

ADDRESS BY THE GENERAL OVERSEER, PASTOR ENOCH ADEJARE ADEBOYE, GENERAL OVERSEER, THE REDEEMED CHRISTIAN CHURCH OF GOD, AND VISITOR, THE REDEEMER'S UNIVERSITY AT THE 6TH CONVOCATION OF THE REDEEMERS UNIVERSITY AT THE PERMANENT SITE AND MAIN CAMPUS EDE, OSUN STATE ON THURSDAY 8TH JANUARY, 2014.

Protocols

We ascribed great thanks to God Almighty from whom all blessings flow, firstly for bringing all of us into this New Year 2015 of triple grace.

Above all, we give thanks to the Lord for this great University for making it possible for us to relocate from the Redemption Camp to this spacious environment of Ede, Osun State. It is our desire and prayers that this land of Ede shall be a Rehoboth to you all, Management, staff and students. May the Lord make room for you to utilize all the potentials and opportunities in the land, and grant you enablement to fulfill your dreams and expectation in the Name of the Lord. Amen.

It gives us immeasurable pleasure to note that this is the 6th Convocation of the University as well as the maiden convocation to take place on the permanent site in Ede, since the granting of the license to operate in January 2005, and the admission of the first set of students in September 2005. Congratulations as we return all gratitude to God for His sustaining ability and faithfulness.

We wish to salute the Vice Chancellor, the entire management team, the academic and non-teaching staff and students for the courage, perseverance, endurance and strong commitment to relocate to Ede, the main campus and permanent site with resumption of the 2014/ 2015 fresh students on 13th October 2014, after having been at its temporary location on the RCCG Redemption Camp since inception in 2005. We are aware of the challenges of breaking up the fallow ground and moving to a new site.

Our special thanks to His Royal Majesty, Oba Munirudeen Adesola Lawal, Laminisa 1, Timi of Edeland, for his extraordinary commitment towards the realization of the movement of the University to Ede. Sir, we appreciate the noble roles you played to accomplish this feat.

According to our Creator manual that enjoined us to continue to be steadfast, unmovable and unstoppable, always abounding in the work and strides, as your labour of love shall not, and never be in vain in the Lord. May the grace of God continue to sustain you to surmount all the teething problems on the site in Jesus Name, Amen.

We congratulate the graduating students, but first we apologize that your convocation which should have been held in September 2014, had to be rescheduled due to the relocation. We wish to state that the next convocation would be held as and when due. We salute you, who have toiled to complete the various courses, in the three (3) Colleges; Humanities, Management Sciences and the Natural Sciences since your admission and matriculation in the University in 2010.

It gladdens our heart to note also that 598 students are graduating during the 6th convocation of the University, with breakdown as 125 in the Humanities, 354 in Management Sciences, and 119 in Natural Sciences. The convocation records showed further that a total of 28 students are graduating in First Class Honours, 201 in 2nd Class Upper Division, 266 in 2nd Class Lower Division, 95 in 3rd Class Division and 8 Ordinary Pass. Let Somebody Shout Halleluiah !!! We wish to congratulate all of you who have distinguished yourselves.

From these results, we challenge you to keep up the spirit, striving on the upward way, and looking forward to a bright and fulfilling future, irrespective of the gloom of the job market and other challenges in the society. Fear not, your tomorrow will be alright. To those of you who have not performed appreciably well,

keep up the fighting spirit to the top by exploring all other options to improve your career and prospects, and take advantage of it. The covenant keeping God will not leave you nor forsake you.

We congratulate our esteemed parents and guardians for keeping faith with the University and cooperating all the way through, in the process of transforming our graduands, from foundation or year 1 till this day of great joy. You have sown, toiled and sacrificed to ensure that your children or ward are given the best legacy in life, a Golden education. We pray that God will cause you to eat the fruit of your labor. We pray for long life and good health, to reap the great benefit of educating your child as well as seeing them through their future endeavours in Jesus Name, Amen.

There is no doubt that this nine (9) year old Redeemers University is impacting our society and transforming it in the process for the better. As these graduands are released into the society, it is our belief that they will turn out to be of the highest quality such that the society and the graduands themselves would have been better off.

