

**BOWEN UNIVERSITY IWO, OSUN STATE**  
**AN ADDRESS DELIVERED BY THE**  
**VICE-CHANCELLOR PROFESSOR**  
**T. O. OLAGBEMIRO**  
**ON THE OCCASION OF THE**  
**2<sup>nd</sup> CONVOCAION OF THE UNIVERSITY**

**ON**  
**SATURDAY, 3<sup>rd</sup> 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, Lagos, Oyo, Ogun, Ondo, Ekiti and Kwara States.  
Honourable Minister of Education, Dr. Aja Nwachukwu,  
Other Honourable Ministers present,  
Kabiyesi,

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,  
Pro-Chancellor and 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.

Glory to God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit for the grace bestowed on us to witness the 2<sup>nd</sup> Convocation of Bowen University holding today.

With a heart full of gratitude to the Almighty God for his love, faithfulness and uncountable blessings on Bowen University in particular, and the Baptist family in general, it is my greatest honour and privilege to address the 2<sup>nd</sup> Convocation of this University. I wish to join the Visitor to Bowen, Rev. Dr. S. Ademola Ishola, our Chancellor Rev. Dr. Reuben I. Chuga and the Pro-Chancellor, Deacon Professor Bisi Adebowale to formally welcome you all to the occasion on behalf of the Senate, Management, the Staff and Students of Bowen University. I most particularly welcome the immediate past President and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, our Honorary Degree Awardee, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo, GCFR, to the University.

I wish to express my special delight and gratitude to our Convocation Guest Speaker, Sir (Prof.) John Theodore Houghton FRS former Director – General and Chief Executive Meteorological Office, United Kingdom, who delivered the Convocation Lecture titled; “God, Science and Global Warming”. We thank you for honoring the invitation to deliver the lecture in our University despite your numerous international engagements.

**Preamble**  
As we may all be aware, Bowen University, the academic heritage of the Nigerian Baptist Convention was established on the 17<sup>th</sup> July, 2001 following the approval of the Federal Government. Academic activities commenced on 4<sup>th</sup> November, 2002 with three Faculties and 22 academic programmes. The University is committed to adding a “distinctly moral dimension to tertiary education in Nigeria” and has as its motto “Excellence and Godliness”. These guide all academic pursuits and life on campus, and have been the hallmark of the University, the standards by which the University is administered.

To achieve the above philosophy, students are encouraged to share certain Christian beliefs, which Baptists cherish and practice.

The University operates a code of conduct as contained in the Student Information Handbook. The Handbook is given to every student upon admission to the University. Each student and his/her parent/guardian are mandated to sign an undertaking that they have digested the contents of the Handbook and are willing to abide by its provisions.

Besides, the Pastor/Imam of each student also signs a Guarantor’s Form, stating that the student will be of good behaviour during his/her studentship.

The University therefore has zero tolerance level for all acts of indiscipline, and, any such act is appropriately sanctioned.

In a bid to reform some categories of students, whose cases would normally have warranted outright expulsion, the University sends such students for a mandatory 3-month reformatory programme organized in collaboration with the Baptist College of Theology, Oyo. Through this programme, we have been able to reform an appreciable number of students. However, this category does not include those who have been found culpable of cult-related activities. Bowen University does not tolerate cultism.

**HIGHLIGHTS OF ACHIEVEMENTS, 2006-2007**  
I recall with a deep sense of nostalgia that this time last year, we gathered here in the University for the maiden Convocation of the University. It is natural that on an occasion as this, we need to take stock of our God-assisted achievements in the last one year. First and foremost, this magnificent and imposing edifice-the University Worship Centre – in which we are holding this Convocation is a testimony to the place of pride God occupies in the scheme of things in this university. A befitting place of worship is the heart beat of any Mission-owned Institution like Bowen University. Our God is, indeed, able to do all things beyond human imagination. We give thanks, glory, honour and adoration to the Almighty God for this blessing notwithstanding our lean financial resources.

**Faculty of Social and Management Sciences**  
Construction work on the first phase of the Faculty of Social and Management Sciences Building adjacent to the worship centre has almost been completed. The building has a total of 13 lecture rooms, two computer laboratories and a radio and television studio.

**Staff Housing**  
The University aspires to accommodate many of her staff on campus. Currently, the Vice-Chancellor, Registrar, two Deans of Faculties, Director of Health Services, Hall Master, Hall Mistress and some Officers on essential duties are resident on campus. The University has almost completed 4 units of 3-bedroom semi-detached twin bungalows to accommodate an additional eight staff in the first phase of the staff Housing development. The second phase is expected to commence shortly.

