

The Quiet Exams That Decide Our Lives

(Luke 16:10)

Luke 16:10: "He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much."

INTRODUCTION

Brethren, every one of us has written exams before. We prepared, we sat down, we faced questions, and we waited for results.

But beyond those visible exams, there are **quiet exams** — exams not written on answer sheets, but on conscience.

Not marked by lecturers, but by integrity. Not invigilated by supervisors, but by Heaven.

These exams have no bell, no timetable, no hall, and no script — yet the results decide our future.

Jesus summarized it when He said: *"He that is faithful in the least..."* Meaning the smallest, quietest decisions of life are the real examinations.

PERSONAL NARRATIVE — AUCHI POLYTECHNIC

In 2005, during my **HND Mechanical Engineering Technology** final year at

Auchi Polytechnic, I encountered these quiet exams in the literal exam hall.

There were different categories of students:

- intelligent & disciplined students who read
- intelligent but careless students who read with expo for assurance
- intelligent but lazy students who didn't read and intended to copy
- religious but unprepared students hoping for favor instead of study
- religious students who prayed and still used expo
- dull but determined students relying completely on malpractice
- and the rare few who labored with conscience and fear of God

I usually sat in the **front row**, to avoid being asked to open my script. One day, a much older classmate we called "**Bros**" whispered: *"Shift your elbow small!"*

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I refused. A lady sitting nearby added: *“Charles, just shift your smallest finger — I can see everything from here.”*

That day I learned some people do not lack intelligence — they lack preparation and discipline.

Around that same period, I was serving as the *Campus Congregation Evangelist*. A Christian brother, IJ, asked me to read with him. But during reading, he would abandon the book to repair laptops — his hustle to survive and sponsor his younger sister. He assured me he had already read.

During the exam, IJ sat behind me and began whispering:

- *“Shift!”*
- *“Do you want me to fail?”*
- *“As your brother?”*
- *“As our evangelist?”*

At a point he shouted about migraine. The invigilator attended to him.

When the invigilator turned away, he continued whispering, even calling me wicked.

Under pressure, my resistance weakened. I shifted slightly.

Another invigilator saw from the window, entered shouting, *“I caught both of you!”* Our scripts were seized.

Students pleaded. After review, the chief exam invigilator concluded my conduct didn’t align with cheating and released us.

The next day in another exam, he tried again. This time I refused with conviction.

That exam hall was small, but the lesson was large: ***academic exams tested my brain; quiet exams tested my character.***

THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATION

Brethren, the Bible shows that God watches men in two realms:

- the **public** and
- the **private**

Promotion does not begin with the public.

Before **David** fought Goliath publicly, he fought lions and bears privately.

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Before **Daniel** entered the lions' den, he passed a quiet exam at the dining table.

Before **Joseph** ascended to Pharaoh's throne, he passed a quiet exam in Potiphar's house.

Before **Paul** became an apostle, he passed a quiet exam in blindness.

Scripture confirms:

✚ God sees secrets —
Job 31:4

✚ God weighs motives —
1 Samuel 16:7

✚ God rewards faithfulness in little — **Luke 16:10**

Heaven does not trust us with **much** until we are proven in **little**.

THE QUIET EXAMS OF MODERN LIFE

Today, we may no longer be in lecture halls, but we are all sitting for exams in real life:

- exams of integrity
- exams of loyalty
- exams of purity
- exams of identity
- exams of responsibility
- exams of truth
- exams of diligence

Some exams are triggered by pressure. Some by

loneliness. Some by opportunity. Some by desperation. Some by such subtle whispers that people around do not even notice.

MULTI-GROUP EXTENDED APPLICATION

STUDENTS — Quiet Exams of Preparation & Dishonesty

Modern students face pressures such as:

- copying or being copied from
- paying seniors for expo
- buying projects on WhatsApp
- falsifying attendance sheets
- bribing lecturers through intermediaries
- relying on prayer to replace preparation
- hoping titles like "brother/sister" will influence marking
- ghosting classes but expecting divine intervention

Quiet Exam Question:

"Will I choose diligence or shortcut?"

