

‘CROSSING THE TRESHOLD’

CHAIRMAN’S ADDRESS AT THE VALEDICTORY PROGRAMME OF CALEB INTERNATIONAL COLLEGE, LEKKI, WEDNESDAY, JULY 10, 2013

The CEO, Caleb Group of Schools, Distinguished Guest Speaker, College Principal, Parents, Staff and Students, Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen.

Glory be to God for the grace to be here again. This is a my second visit to this great school, a member of the Caleb Group of Schools, of which Caleb University is the flagship. I appreciate the privilege of chairing this occasion. On behalf of the Principal, Staff and parents, hosts and organizers of this programme, I offer a hearty welcome to our Guest Speaker, Professor Rahamon Bello, FAS, the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Lagos (ably represented by the dynamic Professor Toyin Ogundipe, Director of Academic Planning and immediate past Dean of the School of Postgraduate Studies). For the record, the University of Lagos is the primary place of my employ as Professor, from which I went to Caleb University on leave of absence some three years ago. I felicitate with our outgoing students and their parents on this occasion, an important milestone in our children’s young lives.

My short address is entitled “Crossing The Threshold.” For those who may not have been raised in traditional communities, the concept of the threshold may not be too familiar or striking. But for members of the older generation, the symbolism of the treshold, that bar that you cross on your way in or out of the house, is most telling. For our students, there was a day you crossed the threshold into this institution and today you are formally crossing it to graduate from here.

What does the threshold represent? It is a place of transition, of decision, action and movement. You cannot afford to tarry too long, as you might constitute a nuisance to yourself or others, and, even, expose yourself to some inconvenience or worse. To linger there is to be guilty of indecision, with grave consequences, such as failure. Many cross the threshold to victory, others to defeat. It is life-defining.

What did heroes of faith do before crossing the threshold? Jesus took time to undergo water baptism, fast and pray before crossing the threshold from thirty years of secular activities to three and half years of intense spiritual work culminating in the salvation of penitent humankind. The conquerors of Jericho too took time to prepare as they crossed the threshold into The Promised Land..

You are now about crossing the threshold, to signal a new beginning, a new life full of new dreams and possibilities. You should recall your first day here when you crossed over into this institution and now is the time to cross over on your way out. You need to pause, reflect and

pray, commit your life and ways to the Lord, have a purpose and direction, work hard and live responsibly and move on to change the world around you. May the Lord Jesus Christ be with you as you aspire, perspire, innovate and create.

I congratulate our graduands and their teachers on this milestone, and thank the parents for giving their children the best possible start in life. A sound education complements the whole armour of God if our wards are to cross the threshold to a future of success and fulfilment. May the Lord make their dreams come true.

Before I conclude, permit me to remind those who did not know that Caleb University, Imota is the only private university in Lagos State that has produced bachelor's degree holders in twelve disciplines across three Colleges. We have not only graduated three sets of students, we have also now commenced postgraduate studies, beginning with the MSc programme in Architecture. Other postgraduate programmes will be added before the end of the year. Parents of our students obtain their wards' results via text message and electronic mail. As we speak, our 2013/2014 academic session is over and Senate is meeting tomorrow to consider results. We do not experience disruptions arising from staff or student union crises. Our next Convocation will take place in October, in the year of graduation, and, as usual, our certificates will be ready for collection on the same day. We do not donate or sell our degrees, every degree at Caleb University is earned and that is why our products are competitive. Our pioneer best graduating student, who obtained a First Class Honours degree in Industrial Chemistry in 2011, came first in the entrance examination into the MSc Chemistry class at the University of Ibadan in 2012.

I have said enough to drive home the point that Caleb University is the ideal destination for those who are crossing the threshold to the higher ground of moral and academic excellence. A leading Nigerian bank adopted a slogan in its early years: "Why not bank with us?" We at Caleb University are delighted to say: "Why not study with us?" You will be glad you did. I welcome you to that world of unlimited possibilities beyond the treshold.

I thank you for listening. God bless.

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