

This is me chatting with you, not a structured piece of writing.

Ifeoluwa's POV: 2023

2023 was such a year, and I really want to write a review, but I don't even know where to start. A lot can happen in a year, and everything that could happen happened this year.

[Last time](#) I did something like this, I kind of categorized my life into different sectors and then wrote about them. I would do that again, but I remember journaling more than once this year about how I felt like I was struggling and failing in every aspect of my life—mentally, spiritually, financially, physically, in relationships, and in my career/academically. Even I know that that's a bit dramatic, so don't take me too seriously.

I keep saying that I feel like the exact same person that I was 5 years ago, but I only have to look at the things I wrote as recently as the [beginning of 2023](#) to see that a lot can happen in such a short period of time. I might look the same (and yes, I eat well now), but I'm such a different person! God really did His thing with His child this year.

It was a year filled with so many testimonies. On some days I sat down, thought about how kind God is, and started to cry. I read my 2020 review and saw that I said that I cried more than I ever had in any year prior, and now I'm just scared. I'm pretty sure that the years since then have been filled with more tears than the previous years, but you see this 2023? Jesus is and always will be a shield. I'm a semi-emotional person, but I was a big mess this year.

God blessed me with the gift of men in 2023, and sometimes I sit for stretches of time to try to calculate how much I owe the people in my life. I experienced love this year that challenged me so much. People did things for me that I couldn't believe. What did I do to deserve the love I received this year? What could I possibly have done? God is kind.

Concerning contentment, Luke 12:15 made more sense to me than it ever did before, and that happened with many other things too. 2023 was full of circumstances that made me relearn those things that I had learnt over the years and even taught others. There were things I thought I had on lockdown that I had to go back to this year. It was a season of reemphasis for me.

I learnt that of a truth, spiritual growth is really just the things I've learnt influencing my everyday life. I sat down and asked myself whether I truly believed the things that I'd professed all my life. Is God good? When I pray, do I believe that He hears me? What is my purpose? What are the things that matter? Why am I important to God? When God looks at me, what does He see? It was a season of reflection and strengthening my convictions in the truths that I'd recited for many years.

This year, I broke up with my (now former) best friend, and it was one of the hardest things that happened to me. However, I saw God carry me and give me wisdom, and I was able to rest in Him. More than that, He surrounded me with so much love, pain was a real but distant memory. Time really heals wounds, and God really gives strength.

I learnt to be very honest and found out things about myself that I wasn't really proud of, but by God's Spirit, I worked on my heart and my character. God taught me that He doesn't condemn me; rather, by His

Spirit, He makes me better every day. That was and still is such a comfort. I struggled in my mind like I never thought I would. I fought wars with the Ife who believed the lies of the enemy, and my Father upheld me with the truth of His word. I came to terms with the fact that I'm not perfect, and God gave me the strength and wisdom to become better.

I learnt that the opinions of the people we hold in high esteem have more of an effect on us than we might think at first. I found myself struggling to believe my intentions and the sincerity of my actions simply because another person planted seeds of doubt in my heart, and I decided then not to ever let anyone's opinions impress on my heart stronger than what I know to be true about me from God's Word.

Somehow, I just found out this year that most of us go through the same things, even though social media—and the need to always give the impression of perfection— makes us think that we're the only ones going through stuff. For some reason, I saw people be a bit more vulnerable online and in my relationships, and I can't count how many times I said "We're two twins" because I heard my thoughts echoed from the lips of other people.

2023 was the year where I had the most emotional yet intellectual conversations with my people, and I realized that I'm surrounded by so much wisdom and can never lack good counsel. Thank you, everyone.

God went to great lengths to school me on receiving love and accepting help, and even though there's still a long journey ahead of me, I'm really proud of how far this girl has come! I was in situations where I couldn't but receive, and it just reemphasized the fact that we're created for love and community. I decided to be more vulnerable this year, and even though it surprised some people, it was an almost sweet thing.

I went back to school and moved to a new country, and even though that's the most drastic thing that happened and should probably have come up since, sometimes I can't believe it. I learnt this adulting thing for real this year, and I only have God and the support system He blessed me with— in family and friends— to thank for the fact that I'm still in one piece today.


I stepped out of my comfort zone, literally, and I found that God can keep me even there.

The scariest thing that happened to me this year was turning 22. You mean I'm now practically in my early 20's? Lol. As we go into 2024, please remember that I'm 19 until I say otherwise, and while we're on this, also remember that nobody should please call me *dear* because I don't like it, I'm begging you.

I mentioned in the last review that I moved to a new church, and I want to reiterate that to date, that is one of the best decisions I have ever made. My life is better, and the lives of the people around me are better for it too. It is one of the greatest honors of my life to grow and serve at CCI. God, thank You!

It was a weird year for me in devotion. I had really good days, and there were days when I had to tell myself multiple times that *I'm full of God even when I don't feel like it*. Sometimes when people asked me Bible/God questions, I remembered the Ife they knew who gave them the confidence to come to me, and she spurred me to be better. Sometimes that was all I needed to get up and do what needed to be done, so thank you.

Influence belongs to the bold. I first heard Pastor Laju make that statement in 2021, but this year, it made so much more sense to me. I have a mandate to change the world, and I cannot let timidity or shyness win. I stepped out of my shell a bit more this year, and I will even much more in 2024 and beyond, by God's Spirit.

This is too long already, but this year I made new friends; had many opportunities to serve and grow; worked with the best teams and did work that I loved; discovered that I really love beautiful songs; pushed pride out; was broke and learnt lessons on contentment; doubted everything about myself; decided that I'll be intentional about enjoying life; discovered Tessa Afshar; learnt that life will go on no matter what anyone is going through; started journaling on Google docs and loved it; really adulted this adulting thing; had my first 'therapy' session courtesy of Doyin; found that my heart can really love; came to terms with the fact that I'm no longer a child; and learnt to love the Ife who Jesus loved so much, He died for .

My journal this year was full of me reminding myself of the things that God has done as a weapon for the future. God is so good. This is my conclusion. He is so good! You can trust Him. You can rest in Him. He won't mismanage your life, and even if you want to, He won't let you.

2024 will be a great year; I'm certain of it.

See you next year, or in three years.

All my love,

Ifoluwa

Songs that sum up my year: Highs and Lows, Been So Good, No One Ever Cared for Me Like Jesus.

How was 2023 for you? Send me an email (ifeoluwaolaniyan43@gmail.com) or a DM (@aiiffee on Instagram).

I should probably do this on another platform next time.