**Water Processing Factory**  
The University has almost concluded work on its Water Processing Factory to provide safe and healthy drinking water for its staff and students as well as the immediate community. It is expected that production will commence early next year.

**Teaching/Research Equipment And Books**  
As I stated in my maiden Convocation Address last year, the University is a beneficiary of some state-of-the-art research equipment and books from a United Kingdom based Research Institute-Rothamsted Experimental Station (the oldest Agricultural Research Station in the world-established, 1604). In the last one year, we have committed substantial funds for the acquisition and maintenance of our teaching and research equipment as well as laboratory facilities.

**Library Automation**  
In recognition of the fact that the Library is the heart of a University, we have continued to fund our Library as well as equip it for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. I am happy to report that our Library has been fully automated. The e-Library has 30 computers with 28 connected to the internet which make access to countless journals and books a reality view to automating the Library, while its multimedia units are also being equipped.

**ICT**  
On 19<sup>th</sup> July, 2007, our multi-million Naira Digital Centre was commissioned by the Visitor to the University, Rev. Dr. S. Ademola Ishola. The Naira has concluded arrangements on the deployment of an Eduportal to provide the following services; Online Application and Admission, Course Registration, Virtual Library, Online checking of results and computation of GPA and CGPA, Transcript Request, Alumni Management System, Human Resources Management and Hospital Management amongst others.

The University has concluded plans with notable computer vendors to supply computers to interested members of staff on a leasehold agreement basis. A wireless network has also been put in place to enable staff access to the internet anywhere on campus. With the deployment of ICT facilities, Bowen has now become part of the global village. We thank God for providing the Centre.

**Research Grants**  
The University has the policy to offer research grants to eligible academic staff to conduct their research. In the 2007/2008 session, a total sum of 14million naira has been allocated to service staff development, short term training and research grants.

In spite of the age of the University, the staff and students have continued to apply themselves very conscientiously to the achievement of academic excellence and the extension of the frontiers of knowledge through teaching, research and community service.

**Energy Globe Winner, 2007**  
One of the unique academic programmes the University introduced since inception is the Physics and Solar Energy degree Programme. I am proud to inform this August gathering that two of our first set of graduates in this discipline emerged as the “National Energy Globe Winner for 2007” for the Country. The Award is in respect of “A Solar Tracker Model for Traffic Light System” constructed by Adelewo Emmanuel ASALEYE and Damilola FADUGBA-ALFRED for their Final Year Project in July, 2006. The two graduates of the University were supported by the University to receive the International Award personally from the ENERGY GLOBE Award Organization at a ceremony held in Brussels on 11<sup>th</sup> April, 2007.

**Academic Linkages**  
The University has continued to sustain its Academic Linkages with notable world class institutions and Research centres. Institutions that we have entered into such linkage agreements with at home and abroad include, Alabama A & M University (Southern Hemisphere, GIS Training School), Rothamsted Research Station Harpenden, Herts, U.K., University of Wales, Cardiff, U.K., Liverpool Hope University, Liverpool U.K., Hardin-Simons University, Abilene, Texas, University of Mary Hardon-Baylor Belton, Texas, Obafemi Awolowo University Ile-Ife, University of Ibadan and Nigeria Institute of Social and Economic Research (NISER), Ibadan.

So far, the University has between 2006 and 2007, hosted two sets of American students on Student Exchange Programme. Early next year, some of our staff and students will visit some Universities in the USA and United Kingdom for further exposure, under the Linkage Programme.

**Establishment of The College Of Health Sciences**  
In my Convocation Address last year, I did mention that the second phase of our academic development would commence with the establishment of the College of Health Sciences.

I am delighted to inform this gathering that our College of Health Sciences is gradually coming on board. The turning of the sod was performed for the construction of the Faculty Building of the College-Chief L. A. Gbadamosi Faculty Building-on Friday, 13<sup>th</sup> August, 2007 by the Visitor to the University, Rev. (Dr.) S. Ademola Ishola. The University has also appointed the Foundation Provost, Prof. A. Akinsola who assumed duty early last month. Recruitment of core Faculty Staff and the construction of Anatomy, Physiology and Biochemistry laboratories will soon commence. Very shortly, we will embark on the upgrade of the Baptist Hospital in Ogbomoso to the level of a full-fledged Teaching Hospital. This is a big challenge before the Proprietor of the University, and the financial commitment of every Baptist is highly demanded. The college will fully take off in the 2008/2009 academic session. One unique feature of the college is that apart from its doctor of medicine and optometry programmes, it will also run Bachelor of Science degree Programmes in Physiology, Biochemistry and Anatomy.

