

Each one of you has something you're good at. Each one of you has something to offer and you can only achieve that through gaining knowledge. Education is not only sitting on desk (getting a formal education), think about handcrafts, farming, sewing etc. You need to think about what you want to do, what you wish to do. Maybe a doctor, a business woman, a makeup artist, a nurse.

We need every single one of you to develop your talents, skills and intellect so you can help yourself, your family, your community, and the nation at large. Zimbabwe is waiting for your knowledge and skill to transform into a new chapter. If you don't do that – if you quit on school or life – you're not just quitting on yourself, you're quitting on your children, your generations before and ahead, your community and country. We are all called upon to become better, and achieve greater than our fore fathers. We need you to not focus on sex and boys for now. It's just a distraction, you cannot chase two mice and catch them both - you just end up losing both.

Now I know it's not always easy to do well in school. I know a lot of you have challenges in your lives right now that can make it hard to focus on your schoolwork.

I get it. I know what that's like. I have never had a father since I was young. I was raised by a single mother who struggled at times to pay the bills and wasn't always able to give us things the other kids had. I missed having a father in my life sometimes. There were times when I was lonely and felt like I didn't fit in. I went through a lot of physical and psychological abuse.

So I wasn't always as focused as I should have been. I did some things I'm not proud of, got into trouble. And my life could have easily taken a turn for the worse. I was fortunate. I had the opportunity to go to college, which I still am.

Some of you might not have those advantages. Maybe you don't have adults in your life who give you the support that you need. Maybe your home where you should be protected is the place where you don't feel safe, or have friends who are pressuring you to do things you know aren't right. Or you just come from a poor family....that's all you know...maybe your parents passed on.

But at the end of the day, the circumstances of your life – what you look like, where you come from, how much money you have, what you've got going on at home – that's no excuse for neglecting your homework or having a bad attitude. That's no excuse for naiveté, talking back to your teacher, or cutting class, or dropping out of school, eloping, becoming sexually active, getting into marriage of convenience, unwanted pregnancies, which all lead to shame, regret, and no hope....you become a dead man walking, no vision. That's no excuse for not trying.

Where you are right now doesn't have to determine where you'll end up. No one's written your destiny for you except God and it is good, it's your task to search it out in faith, with faith and work it out through patience and endurance.

You choose to take responsibility for your education, sex life and set goals for yourselves. And I expect all of you to do that.

I'm calling on each of you to set your own goals for your education and life – and to do everything you can to meet them. Your goal can be something as simple as doing all your homework, paying attention in class, or spending time each day reading a book at our very own Library Nhimbe. Maybe you'll decide to get involved in an extracurricular activity, or volunteer in your community... Maybe you'll decide to take better care of yourself so you can be more ready to learn. Maybe work on your character, remember your character to make room for your gift, you can have a gift but without character it can never be maximized to the fullest. Character is vital.

Whatever you resolve to do, I want you to commit to it. I want you to really work at it.

I know that sometimes, you get the sense from TV that you can be rich and successful without any hard work — that your ticket to success is through whatever you see there: maybe being a reality TV star, when chances are you're not going to be any of those things.

But the truth is, being successful is hard. You won't love every subject you study. You won't click with everyone in your path, so humility might help. Not every homework assignment will seem completely relevant to your life right this minute. And you won't necessarily succeed at everything the first time you try.

No one's born being good at things, you become good at things through hard work. You don't hit every note the first time you sing a song. You've got to practice. It's the same with your schoolwork, or life per se. You might have to do a math problem a few times before you get it right, or read something a few times before you understand it, or do a few drafts of a paper before it's good enough to hand in.

Don't be afraid to ask questions. Don't be afraid to ask for help when you need it. I do that every day. Asking for help isn't a sign of weakness, it's a sign of strength. It shows you have the courage to admit when you don't know something, and to learn something new. So find an adult you trust – a parent, grandparent or teacher, a coach or counselor – and ask them to help you stay on track to meet your goals. Be accountable to someone; that's the only way you can grow and be better than you were yesterday. Do a self-introspection, especially concerning sex and boys, know your strengths and weaknesses. If you have sex issues that need clarity, feel free to talk to your teachers and coaches - it's important. A problem shared is half solved. Knowledge is power.

