



# GET TO KNOW JASON

**Bula. My name is Jason. I'm 32 years old and I'm from the beautiful island of Fiji. My family and I have been a part of the GCI church in Fiji since 1992. I was fortunate enough to have grown up in the church, as a Y.E.S. (Youth Education Services) member and then a youth member. I was the youth leader of GCI Fiji for eight years. The young people have always held a special place in my heart, and I thoroughly enjoyed working with them. However, I felt that God was calling me into a different ministry. Months later, I was commissioned as the Faith Avenue Champion where I currently serve.**

**1. What difference has it made to have a mentor in your local church who cares about your holistic well-being, including your professional well-being?**

The corporate world is very competitive. We sometimes get caught up in it all and begin to lose the light of God in us. I'm so grateful to have a mentor who was able to gain great success in the corporate world whilst shining the light of Jesus. Being guided by someone who shares the same

beliefs ensures that you succeed without losing yourself.

**2. How has your experience of mentorship impacted your participation in the local church?**

Being "busy" was a great hindrance to my participation in church. Seeing my mentor able to do it all—run a family and a business and actively participate in church activities—made me realize just how "not busy" I actually was. I just needed to better manage my time.

**3. How have you experienced the presence of God in your mentoring relationship?**

I experience God's presence through the relationship itself. God is a relational God, and it showed in this mentorship. My mentor and I are from different generations. We're different in so many ways, yet we are able to connect. She is able to understand the struggles we young people go through and often provides guidance on how to overcome them.

**4. What qualities do you see in your mentor that make them a good mentor?**

There are many qualities I admire in my mentor. She is an intelligent,

strong-willed woman. She is someone who has gone through many adversities herself, so she is able to connect to what we go through. My favorite quality of hers is her ability to care. She genuinely cares for those around her, enough to discipline us when required.

**5. What have you learned about God and yourself through this mentoring relationship?**

I've learned that God is faithful. God knew that I am far from perfect. He knew my weaknesses and instead of dismissing me, he connected me to people who could help me grow spiritually, foremost, as well as professionally.

**6. What words of advice would you share with other mentors and mentees?**

My advice is to go for it. This is a great way to learn more about God, yourself, and others. Having a mentor provides an outside perspective on things. There are times when we struggle to admit our own faults, so having someone help you realize your strengths and weaknesses is great.



## GET TO KNOW TAKASA

**Bula! My name is Takasa, and I am 37 years of age. My wonderful husband and I have been married for 11 years. Together we have been blessed with two beautiful children, a son (11) and a daughter (8), who keep us active. I joined GCI Fiji in 2012 and support my husband with the Love Avenue for our congregation. I have only recently come to lead our young children's ministry. Leading the children's ministry is so fulfilling as I witness the next generation of our church grow in their faith.**

### **1. What difference has it made to have a mentor in your church who cares about your holistic well-being?**

It is indeed a wonderful blessing to have a mentor within the church. Not only does she guide us spiritually, empowering us to participate and become the next generation of church leaders, but she is a pillar of wisdom and a life-mentor outside the church. I look up to her as the type of leader I would like to become. I learn from her, talk with her about work and non-work-related topics—just about everything to do with life! I'm confident that she has my best interests at heart.

### **2. How did your experience of mentorship impact your participation in the local church?**

Becoming more familiar with one another outside of church allowed me to open myself up to her. Having married into the church, I would sometimes feel out of place in the church setting. As my mentor saw my capabilities, she brought me out of the shadows at church and put me in places where my strengths would be put to good use for the work of God. As I participated more (often with very little self-esteem or confidence), I found that I loved to "serve" in church. Through serving, I also grew

to know my church family better, ultimately helping me feel like I was a part of the church.

### **3. How have you experienced the presence of God in your mentoring relationship?**

Not once but twice at very pivotal crossroads moments in my life, my mentor was instrumental in guiding my career progression. God worked through her—somewhat my guardian angel on earth—to guide me through various work hurdles and help me to a place where I never dreamt I would be.