**CONVOCAION HIGHLIGHTS**  
During this Convocation, Bowen University will confer her first Honorary Degree (D.Sc.) to an illustrious son of Nigeria, the immediate past President and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and a Baptist, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo, GCFR. To our honorary graduand, I most heartily congratulate you on the well deserved honour. We are proud of the innovative trends that you brought into the governance of our beloved country.

We are also aware that the reform of a polity that has been pauperised and traumatized by over 15 years of political and economic disintegration characterized by planlessness, impulsive governance, corruption, selfishness and crass deceit will take a much longer time to crystallize. We are however hopeful because the foundation of a better Nigeria has been laid during your tenure.

Notable among the reforms brought about during your tenure as President of Nigeria is the revolution in information and communications technology, which opened the frontiers of social and economic development. Nigeria and Nigerians can now be easily reached from any part of the globe. This is a feat most Nigerians could not have envisaged prior to the coming on board of your administration.

Your Excellency, sir, Bowen University and 34 other Private Universities would not be a reality today but for the liberalisation policy introduced into the educational sector. Today, more Nigerian have access to university education. The educational system at the tertiary level has begun to stabilize gradually because of the comparative advantages created by the existence of private universities. Private universities are blazing the trail in terms of regular and uninterrupted academic calendar, and provision of a conducive enabling environment of peace and sanity for effective learning. Bowen is a living example.

In the years ahead when an account of the transformation of the University system is being given, your name undoubtedly will be written in gold.

We heartily congratulate Your Excellency as a worthy Honorary graduand and Ambassador of Bowen University. We wish you well in every area of continuous service to Nigeria and humanity at large.

Similarly, a total of 843 graduates will be awarded first degree at this Convocation. The break-down of the classes of degrees is as follows:

First Class Honours	19
Second Class Honours Upper Division	267
Second Class Honours Lower Division	437
Third Class Honours	120
<b>Total</b>	<b>843</b>

The graduands have imbibed the vision, mission and philosophy of Bowen University. They have passed through a standard, which seeks to integrate the pursuit of a liberal education with the search for meaning in our Christian lives as contained in our mission statement, philosophy and motto.

May I therefore, congratulate our graduating students for being a part of the privileged few, who have benefited from the revolution being witnessed in University education in Nigeria in recent years with the approval of Private University System.

**The Graduands**  
The University is proud to be producing young men and women that are truly certified worthy in both character and learning as part of our contribution to the high level manpower development for the country. As we all know, Nigeria is passing through a period of serious socio-political and economic restructuring caused partly by the global economic recession, and partly by the recklessness in the management of our financial resources in the past. The challenge ahead of you as you graduate from Bowen is, undoubtedly, likely to be far greater than any experience you may have had before now. In the task before you, you will walk alone, and not even the degree certificates that you are about to receive may help you. It is one thing to acquire a degree, and another to make the best use of it.

It is a fact in Nigeria that most graduates look for public sector employment, forgetting that graduate unemployment constitutes a fraction of the enormous problems confronting Governments. The knowledge gained from Bowen should have prepared you, not only to acquire an independent mind, but also to learn to be self-sustaining and self reliant. As young graduates, you should learn to pull your resources together, to organize yourselves into work-groups and with the help of Government, the banks and other agencies, set up small business enterprises or acquire land for agricultural production. With the enormous land resources and abundant natural blessings of rain and sunshine, a serious and hardworking mind should find enough to do to earn a good livelihood.

Although, Governments the world over regard the provision of job opportunities for its citizenry as a major critical and social obligation, however, in a depressed economy, the burden and responsibility for gainful employment is now being shared with Government by individuals and corporate organizations.

My dear graduands, having gone through the Bowen experience, I am confident that your resilience, resourcefulness and industry, will no doubt assist you to succeed wherever you find yourselves both within and outside the country.

I congratulate all our graduands and rejoice with you, your parents and guardians for your excellent achievement.

I wish you God’s abundant blessings in all your endeavours as you leave Bowen University to face challenges of life. Amen.

**CHALLENGE**  
With advancement in technological innovation and the Internet services which enable us to surf the world-wide web, Nigerian youths in like manner continue to advance in knowledge along with the evils that go with it. We produce first class brains that are marketable any where in the world. We also produce crooks and corrupt citizens i.e. cults, miscreants, smugglers, armed robbers, thugs, area boys and the likes that continue to dent our image locally and internationally. We are now, most unfortunately, suspects in most countries of the world.