2 Timothy 2:15 — *"Study to show thyself approved..."*

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YOUTHS — Quiet Exams of Identity, Modesty & Belonging

Today, many young brothers and sisters have been pressured into **indecent dressing** to feel:

- modern
- accepted
- upgraded
- noticed
- sexy
- trending
- relevant

Clothes are now designed to reveal body parts:

- bellies
- breasts
- thighs
- pants
- sensitive areas

Because the world says:

- “Expose to belong.”
- “Seduction is empowerment.”
- “If you don’t dress like this, you are local.”

But belonging is not the same as becoming.

It is not only sisters — young men now:

- dress to seduce

- dress to intimidate
- borrow clothes to appear wealthy
- live beyond their means for Instagram
- fake lifestyles for validation

Quiet Exam Question:

“Who am I trying to impress, and why?”

Romans 12:2 — *be not conformed...*

1 Peter 3:3-4 — *modesty and inner dignity.*

WORKERS — Quiet Exams of Ethics & Loyalty

Workplaces are full of exam halls now. Pressures include:

- signing in late but marking early
- wasting office time on social media
- leaking confidential information
- inflating invoices for reimbursement
- forging numbers to impress management
- gossiping colleagues for promotion
- leaking trade secrets to competitors

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- bribing regulators for approval
- selling job slots in HR
- sexual harassment disguised as mentorship
- workplace politics disguised as teamwork

Quiet Exam Question:

“Would I behave the same way if cameras were on?”

Daniel 6:4 — no corruption was found. **Colossians 3:23** — work as unto the Lord.

BUSINESS PEOPLE — Quiet Exams of Honesty & Value

In business:

- fake parts
- expired products relabeled
- diluting engine oil
- reducing quality after approval
- cheating customers with fake measurements
- overpricing during scarcity
- tax evasion
- hidden defects
- dishonest tenders

Quiet Exam Question: *“Do I want profit more than righteousness?”*

Leviticus 19:35-36 — honest weights. **Proverbs 20:23** — false scales are abomination.

FAMILY & MARRIAGE — Quiet Exams of Truth & Fidelity

Inside homes:

- lying between spouses
- hiding debt or purchases
- silent emotional affairs on WhatsApp
- using children as leverage
- sexual temptation in offices
- promising children what we never intend to fulfill
- raising children with church language but worldly conduct
- public affection but private disrespect

Quiet Exam Question: *“Am I honorable when nobody sees?”*
Matthew 5:37 — let your yes be yes.

CAREER ENTRY & SOCIETY — Quiet Exams of Access & Privilege

Increasingly:

- job slots are bought

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- HR positions are sold
- NYSC certificates forged
- CVs exaggerated
- transcripts altered
- politicians used to bypass merit
- sex traded for employment

Quiet Exam Question: *“Do I want position or do I want integrity?”*

Psalm 75:6-7 — promotion comes from God.

MINISTRY — Quiet Exams of Sincerity & Stewardship

Even pulpit life is not exempt:

- testimonies exaggerated to deceive people to think they are using God’s power *[denomination]*
- church accounts manipulated
- appointments given by favoritism
- doctrine adjusted to retain attendance
- titles used to intimidate followers

Quiet Exam Question: *“Is it God or gain that drives me?”*

Titus 2:7 — in all things showing integrity.

1 Peter 5:2 — serve not for dishonest gain.

SOCIETAL CONSEQUENCE

When these quiet exams are failed consistently, society collapses loudly.

The student who cheats in exam halls becomes the engineer who cuts corners on bridges.

The youth who buys a job becomes the civil servant who sells job slots.

The professional who steals office time becomes the leader who steals public funds.

Corruption did not start in government. It started in classrooms, bedrooms, offices, WhatsApp chats, and quiet decisions.

REVELATION & CONCLUSION

Brethren, *paper exams decide your certificate; quiet exams decide your credibility.*

Paper exams help you get employment; quiet exams help you get promotion.

Paper exams open doors; quiet exams determine if you will remain inside them.

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Jesus did not say, “faithful in much.” He said, “*faithful in least.*”
Great destinies hang on tiny hinges.

FINAL CHARGE & PRAYER

May God raise a generation in His church who:

- will not conform because of pressure
- will not compromise because of hunger
- will not sell integrity for relevance
- will not exchange dignity for fashion
- will not trade destiny for shortcuts
- will not lose self because of society
- will not cheat to enter positions
- will not lie to sustain them

May we pass the quiet exams that decide our lives in Jesus' Name,
amen.

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