

BOWEN UNIVERSITY IWO

AN ADDRESS DELIVERED BY THE PRO-CHANCELLOR AND
CHAIRMAN, GOVERNING COUNCIL DEACON PROF. BISI
ADEBOWALE ON THE OCCASION OF THE 2ND CONVOCATION OF
BOWEN UNIVERSITY ON SATURDAY,
3RD NOVEMBER, 2007.

The Visitor to Bowen University and General Secretary of the Nigerian Baptist Convention, Rev. (Dr.) S. Ademola Ishola,
Honourable Chancellor, Rev. (Dr.) Reuben I. Chuga,
Your Excellency Chief Olusegun Obasanjo, GCFR, former President and
Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

Your Excellencies the Executive Governors of Osun, Oyo, Ogun, Ondo, Ekiti and
Kwara States.

Honourable Minister of Education, Dr. Aja Nwachukwu,

Other Honourable Ministers present,

Kabiyesis,

My Lords Spiritual and Temporal

The Executive Secretary, National Universities Commission, Prof. Julius A. Okojie,

Members of the Executive Committee of the Nigerian Baptist Convention,

Members of the Governing Council of Bowen University,

Members of Senate and Congregation of Bowen University,

Pro-Chancellors and Vice-Chancellors of Sister Universities,

Distinguished members of the Graduating Class,

Parents and Guardians of Graduands,

Staff and Students of Bowen University,

Gentlemen of the Press,

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen.

PREAMBLE

We thank the Almighty God for the grace and privilege He has accorded us to witness another important day in the history of Bowen University in particular and the Nigerian Baptist Convention in general. We have every reason to rejoice and be glad as we mark the 2nd Convocation of the University today.

This Convocation like the maiden edition is very special and historic, because today we are witnessing the conferment of the First Honorary Degree of the University on the immediate past President and Commander-in-Chief of Armed Forces of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo, GCFR, a great Nigerian, a renown International elder statesman and more importantly to us, a distinguished member of the Baptist Family under whose administration the University was approved. We heartily rejoice with him on this auspicious occasion and wish him good health and many more years of active service to his fatherland.

Also, at this convocation, the University will be turning out its first set of graduates of Agriculture, being a five-year programme and thus completing the first generation of Bowen graduates. There is no doubt that God has greatly helped us in diverse ways in the task of building this University to an enviable standard.

CHALLENGES

With the production of the first set of graduates, the University is steadily progressing into its second stage of development. One of our priorities for this stage of development is to establish a world-class Medical School. This will make Bowen University truly reflective of the three key cardinal objectives of the Baptist Mission in Nigeria, namely evangelism, education and health ministries. As I mentioned in my address at the maiden Convocation, "University Education is a capital-intensive venture" The establishment of a standard medical school is therefore a great challenge to the Baptist family who are the proprietors of the University.

The Nigerian Baptist Convention had a projection of raising about N6bn annually from the estimated 6 million Baptists in the Convention at the rate of N1,000 per Baptist. If we are able to consistently do this for the next three years, we will build a University of the highest standard in the world. However, what we have been able to raise from the N1000 minimum contribution per adult Baptist member has been a far cry from the projected amount. I, therefore, use this occasion to once again appeal to my fellow Baptist members to be more committed to our dream project- Bowen University. Our Pastors are expected to do their best in sensitizing their congregations to the extent that every member of each congregation would respond positively to the clarion call. As a show of commitment, I urge every Baptist church to visit Bowen University to be able to appreciate what the Lord is doing here and thereafter, be challenged to be identified with a project in the University. I have often said it, if you want to see a miracle come to Bowen University.

On this note, I wish to appreciate the notable assistance in cash and kind by individuals, corporate bodies and organizations, including some of our Churches in the last one year. May God richly reward your labour of love.

Private Universities are part and parcel of the educational system in Nigeria. The parents of students who attend Private Universities are also full blooded Nigerian tax payers. These institutions should therefore be assisted by Government in the area of infrastructural needs such as roads, power, water and security as an incentive. We are aware that as a matter of policy, Government gives some incentives to newly established industries such as tax holidays and duty drawback. I therefore, wish to particularly appeal to the Federal Government to, in the same vain extend the intervention of the Educational Trust Fund to Private Universities to assist them in tackling the challenges faced in the areas highlighted.

FELICITATION

May I at this juncture express our deep appreciation to the Government and people of Osun State, ably represented by His Excellency, Prince Olagunsoye Oyinlola for the support we have been receiving from the State especially for providing 50% of the N13million expended by the University to get connected to public water supply. We are looking forward to more support in future.

This address will not be complete, if I also do not acknowledge publicly, the inestimable support we have received from His Royal Highness Oba Ashiru Tadeso (Ariwajoye I) and his subjects since the inception of the University. They have been wonderful partners in progress. May God continue to bless Kabiyesi and his subjects.

Let me once again congratulate His Excellency, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo, GCFR, on the conferment of the first honorary degree of Bowen University. We are proud of what you have been able to do to move this country and we will continue to pray that God in His infinite mercies will always uphold you.

On a final note, let me use this occasion to congratulate the parents and guardians of the graduands. You have every cause to thank the Almighty God for giving you the grace to witness this day which is a significant landmark after many years of investment in bequeathing a worthwhile legacy on these young ones. It is my prayer that the good Lord would cause you to eat the fruit of your labour in Jesus name. To the graduands, today's ceremony is the beginning of yet another phase in your journey through life. I have no doubt that you have been given the best of formal education and spiritual nurture as well, as you go out into the world, we expect you to be good ambassadors of Bowen University in all that you do. Let the fear of God rule your heart. It is my prayers that the Good Lord would guide and guard you in all your ways.

I congratulate the General Secretary of the Nigerian Baptist Convention, the Chancellor, the Executive Committee of the Nigerian Baptist Convention and the Baptist members nation-wide on this happy occasion. May the good Lord continue to bless you and renew your strength to be able to do more for Bowen University.

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Gentlemen of the Press,

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen.

I thank you all for your patience and wish you journey mercies back to your various destinations.

Deacon Prof. Adebisi E. Adebowale

Pro-Chancellor and Chairman

Governing Council

Bowen University

3rd November, 2007