Nigeria needs a new generation of leaders who would make a difference in the society. Bowen University is resolutely committed to focus the lost core values of integrity, respect, obedience, service, love and care. As a Christianly constituted, our focus is to imbibe in our students the “fear of the Lord” as contained in Proverbs 1:7 “The Fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and instruction”.

**Challenge to the Baptist Family and others**  
Let me seize this opportunity to thank every member of the Baptist family for their prayers and continuous donations in cash and kind to the University. It is my sincere prayer that the Almighty God would bless you real good for your labour of love. As Vice-Chancellor in a Baptist University, your prayers has been the source of my strength and support.

We, again urge you to maintain the spirit of giving in due season, you will “reap the reward, if you faint not” As Bowen University has entered the second phase of its development, constant cash flow is needed. We must appreciate the fact that University Education is a capital intensive venture and as Baptists, it is a primary responsibility of all of us to finance the capital development of the University. We count on your continuous support now and in the future.

**Challenge to Government**  
The Executive Secretary, National University Commission, Sir, let me use this opportunity to call on the Federal Government (ETF) again, as I did on the occasion of our maiden Convocation, to extend the Education Trust Fund (ETF) intervention to Private Universities. We are of the opinion that investment in human capital development should be a shared responsibility between the government and proprietors of these institutions. The product of these universities will, undoubtedly, contribute to the development of the society. The law establishing the ETF is overdue for amendment in view of the innovation in the operation of the University System in the country that now allows ownership of private universities.

We also need the assistance of wealthy Nigerians as our partners in our educational enterprise here in Bowen. We need additional classroom blocks and student hostels. We have a plan to build a modern sports complex of international standard. All these will gulp millions of naira. May the Lord depend on you to meet these challenges. The Lord will not forget you at your own hour of needs.

**APPRECIATION**  
This address will not be complete, if we do not publicly acknowledge our benefactors. God has used them tremendously to meet some urgent needs of Bowen University at various times.

Firstly, we give thanks and adoration to God for keeping alive the dream to establish a University by the Baptist denomination, and for making the dream to come through at the fullness of time. According to the Bible, God makes everything beautiful in His own time.

Our gratitude also goes to the Federal Government once again for granting approval to the Nigerian Baptist Convention to establish Bowen University, through the Federal Ministry of Education and the National University Commission (NUC)

We continue to thank the Oluwo of Iwo, Obashiru Olatunbosun Tadese, Ariwajoye I and our Host Community, Iwo, for giving the Nigerian Baptist Convention their land to site Bowen University and for their continued support since the establishment of the University.

Special appreciation goes to HIS Excellency, the Executive Governor of Osun State, Prince Ogunsoye Oyinlola for his invaluable assistance to the University, particularly in the area of water supply to the University. The supply of potable water is one of the major areas of urgent needs of the University. His Excellency has released counterparts funds to connect the area to the Municipal Water Supply and to rehabilitate the access road to the University that was in a terrible state of disrepair. May God continue to bless His Excellency and the State in general.

We are indeed grateful to the Visitor to the University and General Secretary, NBC, Rev. Dr. Solomon Ademola Ishola, the Chancellor and President of NBC, Rev. Dr. Reuben I. Chuga, the Pro-Chancellor and Chairman, Governing Council, Deacon Professor Bisi Adebowale, members of the Governing Council, all associations, corporate bodies and individuals that have instituted prizes and awards to appreciate academic and moral excellence, Baptist College Individual Students Association (BACOSA) and our Octogenarian Aca A. M. Laosebikan, for your various contributions in getting Bowen University this far.

Similarly, we wish to express our profound gratitude to all Conference Secretaries, Baptist Pastors and Baptist Churches for their contributions.

We continue to thank the Executive Committee of the Nigerian Baptist Convention for financial support, and the General Secretary of the Convention from whose fatherly position and goodwill the University has immensely benefited and continued to benefit both within and outside the country.

May the Almighty God from whom all blessings flow bless you all richly in every way in Jesus name. Amen.

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Gentlemen of the Press,  
Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen.

I thank you all for your attention. May the good Lord grant you journey mercies back to your various destinations in Jesus name. Amen.

Long live Bowen University  
Long live Nigerian Baptist Convention  
Long live Federal Republic of Nigeria

**PROFESSOR T. O. OLAGBEMIRO**  
**VICE-CHANCELLOR**  
**BOWEN UNIVERSITY, IWO**

November, 2007