

**“BOLDLY INTO THE FUTURE”
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**Guest Speaker's Address
2026 Graduation Ceremony, Speech and Prize Giving Day
Bethany Christian Academy, Barkin Ladi, Plateau State, Nigeria
25th July, 2026.**

Theme: *"BOLDLY INTO THE FUTURE"*

Bible Text: Joshua 1:9

"Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go." — Joshua 1:9 (NIV)

**The Proprietor of Bethany Christian Academy: The Great Commission Movement
Nigeria,
Members of the Governing Board,
The Special Guest of Honour,
The Chairman and Chief Launcher,
The Principal, Teachers and Staff,
Distinguished Parents and Guardians,
Special Guests,
Dear Graduating Class of 2026 – The Set of VALOR,
Ladies and Gentlemen.**

Good day to you all.

I count it a rare privilege and a profound honour to stand before this remarkable gathering on this memorable occasion. My sincere appreciation goes to the management of Bethany Christian Academy for inviting me to share in this historic celebration.

Today is not merely a graduation ceremony.

Today is a celebration of dreams.

A celebration of sacrifice.

A celebration of hope.

A celebration of destiny.

Most importantly, today is the beginning of a new chapter.

Graduands, today you wear beautiful gowns.

Tomorrow, life will ask you to wear courage.

Today you receive certificates.

Tomorrow, life will demand character.

Today, everyone applauds you.

Tomorrow, the world will test you.

And that is why our theme could not have been more appropriate:

BOLDLY INTO THE FUTURE

It was the legendary Abraham Lincoln that said “the best way to predict the future is to create it”. The parents and teachers of our graduating students by the grace of God have created a

glorious future for them and are sending them forth boldly into the future by the power of God. Indeed this great future was created many years ago when Rev Yemi and Sue Ladipo by the grace of God brought the Great Commission Movement to Nigeria in 1969 beginning at the Campus of the University of Lagos but has now spread nationwide.

The Meaning of Valor

I am especially delighted that your graduating class is called **THE SET OF VALOR**.

Valor means **great courage in the face of difficulty**.

It is easy to be courageous when everything is going well.

True courage is revealed when life becomes difficult.

Valor is refusing to quit.

Valor is standing after falling.

Valor is believing when everyone else doubts.

Valor is praying when circumstances appear hopeless.

Valor is moving forward despite fear.

Remember this:

Courage is not the absence of fear. Courage is moving forward in spite of fear.

God's Command: Be Strong!

Joshua was about to lead millions of Israelites after the death of Moses.

Humanly speaking, he was terrified.

Yet God did not tell Joshua,

"I will remove all your challenges."

Instead, God said,

"Be strong and courageous..."

Notice carefully.

God never promised Joshua an easy journey.

God promised Joshua His presence.

There is a huge difference.

The greatest guarantee in life is not the absence of problems.

The greatest guarantee is the presence of God.

When God walks with you,

mountains become stepping stones.

Storms become classrooms.

Failures become lessons.

Disappointments become divine appointments.

Dear Graduands...

The world you are entering is exciting.

But it is also demanding.

Some of you dream of becoming doctors.

Some engineers.

Some veterinarians.

Some lawyers.

Some professors.

Some pilots.

Some entrepreneurs.

Some missionaries.

Some presidents.

Some scientists.

Some inventors.
Some diplomats.
Wonderful dreams!
But hear me carefully.
Dreams are free.
Success is expensive.
The price of greatness is discipline.
The price of excellence is hard work.
The price of leadership is responsibility.
The price of success is perseverance.

Life Is Not a Bed of Roses

Permit me to tell you something your teachers may not put in your report card.
Life is not a bed of roses.
You will apply for university admission.
You may not get admission the first time.
Do not give up.
You may fail an examination.
Do not give up.
You may lose friends.
Do not give up.
You may experience disappointment.
Do not give up.
You may face rejection.
Do not give up.
You may cry.
But never quit.
Because winners are not people who never fail.
Winners are people who never stop trying.
Winners never quit and quitters never win.
As Winston Churchill famously said:
"Success is not final, failure is not fatal: it is the courage to continue that counts."