When you're struggling, even when you're discouraged, and you feel like other people have given up on you – don't ever give up on yourself. Because when you give up on yourself, you give up on your family, your children and the nation at large. There are just too many people involved that you cannot afford to give up.

So today, I want to ask you, what's your contribution going to be? What problems are you going to solve? Who are you gonna be come? What will society, your children and children's children's who come in years say about what you made of life?

It's OK to say no to sex...you can always go backwards even though you might have gone further. You can always say no even though you have said yes before or were pressured into it. It's never too late to start on a fresh page. HIV and AIDS, STIs are real.

Beware that if you are going out with an older partner, the older he is, the more likely he will want sex, expect sex, and he could even have picked up a sexually transmitted infection.

There is a difference between sex in the movies and loving relationships in real life.

We've all experienced love during our teenage years. We've loved and been loved. This love adds richness and happiness to our lives. It makes us feel important, understood and secure. It provides us with a chance to discover our own-selves as we share it with someone new. We also learn things — to love ourselves, things we'd like to change and about the qualities and values we look for in a partner. Love and romance should be separated. Love contains a small portion of romance, it's not all about romance or sex; it's a beautiful gift and we can enjoy it well when we wait for the right time. There is nothing more fulfilling than knowing I have done the right thing at the right time. I am 27 years, I'm not sexually active, and no kids because I'm waiting for the right time after I am fully convinced I have secured my future and that of my children and I have enough to offer the people around me.

I strongly discourage you from a romantic relationship. The only rational thing that you ought to do is to focus on your career and make your life meaningful by pursuing the purpose for which you were sent here to do. Each of us has a specific purpose and power or ability to making our dreams come true. It's in us.

However, we can see or experience many youth indulging in romantic relationship where breakups, matchups are common. It's because we have the false belief that you'll get most happiness if you'll be able to marry his/her girlfriend/boyfriend. But the fact is that you just get trapped in a vicious circle. A girl commits suicide or has an unwanted pregnancy, HIV or an STI because she couldn't marry the guy she wanted, while that guy for sure will fall in love with another girl again. So sacrificing a beautiful life just for a romantic relationship is a blunder. Instead, you should focus on your career, if you manage to do that you increase a chance of getting a better focused life partner who's going to help you walk your path, and secure a better future for your kids. A wise man leaves an inheritance for his children and remember "a wise woman builds her home and a foolish one destroys it with her hands, musha mukadzi." (A woman is a helper to her husband, so ask yourself how you will help out when your foundation is wrong, you are not educated enough in any area to be specific...)

Dating and relationships I don't discourage, but sexual attraction I do discourage.

Having a life partner is a psychological need, but waiting for the right time is what makes everything perfect. In addition, opting to date instead of studies will mislead one from the journey of life. Student's first priority ought to be their studies, not romance. This doesn't mean students mustn't enjoy, but it should be done at the right time. This is why parents fear when their children date, neglecting their money invested on their studies.

Let's say you going to date. I need you to ask yourself if you able to keep sexual attraction away, are you going to avoid funny places that make you vulnerable, does your boyfriend love you enough to support you in pursuing your education? A man who loves you should be able to wait for you. He should respect your body or your principles in general. Do you have principles in place, rules you live by that will ensure achievement of your set goals?

There is more to love and romance. Relationship is not easy and one can experience emotional turmoil forcing him/her to commit suicide sometimes, be in a forced marriages, marriage of inconvenience. So one should not take a hasty step to start a relationship unless of course you are old enough, achieve enough to be able to settle and have kids and know full well that you are financially independent. Man needs our help. More than we need theirs. We are the support system, we are the brains, they are Kings. We are the counsellors or wise men, and a king's throne will soon come to ruin without a wise experienced helper. And of course we get curious about romance because we watch romantic movies, read romantic novels, and so on. So the best way to handle romance is by keeping far too busy. In a nutshell, studies come first over relationships.

So be the best woman you can be starting with what God has given you... It's more than enough, you can handle enough...we all do.