunk in the pit that they made, in the net that they hid has their own foot been caught. The Lord has made self known, God has executed judgement, the wicked are snared in the work of their own hands.”*

Psalms 9:15-16.

Chapter Nine: We have a Great High Priest

Hebrew 4:14-16 – **“Since, then, we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast to our confession. 15For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who in every respect has been tested as we are, yet without sin. 16Let us therefore approach the throne of grace with boldness, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.”**

This is an announcement of hope, anticipation, optimism, and expectation for many people who may have lost hope or dissipated on the notion that Jesus died for all our weaknesses. A failure to acknowledge that from the beginning of creation God’s love for humankind never shifted.

Whatever we may be going through in our daily lives and uphill struggles, Jesus has been through it or it is safe to say that Jesus is going through the difficult times with us, shares our pains and burdens, our joys and triumphs. Our confession, that Jesus is Lord of all

requires renewal with clarity of our faith in the divine intervention of the almighty God.

Let me take more time to analyse this passage for a better understanding;

- a) Since, then, we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God; There is no misunderstanding on the superiority of Jesus, there is no confusion about his Excellency, the son of God, he has passed through heaven and earth, so there is nothing we are going to pass through that he has not experienced.
- b) Let us hold fast to our confession; Our confession in God and Jesus is the confession of our faith and honour of the creator. “For without faith it is impossible to please God for whoever comes to God must believe that God is a rewarder of those who diligently seek God”. Hebrew 11:6
- c) For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses; Jesus sympathises with all of humanity, where there

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are pains and calamities, where there are aches and perils, Jesus is there. Jesus is the only high priest who is capable of transcending our turmoil to serenity, our mourning to dancing and sorrow to joy.

- d) But we have one who in every respect has been tested as we are, yet without sin; Christ stood the test for our victory, Jesus paid the price for our liberation, redemption, and freedom, Jesus is the child of God without blemish nor sin, there are no tests under the sun and or on earth that Jesus had not passed for our sake, with this in mind we must find a place in our heart for celebration of the sanctity of our souls.
- e) Let us therefore approach the throne of grace with boldness; We should therefore come with boldness and not fear, with rejoicing and not sadness, courage and not cowardice, when we come with boldness and faith we are guaranteed a higher measure of success, testimony and victory.
- f) So that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need; When we fulfil all of

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the proscribed notions in these verses, we are rewarded with mercy and grace, which meets our help in time of need, including grace to help ourselves and each other.

I am encouraged by the verses shared today and it is my hope and prayer that an extension of this love and grace of God will be meted to Lesbians, Gays, Bisexuals, Transgender and Intersex people;

- Who work in faith,
- Confess that Jesus Christ is Lord and saviour,
- Reconcile their hope and trust in God's love and gifts.

God bless you, God bless our universe, Amen.

I Say a Little Prayer For You

Write down your thoughts:

What will you do differently today?

Now write your prayers: (For yourself & the world)

Memorable Quotation: *“Blessed be the Lord your God, who has delighted in you and set you on the throne of Israel. Because the Lord loved Israel forever, God has made you king to execute justice and righteousness.”*

1 King 10:9.

Chapter Ten: Let Love be Genuine; don't fake it

The Message: Romans 12: 9-10 – **“Love from the center of who you are; don't fake it. Run for dear life from evil; hold on for dear life to good. Be good friends who love deeply; practice playing second fiddle.”**

NRSV: Romans 12:9-10 – **“Let love be genuine; hate what is evil, hold fast to what is good; love one another with mutual affection; outdo one another in showing honour.”**

When love is authentic, it cannot be replicated in detestation, we are human and are conditioned to understand the difference between love and hate, lies and truth, fake and genuine, copy and original, evil and good, wrong and right, sinful and pure, unethical and principled etc.

We cannot activate love on another person's account, we can only extend love from the honesty of our own being and understanding. This has made the Christian journey more difficult in many ways for Lesbians, Gays, Bisexuals, Transgender and Intersex people and

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other marginalised communities.

