

## LETTER FROM RONALD OF UGANDA OCTOBER 11, 2006

### **MY DAILY LIFE AND EXPERIENCE**

My name is Ronald Asiimwe and I am from Uganda East Africa. I am located in western Uganda near the mountain Rwenzori, the highest mountain of East Africa. My home district is called Kaborole. I am 23 years old and I began my studies when I was very young. I have faced so many challenges as a student but I was able to overcome some of them. I lost my parents at an early age. I was so worried about my studies, but I did not lose hope and today many students don't have the self-assurance that I had, especially when they are left alone after the death of their parents. Some stop going to school, others think it is the end of the world and some see themselves being incapable of any thing. The worst is when children start learning bad habits such as smoking, idleness, laziness and others. I have helped so many students to get over that problem through counseling, or advising them to go for counseling

My parents taught me to respect my teachers and my elders and all the people in their respective offices that I think that helped me with my studies. I don't take alcohol, I abstained from sex in order to avoid AIDS scourge, worst of all, the majority of my classmates have died because of AIDS.

When I go back from school during holidays I have to do some work so that I can earn money for my school fees. I do things like make bricks, dig, farm, grow some fruit and cabbages, work in the banana plantation, go to the mountain to graze the goats and help my guardian at home. During holidays so many youth come to me for advice; some come to me looking for solutions in their homes for problems like divorce, fighting in homes, and many others. The majority of them are youth, this has forced us to start a youth association to help each one of us economically, socially, and politically. Our main objective is to fight poverty, through hard work. Poverty is the reason for misunderstandings in homes or families. We meet once a week and every member has to attend.

### **MY CULTURE (BRIEFLY)**

My culture is composed of clans. I do not know whether it is the same case in United States, but every person has a culture with some rules to fulfill. For example a woman is supposed to dress properly and sit while preparing food, and respecting her husband is a must. Young, growing boys and girls usually live at their fathers homes, and if a boy wishes to begin smoking or to shave off the first beard, the boy has to request first the approval from his father by offering him a goat and a calabash of beer. But this has started to change because of the modernization of marriage, which is now arranged by both the boy and the father, but in the past it was only for the parents to arrange, but today both the child and parents are involved. However, the boy is likely to refuse if his wife is not beautiful.

Before marriage there is a preparation for marriage and procreation, the purpose is to introduce young people to matters of sex. Girls are taught how to prepare food for men and to behave well, how look after their children and husband's family and kin uncle. Boys are taught what concerns men, how to acquire wealth, and how to be responsible as the head of the family. The first pregnancy becomes the final seal of marriage; the sign of complete integration of a woman in into her husband's family and kin uncle.

### **THE GEOGRAFICAL NATURE OF MY AREA AND UGANDA IN GENERAL**

Uganda is a country with good climate, that's why the majority are poor. This is because the good climate has made people be so idle. In Uganda, even if you don't work you can survive. Some people are lazy because of having plenty of food, this caused us not to be creative. We as human beings we are all equal, whether I am black or brown, we where all created in the Image of God, we are all imperfect in this world which we are living. What I would advise all people to do is to develop curiosity; people should discover things. They should not only believe in the writings, some writers just write for the sake of money, to be known and worse of all they do not make a clear research. Let us develop the spirit of curiosity.

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