### **4. What qualities do you see in your mentor that make them a good mentor?**

As a mentor, I have great respect and admiration for my mentor as an educated, powerful leader in her workplace. She can juggle the demands of work, has raised a wonderful family, and is a respected leader in church. In many ways, I see her as the type of loving, God-fearing woman I can only aspire to grow into. These characteristics flow into her role as our pastor's wife. She is that motherly figure who has nurtured the young people up into our respective church roles, despite her own responsibilities within the church.

### **5. What have you learned about God and yourself through this mentoring relationship?**

I have learnt that God will place people in your lives that you feel embody Christ himself. In that relationship of familiarity, love, and respect, we then let our guards down and allow God to work in us through our mentors. But it isn't just about learning from them, it is also understanding that we have the obligation to be mentors ourselves and be that person for someone else. Learning from other people, building ourselves up, and becoming beacons of hope and encouragement to other people, that is how God's love will continue to flow.

### **6. What words of advice would you share with other mentors and mentees?**

A good mentor-mentee relationship is "give and take" and based on respect. When we bare our raw selves and break down our stumbling blocks, we can hear what other people have to say to us. When they "walk the talk" (in the good and bad), we respect their expertise and know that they themselves have been through the advice they give. It becomes even more genuine when we become intertwined beyond just church or work mentoring; we become family.



# GET TO KNOW TONGLI

Hello! My name is Tongli. I am 26 years old and currently live and work in Fiji. I have been with GCI since we moved to Fiji in 2003. My late grandfather, Ratu Epeli Kanaimawi, was our pastor for many years and was a great role model to me and my siblings. I am currently GCI Fiji's youth leader and enjoy the work that the church—and most importantly, God—has bestowed upon me.

### 1. What difference has it made to have a mentor in your church who cares about your holistic well-being?

It makes a big change. Having an accountability partner/mentor help you through your hard times can really help you lean more towards God, rather than towards the world. It then helps you be a mentor to those around you, either at home, school, or work. They might be going through a similar situation you have experienced, that you are now well equipped to empathize and help them solve.

### 2. How did your experience of mentorship impact your participation in the local church?

It changed my perspective on life—that commitment to the one true God is top priority. I have come across a CEO, a co-founder, chairman, and first responders who are able to set aside their work, hang their titles at the door, and come in with the urgency to learn, worship, and communicate with those who do not hold the same titles. It makes you ponder the question: "Are you really busy 24/7 that you are unable to provide your time to God?"

### 3. How have you experienced the presence of God in your mentoring relationship?

I have experienced God's presence through the changes in others who I have mentored. Seeing them not only seek God in what they are going through, good or bad, but being a light in their own little circle of friends and/or family, is inspiring.

### 4. What qualities do you see in your mentor that make them a good mentor?

I see curiosity in God's word. The saying we might be aware of is "Curiosity killed the cat." However, the full idiom is actually "Curiosity killed the cat, but satisfaction brought it back." Rather than taking the knowledge of others as truth, the qualities of having a curious mind can help you reach new heights in both religious and lifestyle knowledge.

### 5. What have you learned about God and yourself through this mentoring relationship?

There is much more I have yet to learn, not only from God, but also from my mentor and those who I mentor. God blessed us with the

ability to live different lifestyles, cultures, and social norms. Therefore, we all have a different perspective that can help us learn more of what God's word is trying to tell us or that can even challenge us to learn more.

### 6. What words of advice would you share with other mentors and mentees?

"You can lead the horse to the river, but you cannot force it to drink water." Do not be discouraged that others might not agree with you or avoid you because of what you believe. Our goal as Christians is not to save the world, but to make disciples; Jesus will do the saving. If you have friends or mentors who have different views that contradict God's word, it will be best to speak the truth in your words and in your life. And if they do not agree, pray for them as always, and do not let it affect your life with Christ. Galatians 1:10 says, "For do I now persuade men, or God? Or do I seek to please men? For if I still pleased men, I would not be a bondservant of Christ." Do what pleases Christ, and not others.