When we are confronted with matters that are so evil we need to learn to run from it. As a young person growing up, my mother would advise me, when you walk the streets and you see a commotion, a fight, do not stop to investigate, do not go anywhere close to the arena, if possible choose another route, this has been a life saving advise from my mother. It has provided me with the ability to recognise evil and avoid every involvement or attraction to it.

All people are to avoid all evil at all cost, and embrace what is good, love should be one of the best sports in life, the Bible even encourages us to outdo one another in love, showing honour, respect, admiration to each person, old and young, rich and poor, gays and straight etc.

We are at a place, on a journey where we cannot reconstruct our humanity, it is given by God. We need to seek out people that are not like us, and apply genuine love, befriend people you hardly know and experience the transformation.

Evil is a calculated force against love and anyone of any calibre or status can be caught or intertwine in

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evil, evil has no place in our world and must be utterly rejected. As children of God, we must learn, understand and appreciate how much love and evil compete, I want to encourage you today to allow more love and reject all evil, allow the Holy Spirit, the love of God and Jesus Christ to be the centre of your love outpouring towards others. God bless you, God bless our universe, Amen.

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Write down your thoughts:

What will you do differently today?

Now write your prayers: (For yourself & the world)

Memorable Quotation: *“All this I lay to heart, examining it all, how the righteous and the wise and their deeds are in the hand of God, whether it is love or hate one does not know.”*

Ecclesiastes 9:1.

Chapter Eleven: God on our side

The Message – Romans 8:31-39 – “So, what do you think? With God on our side like this, how can we lose? If God didn't hesitate to put everything on the line for us, embracing our condition and exposing himself to the worst by sending his own Son, is there anything else he wouldn't gladly and freely do for us? And who would dare tangle with God by messing with one of God's chosen? Who would dare even to point a finger? The One who died for us—who was raised to life for us!—is in the presence of God at this very moment sticking up for us. Do you think anyone is going to be able to drive a wedge between us and Christ's love for us? There is no way! Not trouble, not hard times, not hatred, not hunger, not homelessness, not bullying threats, not backstabbing, not even the worst sins listed in Scripture: They kill us in cold blood because they hate you. We're sitting ducks; they pick us off one by one. None of this fazes us because Jesus loves us. I'm absolutely convinced that nothing—nothing living or dead, angelic or demonic, today or tomorrow, high or low, thinkable or unthink-

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able—absolutely nothing can get between us and God's love because of the way that Jesus our Master has embraced us.”

In every battle we must be sure and clear that by faith we have God on our side, this way we are victors and never victims, many Lesbians, Gays, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex (LGBTI) people have resigned to the fact that their lives are nothing but evil, a life worthless of care and never can we be redeemed nor will make heaven, this is not true, the enemy has a way to manipulate our consciousness to produce guilt, shame and indignity, the ability of the devil to knock us down and keep us low is at fault.

God gave up so much for us and a clear indication is the sacrifice of Jesus Christ the one man who was said to take away our sins. Let me assure you, being black is not a sin, being blue eyed, brown or blonde hair is not a sin, our sexual orientation connects us with the love of the Creator. We are a special and diverse affection specific of God's creativity, this is something we have NO control.

The death of Jesus meant life for LGBTI people, we live in a world that denied the inclusive love of Jesus, for all people regardless of faith, religion, race, and

nationality. The monopolization of Jesus by any particular group of people is callous, heartless, selfish and undemanding. I want to encourage you to come to Jesus, in your prayers, stand up in the circle of the righteous, boldly claim and name your place in the circle. Speak of your journey, testament and commitment of faith to a loving and deserving God, your story might just save someone else.

God loved the world and through Jesus this love was manifested. Who will be able to 'now' separate us from that love connection? What we need to do is let the world know and appreciate that we exist, let them know of the powerful testimony in reconciliation of spirituality and sexuality.