Your Journey Has Just Begun

Graduation is not the finish line.
It is the starting point.
Many of you desire admission into universities in Nigeria and abroad.
Some of you will study in the United Kingdom.
Canada.
The United States.
Germany.
Australia.
South Africa.
Or other nations.
Excellent!
But remember this:
A university gives you a degree.
Life gives you wisdom.
Never stop learning.

Read books.
Develop skills.
Master technology.
Learn Artificial Intelligence.
Learn communication.
Learn leadership.
Learn financial discipline.
Learn integrity.
The future belongs to continuous learners.

Impossible Says...

People often say,
"It is impossible."
But look carefully at the word:
I'M POSSIBLE.
Nothing is impossible with God.
Luke 1:37 says,
"For with God nothing shall be impossible." And Mark 9:23 says *"all things are possible to him who believes."*
The impossible only remains impossible until someone does it.

Reach for the Stars

Never reduce your dreams because people think they are too big.
If your dreams do not frighten you,
they are probably too small.
Aim high.
Very high.
As Les Brown said,
"Shoot for the moon. Even if you miss, you'll land among the stars."

The Story of the Wright Brothers

Many people laughed at Orville and Wilbur Wright before December 17, 1903.
People said,
"Human beings can never fly."
Today,
millions of people fly every day.
Someone believed.
Someone persisted.
Someone ignored criticism.
History changed forever.

Albert Einstein

Einstein was once considered a slow learner.
Yet he transformed modern science.
Never allow today's opinion to define tomorrow's destiny.

Abraham Lincoln

Lincoln failed repeatedly.

Business failed.
He lost elections.
He suffered depression.
He experienced heartbreaking disappointments.
Yet he refused to quit.
Eventually he became one of America's greatest Presidents.
Failure never defeated him.
Quitting would have.

Nelson Mandela

Mandela spent **27 years in prison**.
Most people would have become bitter.
He became better.
When he finally became President,
he chose forgiveness over revenge.
That changed South Africa forever.

Martin Luther King Jr.

He had a dream.
Not money.
Not power.
A dream.
One speech changed history.
Never underestimate the power of a God-inspired dream.

Mother Teresa

She possessed little wealth.
Yet she became one of history's richest people in compassion.
She reminded the world:
"Not all of us can do great things. But we can do small things with great love."

Steve Jobs

Steve Jobs was fired from the company he founded.
Imagine that.
Many people would have quit.
Instead, he returned years later and transformed Apple into one of the world's most influential companies.
Your setback may simply be God's setup.

Neil Armstrong

On July 20, 1969, Neil Armstrong became the first human to walk on the moon.
His famous words were:
"That's one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind."
One courageous step changed history.
Never underestimate the power of one bold decision.

David and Goliath

The Israelites saw a giant.
David saw an opportunity.
Everyone else asked,
"How can we defeat him?"
David asked,
"How can I miss him?"
Perspective changes everything.
Sometimes your greatest obstacle is actually your greatest opportunity.

Joseph

Joseph was betrayed.
Sold into slavery.
Falsely accused.
Forgotten in prison.
Yet every setback became a staircase.
Eventually he became Prime Minister of Egypt.
Never judge your future by your present circumstances.

Esther

One young woman saved an entire nation because she was willing to stand courageously.
Never underestimate what God can do through one committed life.

Prayer and Hard Work

Young people,
Prayer is powerful.
But prayer is not an excuse for laziness.
The Bible says in Proverbs 22:29:
"Do you see someone skilled in their work? They will serve before kings."
Pray.
Then study.
Pray.
Then prepare.
Pray.
Then work.
Pray.
Then persevere.
As the old saying goes:
"Pray as though everything depended on God. Work as though everything depended on you."
Faith without diligence produces frustration.
Faith with hard work produces extraordinary results.

Guard Your Character

Your certificate opens doors.
Your character keeps them open.
Talent may take you to the top.
Character keeps you there.
Never cheat.
Never lie.

Never steal.
Never compromise your integrity.
Your name is more valuable than money.
Ecclesiastes 7:1 says,
"A good name is better than precious ointment."