We wish to trace the antecedents to the University system in Nigeria and its place in societal development. To be sure, Universities emerged as an offshoot of the educational arm of religious institutions, but were basically academics for awarding universal education and studying the universe as well as interpreting it. For a very long time, between the time the first University in Europe, University of Bologna, was established in Italy in 1088, and the industrial revolution in the mid-19th Century, universities taught mainly naturally philosophy, logic, medicine, theology, mathematics, astronomy, and **astrology**, law grammar and rhetorics.

It was not until the post-industrial revolution era that science and technology emerged as serious disciplines. From then on, Universities have set the pace for society and responded to challenges within society. Indeed Universities are saddled with providing high level manpower for government, arts and entertainment and the industrial society.

The premier University in Nigeria, the University of Ibadan, established in 1948, was the main elite recruitment ground and manpower development centre for the colonial government then, the emerging economy and the educational cadre. The products of this and other Universities in the early days would regale us with tales of how they were interviewed in their hostel rooms for jobs in their final year or were the ones interviewing the employers, since they would eventually sign up for the employer who provided better incentives which included a bigger and more prestigious car.

Today, the reverse is the case as there are no jobs waiting for the several graduates being turned out from our ivory towers. During the halcyon days, the curriculum was not planned to suit national need. That probably, explained why Latin was a very popular course and graduates of physics were recruited as pioneer professionals in the department of government that was the precursor to Nigeria National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC). The medical school, the University College Hospital (UCH), was the only institution of the school then whose relevance to the society could never be subject to debate and will continue to remain so.

From a single university in 1948, there are now over 37 Federal Universities, 37 State Universities and over 50 private Universities, mostly offering generalist courses with some specializing in agriculture and technology. However, there are hardly enough jobs for the graduates, as well as the fact that some of the graduates are not employable by the curriculum and skills that produced them.

The committee on higher education in the United Kingdom, set up in 1963 and headed by Lord Robbins wrote a report which gave four main objectives for the universities namely:

- (i) Instruction in skills, knowledge and character
- (ii) The promotion of the general powers of the mind so as to produce not mere specialist but rather cultivated men and women,

- (iii) To maintain research in balance with teaching since teaching should not be separated from advancement of learning and the search for truth;
- (iv) And to transmit a common culture and common standards of citizenship."

From the above statements, it is apparent that the Universities are not just institutions for awarding degree but a very special institution of control in our society. Furthermore, from the mid 20th Century to now, we have seen the dominant role Universities have played in the developed world. Universities are usually in the forefront of any social re-engineering and transformation of the society, especially with the power of research being focused on areas that will promote human development and solve existential problems.

We have problems with securing jobs for young people, and most of our productive sectors such as agriculture, mining, solid minerals and small scale industries are still primitive in approach to leverage on the evolving global technologies to compete favourably in the global market. These problems have persisted and are burgeoning because the universities are largely out of synchronization with society. Hence we need to generate initiatives, ideas and momentum to transform our society.

Increasingly discovered in the labor market places, our Universities continue to issue bland certificates to graduates who are barely literate, if we take literacy to be the ability to read and write. The education is bland and not tied to the need of the society. Education must be woven into life with a common thread running through life and society.

Against this background or antecedent these was what informed our commitment to position the Redeemer's University to be branded and known as an ideal citadel of learning and centre of excellence in all its ramifications. To whom much is given, much is expected. We call on all levels of decision making process, from the University Council, Senate and Management to be guided by this golden expectation of being the best among the best.

You must explore all options to optimally dispense research and development into alternative and cheap sources to meet needs for the University's operations.

To our graduands, you have been prepared for the real life in the world of work. You must be a pace setter in all your endeavours, such that when we hear of you, it will be good news promoting the good virtues your alma mater has imparted in you.

Once again, we congratulate the Redeemer's University on its 6th Convocation ceremony and the first on the permanent site. We gave you the challenge and you bought into the vision. To the graduands, their parents and well wishers, look forward to a great and bright future. Our prayer goes with you, and that your expectations shall be granted in Jesus Name. Amen.

Many thanks for your attention and God bless.

Pastor E. A. Adeboye
Visitor to the University
& General Overseer,
Redeemed Christian Church of God
8th January, 2015