We may go through mountains and hills of tribulations, we may face many problems not by our own ignorance and lack of knowledge, the Bible says, *"None of this (should) faze us because Jesus loves us. I'm absolutely convinced that nothing—nothing living or dead, angelic or demonic, today or tomorrow, high or low, thinkable or unthinkable—absolutely nothing can get between us and God's love because of the way that Jesus our Master has embraced us."*

The embrative love of Jesus is the answer and the

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most sufficient for us. God bless you, God bless our universe, Amen.

Write down your thoughts:

What will you do differently today?

Now write your prayers: (For yourself & the world)

Memorable Quotation: *“But Moses said to the people, Do not be afraid, stand firm and see the deliverance that the Lord will accomplish for you today, for the Egyptians whom you see today you shall never see again. The Lord will fight for you, and you have only to keep still.”*

Exodus 14:13-14.

Chapter Twelve: God Created Human Beings

The Message Genesis 1:26-28 – **“God spoke: “Let us make human beings in our image, make them reflecting our nature, So they can be responsible for the fish in the sea, the birds in the air, the cattle, And, yes, Earth itself, and every animal that moves on the face of Earth.” God created human beings; God created them godlike, reflecting God's nature. God created them male and female. God blessed them: “Prosper! Reproduce! Fill Earth! Take charge! Be responsible for fish in the sea and birds in the air, for every living thing that moves on the face of Earth.”**

As a liberal theologian and not necessarily as a gay person, studying these passages enabled me to look deeper into the abilities of God, there are a few words amplified and expatiated for more understanding. In my studies of these texts I have taken more time to expound on them. Let me take you step by step in my journey of translation, point of view and perceptive.

- 1) **God spoke;** As religious people we know

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that when God spoke, it is settled, the same also applies to our spiritual connection, what is God saying to you about who you are?, all the answers you have always wanted to know to all your numerous questions about human sexuality and spirituality are in the ability to comprehend that God already spoke to you.

- 2) **God spoke, Let us make human beings in our image, make them reflecting our nature;** When God speaks it is defined and definite, we must recognise that everything about our nature was as a result of God speaking and there is no closeness to human thoughts or words that can change what God had spoken. Lesbians, Gays, Bisexuals, Transgender and Intersex people are made in the image and reflecting nature of God, so we are listed amongst responsible people. This understanding must reach the depth of our souls, spirit, thoughts and physical abilities. Asian, Black, European people are created in the image of God, as long as we are unable to dispute the multiple facet and personalities of God, then it is imperative that we also understand the diverse human combination of human sexuality, which are indisputable.

- 3) **So they can be responsible for the fish in the sea, the birds in the air, the cattle, And, yes, Earth itself, and every animal that moves on the face of Earth;** Human kind was made with a nature for responsibilities towards earthly inhabitants and not domination or cruelty, we have responsibilities for the ozone layers and eco friendly environment, we have greater responsibilities to care for nature and all the other inhabitants of the earth.
- 4) **God created human beings; God created them godlike;** There is a growing phenomena that human kind has the ability to go against God, that is not true, God is always in control. There is no doubt that evil exists in our world, God's initial response to the making of human kind was to create us godlike. I ask us to think of the things that make us godlike, both spiritual and physical attributes, including the texture of our hair, skin tone, voice, sexual attractions and sensibilities, all of these are in our godlike nature.
- 5) **Reflecting God's nature. God created them male and female;** I have always pre-

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sented the pluralist theory that God made multiples of humankind, it would have been an inconclusive notion that God only made one man and one woman, think about the diverse race and also think about the other theories that have evolved over the centuries on human evolution and scientific assumptions, because God is diverse and omnipotent, whose ways and thoughts are mysterious, God is able to be everywhere at every time, thus connecting every soul to godlike creation. I provide the notion that God made many males and females at creation, which can be the answer for the diverse tribes and race across the globe.