Be the Solution

Nigeria does not need more people who complain.
Nigeria needs problem-solvers.
When you see darkness,
be light.
When you see hatred,
show love.
When you see corruption,
choose integrity.
When you see hopelessness,
bring hope.
You are not created to increase problems.
You are created to solve them.
Every great inventor solved a problem.
Every great entrepreneur solved a problem.
Every great leader solved a problem.
Ask yourself every morning:
"Whose life will become better because I lived today?"

You Can Change the World

Mahatma Gandhi once said:
"Be the change that you wish to see in the world."
Do not wait for the world to change.
Become the change.
If every graduate leaves this school determined to make one community better,
Nigeria will become better.
Africa will become better.
The world will become better.

The World Is a Stage

William Shakespeare wrote,
"All the world's a stage, and all the men and women merely players."
Every one of us has a role.
Play yours well.
Do not compare your journey with someone else's.
The sun and the moon shine at different times.
Yet both are successful.
Your time will come.
Prepare for it.

Never Stop Dreaming

Dream impossible dreams.
Dream about discovering cures for diseases.

Dream about building companies that employ thousands.
Dream about becoming governors, presidents, professors, inventors, engineers, veterinarians, missionaries, judges, artists, diplomats and Nobel Prize winners.
Dream of transforming Plateau State.
Dream of transforming Nigeria.
Dream of transforming Africa.
Dream of blessing humanity.
The size of your dream determines the direction of your life.

Remember Who You Are

You are not ordinary.
You are fearfully and wonderfully made.
You are created in the image of God.
You carry divine potential.
Inside this graduating class may be:
A future President.
A future Governor.
A future Chief Justice.
A future Nobel Laureate.
A future renowned scientist.
A future missionary who will preach to nations.
A future entrepreneur who will create thousands of jobs.
A future inventor whose ideas will change humanity.
Perhaps the person who will discover the cure for one of the world's greatest diseases is seated here today.
Why not?
Why not you?

To Parents

Dear parents,
Thank you.
Behind every successful child are sacrifices that nobody sees.
Thank you for your prayers.
Your school fees.
Your sleepless nights.
Your encouragement.
Continue believing in your children.
Sometimes they will fail.
Encourage them.
Sometimes they will stumble.
Lift them.
Never stop praying for them.

To Teachers

Dear teachers,
You are nation builders.
You may never know how many lives you have changed.
One word of encouragement from a teacher can redirect an entire destiny.
Thank you for planting seeds whose fruits generations will enjoy.

Final Charge to the Set of VALOR

Dear Graduating Class of 2026,

Years from today,

people may forget today's decorations.

They may forget today's photographs.

They may forget today's programme.

But may they never forget the impact your lives made upon the world.

Go into the future boldly.

Go with faith.

Go with excellence.

Go with integrity.

Go with courage.

Go with compassion.

Go with humility.

Go with resilience.

Go with God.

When life says, "You cannot," answer, "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me" (Philippians 4:13).

When fear knocks,

let faith answer.

When failure comes,

learn.

When success comes,

remain humble.

When opportunities come,

be prepared.

When challenges come,

stand firm.

When God opens doors,

walk through them confidently.

Remember always:

Your future is not determined by your background but by your vision.

Your circumstances do not define your destiny.

Your difficulties are not your destination.

Your story is still being written by God.

And finally...

Never forget that you belong to **THE SET OF VALOR.**

Be courageous enough to dream.

Be courageous enough to fail.

Be courageous enough to stand alone when necessary.

Be courageous enough to obey God.

Be courageous enough to change the world.

May generations yet unborn rise up and thank God that you lived.

May your names be written not merely in graduation registers but in the history of men and women who transformed humanity.

As you leave this great institution today, remember:

The future does not belong to the fearful.

The future belongs to the faithful.

The future belongs to the prepared.

The future belongs to the courageous.

The future belongs to those who walk with God.

So, graduates...

GO BOLDLY INTO THE FUTURE!

Congratulations, **The Set of VALOR!**

May the Almighty God go before you, walk beside you, strengthen you, protect you, prosper you, and make each one of you a shining light to Nigeria and to the nations of the world.

God bless Bethany Christian Academy.

God bless Plateau State.

God bless the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

And may God bless every one of you.

Thank you, and congratulations!