



A Keynote Address Delivered by the Rector, Bible Life School International, Evang. Emeka Ogbuju, at the 2017/2018 Matriculation Ceremony of the School held on Saturday 16th December, 2017 at the Lokoja Study Centre

I am pleased to welcome you to the Maiden Matriculation Ceremony of this new School. I am also most delighted to humbly welcome to this event the Chairman of the Pentecostal Fellowship of Nigeria, Kogi State, His Lordship, Bishop (Dr.) TED Bako who is also the Chairman of the Governing Council of our new School. I warmly welcome the revered members of our Board of Advisors and Management. It is my joy to also welcome all our faculty members who have been making history with us from inception. I respectfully welcome all our special guests, distinguished ladies and gentlemen. To our pioneer students, I say welcome again to your School of Theology. I also specially recognize your families and friends, as I welcome them to our Lokoja Study Centre.

Most of you were present on the 1st of September 2017 when the Lord laid the foundation of this school under the apostolic cover of His Lordship, Bishop Dr. John Ibenu, the Chairman of Christian Association of Nigeria, Kogi State. The foundation was laid with a mission to raise deep-rooted disciples of Jesus Christ and ministers of the gospel through sound biblical training. We immediately commenced lectures with few foundation students on the 2nd of September 2017. Today, to the glory of God, the school has grown to matriculate 23 students into her Diploma program in Christian Theology and Ministry, and Certificate program in Christian Theology and Ministry; as you can see in the event of today, it has been a journey of God's grace and favour.

It is important to clearly point out today that the Bible Life School is an inter-denominational, non-denominational, non-profit, private and international bible training school. The school accommodates Protectants, Charismatics, Pentecostals, Orthodox, and all Christians who believe the bible as the only Holy and inerrant word of God. We believe and strongly promote the tenets of the Christian faith that hold the deity of Jesus Christ, salvation by God's grace and through faith alone in Jesus Christ and in the present ministry of the Holy Spirit by whose indwelling the Christian is enabled to live a godly life. Our four-fold objectives are:

- i)* To make Christian education and ministerial training easily available and affordable;
- ii)* To offer a concise seminary level training to ministers and church leaders in circular career who did not pass through one;
- iii)* To equip Christian leaders with digital tools for missions in the digital age; and
- iv)* To provide solutions to the problems of humanity using sound theological knowledge for development of the society.

Our programs are highly intensive with lectures every weekend. Our certificate program covers 22 credits units from October to March and April to September each year. Our admission forms for March 2018 is already on sales; our Diploma program covers 90 credit units from October to September each year and October to March the next year. The themes of these programs are in-depth and rich. The lecture materials are fully prepared in diverse formats – videos, audios and physical textbooks and lecture notes. I thank our international partners (Third Millennium Ministries USA), my able Registrar and all our faculty members who have worked assiduously and selflessly without a pay to make these possible.

Let me summarise this address by encouraging more students to join us by March 2018. We have among our students both young ministers and old ministers with over 20 years of experience in ministry yet they have demonstrated high rate of maturity and humility in learning and unlearning at Bible Life School. I wish to share few testimonies of their experiences in the school so far:

- *To God be the glory that I am privileged to be among the pioneers of this great school of theology in Lokoja. It has been months of intensive teachings and I must confess that my knowledge about God has greatly increased. If you are indeed in search for knowledge about God, Bible Life School is a place to be so that you and I can set the world on perpetual fire for Jesus.*
- *Bible Life School is a dream that has come to reality for me. Within this short period, I have acquired knowledge and experiences that have opened my eyes to some things that I thought were not possible. I am proud to be one of the students.*
- *A lot to testify about this Holy Spirit filled school. Even as the latest student, I've been exposed to most unfamiliar things in the Scripture that the society at large ought to have been used to. Bible Life School is now serving as a great platform and rare privilege for me to discover some mysteries behind my being... I am proudly a student of this glorious School.*
- *In over two decades of my Christianity with a background in one of the most organised denomination on earth, I carried with me a baggage of ignorance born out of overzealousness and erroneous interpretation of the scripture by some preachers. But recently I came in contact with a group of scholars who chose to do away with pride to seek knowledge. I don't pray to kill Uzziah anymore before I see the Lord (Isaiah 6:1). I have stopped commanding my morning because job didn't command his (Job 38:12). Many thanks to Bible Life School! It is just getting better. I proudly support Christian Scholars!*
- *The lectures this weekend is the best thing that have happened to my Christian life. I feel so much relieved and free to learn that I can give my tithes beyond percentages instead of paying them with the use of a calculator. Thank God that I did not miss being at Bible Life School this year.*

There are two short testimonies we received which are very striking:

- *"At Bible Life School, God is helping some of our biblical interpretation infirmities"*
- *"BLS is the answered prayer to the ignorance of our time and a gift to the body of Christ."*

These testimonies precisely noted the burden we wish to lighten and the problem we hope to bring solutions to. The church today is faced with an infirmity of poor biblical interpretation, shallow and self-projecting preaching, and erroneous doctrinal foundations. The solutions to these are simple: applied hermeneutic principles, strategic homiletics methodologies, and inter-scriptural exegesis. Some pastors have ignorantly gone into occultism in search of anointing and power. At BLS, we stress that the real anointing and power is knowledge of God's word in the Holy Ghost! We therefore invite all Christian leaders and followers of Christ to take advantage of this rare opportunity to learn and unlearn at the feet of Christ and deepen your relationship with Jesus for the effectual work of the ministry. On this note we solicit for studentship drive from our fathers in the Lord and supports in kind and otherwise from our numerous Christian brethren. We also appreciate the help, goodwill and acceptance we have got from the PFN, spirited individuals and the management of Christfield Schools for granting us this place for a study centre.

We are already on the move. There is no going back. We are taking over Lokoja with the gospel. The right knowledge of God's word will increase in this city as the waters cover the sea.

Enjoy the remaining parts of the programme. God bless you.