- 6) God blessed them: **“Prosper! Reproduce! Fill Earth! Take charge!”** There are many things we know today that signpost the blessings of God:
 - a. Prosper – prosperity has different meanings in different parts of the world, good health, riches and relationships to mention a few example.
 - b. Reproduce – reproduction is not confiding to procreation only, those who are committed to a cause reproduce the goodwill or

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build a new outcome by replicating a good plan.

c. Fill Earth – filling the earth with love rather than hatred, care not fear.

d. Take Charge – be answerable for the change you like to see in the world

I believe if we take time to think more on the spoken words of God, we would find the ability to connect with God's very intention for us as people, regardless of our race, sex, nationality, wealth, health, abilities, disabilities, gender identity and or sexual orientation, God bless you, God bless the universe, amen.

I Say a Little Prayer For You

Write down your thoughts:

What will you do differently today?

Now write your prayers: (For yourself & the world)

Memorable Quotation: *“God is not a human being that God should lie, or a mortal, that God should change own mind. Has God promised and will God not do it? Has God spoken and will God not fulfill it? See I received a command to bless, God has blessed and I cannot revoke it.”*

Numbers 23:19-20.

An open invitation to Jesus Christ

The Bible tells us in Isaiah 55:8 what God thinks of us:

“For my thoughts are not your thoughts nor are your ways my ways, said the Lord. For as the heaven is higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.”

Today, I want you to think about what God will say to you, when you come with every imaginable thought. Now is the time you need to turn all the negative thoughts and situations around for your own good and for the glory of God almighty.

John 3:16 declared “For God so loved the world that God gave God’s only son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.”

A Personal Confession and Prayer

I am a friend of Jesus Christ,
Jesus Christ you are the lover of my soul,
Who washed away my sins,
And died for me,

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Jesus Christ my refuge and my fortress,
I come to You as I am,
My true self I give to you,
And I now confess with my tongue,
That Jesus Christ is my Lord, Saviour and
Redeemer.
Amen

Definitions

Spirituality – is the human ability to connect with a spiritual force, a connection with the divine, this experience is part of the human life. Spirituality is considered Spiritual food and the need to reconcile with God for Christians is essential, in worship, meditation and prayer. For LGBTI people, it adds to their well being and faith. The spiritual life and existence of LGBTI people in religion negates guilt and lifelessness. The spiritual needs of sexual minorities are not different from that of sexual majority hence the essential need to support LGBTI people on a journey to reconcile sexuality and spirituality.

Sexuality – the sexual knowledge, beliefs, attitude, values and behaviours of individuals. Its dimensions include anatomy, physiology and biochemistry of the sexual response and reproductive systems, gender

identity, sexual orientation, roles and personality, as well as thoughts, attachments, physical and emotional expression and relationships.

This is about the nature of human sexuality known, however, sexuality outside the “dictated norm” namely heterosexual is strongly denied, mystified and vilified. Religious leaders and mainstream organisations reject sexual minorities. Those with any form of sexuality, sexual expressions or identifies as sexual minority faces gigantic oppressions by society, religion, the law and customs.

LGBTI – is an abbreviation used to describe people who define themselves as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or intersex. LGBTI is a self-referential category that people may use to describe their sexuality and/or gender identity.

Lesbian – is a woman whose enduring physical, romantic, emotional and/or spiritual attraction is to other women.

Gay – this is an adjective used to describe people whose enduring physical, romantic, emotional and/or spiritual attractions are to people of the same sex (e.g., gay man, gay people). In contemporary contexts, lesbian is often a preferred term for women.

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Bisexual – is an individual who is physically, romantically, emotionally and/or spiritually attracted to men and women. A bisexual may be more attracted to one sex than another, this may vary over time.

Transgender, Transsexuals, and Transvestites – an umbrella term for people whose gender identity and/or gender expression differs from the sex they were assigned at birth. The term may include but is not limited to: transsexuals, cross dressers, and other gender-variant people. Transgender people may identify as female-to-male (FTM) or male-to-female (MTF). Transgender people may or may not decide to alter their bodies hormonally and/or surgically.

