



THE JOURNEY OF A CU STUDENT

*Unleashing Potential Embracing
Transformation*

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INTRODUCTION

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So basically, we'll be looking at the journey of a CU student, but you should know that no two people can have the same experience in a journey even if they follow the same path and arrive at the same destination. So, I interviewed a few students especially final year students about their journey so far in CU and collated the results into the article that you're currently reading (*quick tip: wherever you see a final year student just squeeze some money into their hand because they've tried*). I also sectioned the survey into different headings, so enjoy!

A HUMBLE BEGINNING

Covenant University is a place where your status or background is nobody's business, all you are required to do is follow the rules and avoid trouble. However, if you decide to do otherwise, adequate measures will be taken without fear or favor irrespective of who you are and where you came from.

Some of our students testified that the saying "CU will humble you" is not a joke and many of them, even though they're in their final year, are still suffering from a humbling experience they had in their earlier years as students. Their advice to all other students, not just 100lvl students, is to humble themselves, learn, and obey rules because the consequences of disobeying little rules can be costly. So, all those "it can never be me" you all new students are saying, if you're not mindful, the way "it will be you" will take you by surprise. But as I said earlier, this is not the same for everybody. I assume that the people who CU humbled were people who could not and did not want to follow the school's rules. In the words of a final-year student,

"CU doesn't have any problem. If you're a chill guy like me, your stay here will go smoothly, just follow the rules, and follow God"

~Kamsy Umez

TRIALS AND TRANSFORMATION

The Bible says in James 1:2-3 "**Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness**". We should note that the CU journey is not without challenges, but it molds students into resilient individuals.

I interviewed a 300lvl student of the Biochemistry department and she shared the challenges she had when she was a freshman. She said coming into CU a week after the orientation for the freshmen program, she found it difficult to adapt to the new environment and was treated coldly by others including her fellow freshmen. As a result of this, she had difficulties locating where classes were held. She missed a lot of her classes which cost her the opportunity to write the semester examinations as 75% attendance is required to write examinations here at CU. She said even in her 300lvl she still feels the impact of that experience she had in her 100lvl. However, this amazing student decided that what happened to her shouldn't happen to anyone else then she created a telegram group named "Tips for New Students" as she helped new students navigate their way through school in order not to have the same experience she had.

She also added that another challenge she had was that she felt CU was forcing spirituality on her as it is compulsory to attend all chapel services. However, gradually she felt herself being transformed and little by little, the word of God started gaining entrance into her heart. Now she's a fully committed Christian as she sees God for who He is and Him being her number one help when she passes through difficulties.

A final-year student chirped in that for her, it was waking up early, apparently, their chaplain then, made CHOP compulsory. As a student, you must get used to waking up early, fine, but she said she had to wake up by 4 am to prepare for CHOP and even now when it isn't compulsory anymore, she still wakes up that early and finds ways to be productive.

“Waking up early helped shape my discipline, even when CHOP is not compulsory anymore, I still find myself waking up early to read my Bible and be productive”.

~Divine Chukwunyere

According to research, a more popular challenge CU students pass through is an academic challenge and this is mostly because they are studying a course that was being imposed on them, either by family pressure or inability to meet the requirements needed to study their desired course. A student told me she initially wanted to study psychology but her family insisted she follow a medical route, so she ended up studying Biochemistry, she didn't see that as a setback as most students will, instead she decided she was going to put her best into the course she's studying and later on in future, even if she has to sponsor herself, divert into psychology and still apply some of the knowledge she has gotten from Biochemistry.

FRIENDS, CONNECTIONS AND NETWORK

There is a saying “True friends are great riches”. CU is not just an educational institution, it's a vibrant community where students forge lifelong friendships. However, the important thing is to be able to make wise choices as you interact with the diverse group of students, carefully choosing those with whom to connect, knowing that these chosen friendships will be precious bonds with like-minded individuals who could become important leaders in the future and will be cherished as close friends. Some final-year students I interviewed revealed that the individuals they initially believed they would have no connection with during their first year (100 level) are now the people they have become closest to. They learned that first impressions can be misleading and that CU helped them grow and connect with a diverse range of individuals. They also advised new students to keep an open mind, as unexpected friendships can bring great joy and valuable connections. In the words of Precious Ibileke, a final-year accounting student, she said;

“The friends I had in 100 level are not the friends I currently have. In fact, in my first year I told myself that I’d never be friends with my current friends but now, look at me 😊

~Precious Ibileke

Prayer force coordinator, Sir Kamsy Umez said the friends he had and still has, are like-minded individuals who love God and helped him grow spiritually, which is

what friendships should be about, helping one another grow. As friends, we are to complement one another, and our values must align to make that friendship work.

Precious Ibileke also explained to me that during her 100 level, the friendships she had were primarily based on proximity and shared courses. However, as time went on, she realized that their values were not aligned, and she often felt excluded from their conversations. It became evident that she didn't truly belong in that group. Despite addressing the issue with them and their promises to change, nothing improved. Consequently, she made the difficult decision to distance herself from the group. While her closest friend in the group initially discouraged her choice, she remained firm in her decision. Since then, her life has taken a different trajectory. Interestingly, her closest friend in the group also left last year, and her life is undergoing significant changes.

EMBRACING CHANGE AND GROWTH

Growth is both an opportunity and a challenge and nowhere is this truer than in the transformative journey of a university student. Someone who wants to grow should be willing to adapt to change. Our final year students can testify that where they are now isn't where they were while in 100lvl, they've changed, grown, and transformed. Embracing change means being open to trying new things and stepping out of one's comfort zone. Covenant University students are navigating the typical college experience within the framework of the University's core values and principles. Embracing change here intertwines pursuing spiritual, intellectual, and personal growth. The University also places a strong emphasis on spiritual and personal development where students are encouraged to explore and deepen their faith in God.

Students need to note that change is not an adversity but an ally as it often presents itself in the form of challenges. Just like the example I gave above about Divine and waking up early, at first, it seemed like a challenge, but it changed her and made her a productive morning person.

As John C. Maxwell once said, "Change is inevitable, growth is optional", I encourage you to welcome change into your life. Embrace the unknown, as it brings opportunities for self-discovery and growth through new experiences. Embrace challenges, for they have the power to shape you into the person you aspire to become, don't be afraid of failure; instead, learn from it, as it holds valuable lessons

that can lead to future success. Remember, change is something to celebrate, as it reveals your true potential and helps you create a fulfilling and meaningful life. Let's embark on this journey together, hand in hand with change, and witness the incredible ways our lives unfold.

In conclusion, as university students, we embark on a transformative journey filled with diverse experiences, challenges, and uncertainties. Amidst the ups, downs, and flows of academic life, it is crucial to recognize the significance of God as our anchor, our steadfast support. As we navigate through the vast sea of knowledge and face the storms of academic rigor and personal growth, God provides us with stability, guidance, and unwavering strength. By anchoring our faith in Him, we find solace in His presence, wisdom in His teachings, and comfort in His love. With God as our compass, we can navigate challenges with resilience, embrace opportunities with confidence, and find purpose in our pursuits. As CU students, let us hold firmly to our faith, allowing God to be our constant companion, guiding us through this remarkable journey of learning, discovery, and self-transformation. I leave you with this quote Kamsy Umez told me although it was by Pastor Arome “As astronauts explore space that is how we are meant to explore God”, that is with all diligence and intentionality.