Intersex (previously known as hermaphrodites) – an individual who has atypical development of physical sex attributes including but not limited to external genitals that are not easily classified as male or female, incomplete development of internal reproductive organs. Some intersex characteristics are recognised at birth others are delayed until puberty. The term disorders of sexual development (DSD) are often used as reference to intersex conditions.

Sexual Orientation – an individual's enduring romantic, emotional or sexual attraction towards

other persons. For example, heterosexual, homosexual and bisexuals, sexual orientation falls within a continuum that ranges from exclusive heterosexuality to exclusive homosexuality.

Gender Identity – An individual's own sense of self as woman, man or transgender, Gender identity may or may not conform to an individual's biological sex.

Gender expression – is the outward expression through behaviour, clothing, hairstyle, voice and body characteristics of an individual's gender.

About House Of Rainbow Fellowship

House Of Rainbow Fellowship is an inclusive and affirming religious community open and welcome to all people including Lesbians, Gays, Bisexuals, Transgender and Intersex people, a monthly gathering of "People of Faith" for "Prayer and Praise", which focuses on the person's journey towards reconciliation of sexuality and spirituality.

House Of Rainbow Fellowship aim to provide an inclusive theological focus and interpretation of Scriptures.

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The vision of the House Of Rainbow Fellowship was birthed by Reverend Rowland Jide Macaulay, an openly gay African theologian. The style of the House Of Rainbow Fellowship is Pentecostal with “High Praise”, Prayers and Christian fellowship.

People of all genders, ages, race, abilities, sexualities etc, are welcomed.

Other important tools and resources

Websites:

www.wouldjesusdiscriminate.org
www.houseofrainbow.org
www.youtube.com/houseofrainbow
www.thereformationproject.org

Books:

Holy Bible

The Children Are Free by Revd Jeff Miner & John Connolly

Pocket Devotional for LGBT Christians by Revd Rowland Jide Macaulay

The Queer Bible Commentary, Edited by Guest, Goss, West & Bohache

Rev. Rowland Jide Macaulay

The Queer God by Marcella Althaus-Reid

Indecent Theology by Marcella Althaus-Reid

Take Back The Word Edited by Goss & West

Biblical Ethics & Homosexuality Edited by Robert L. Brawley

In the Eye of the Storm by Gene Robinson

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House of Rainbow Fellowship is the place for you. You are welcomed to send your prayer request to us at houseofrainbow@hotmail.com or join us online via facebook, twitter, instagram and youtube. Wherever we assemble, you can attend our FREE monthly “Prayer and Praise” sessions, refreshments will be served. For more information and details, please contact us or visit our webpage:

www.houseofrainbow.org

About the Author



Reverend Rowland Jide Macaulay, LLB, MTh, PGC, FACT is an ordained minister of the gospel, a Christian Theologian, openly gay, a dynamic and an inspirational speaker, poet, pastor and preacher, for Executive Director of rbm consulting (Publishing) UK and Nigeria, the author of “Poetry Inspired” published in the UK 2001, founding pastor of House Of Rainbow Fellowship, holds a degree in law (London), masters degree in theology and post graduate certificate in Pastoral Theology.

Reverend Rowland Jide Macaulay, a British-Nigerian, works to help, support and connect Lesbians, Gays, Bisexuals, Transgender and Intersex (LGBTI) Christians and of other faiths around the world. He writes for various Christian and secular Journals.

As a gay man of African descent, Rowland Jide struggled with his sexuality and faith as a Christian, he now enjoys a great freedom, joy and a good relationship with God and part of his ministerial work as a gay Pastor, is to meet the spiritual needs of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transvestite and transgender people, in Africa, the United Kingdom, and the rest of the World, through dedicated programmes and prayers.

Rowland Jide is the author of *the Pocket Devotional For Lesbians, Gays, Bisexual And Transgender Christians*, published 2005.