

THE END FROM THE BEGINNING



**Text of the address by Prof. Wahab Olasupo EGBEWOLE, SAN
Vice-Chancellor, University of Ilorin, Ilorin, Nigeria on the occasion
of Matriculation Ceremony for the Newly Admitted Students on
Tuesday, December 17, 2024**

Protocols

Greatest Unilorites

It is a day of joy and very significant in your life records. I therefore want to join others in welcoming you officially and congratulating you for making a good history today. Your journey of three, four, five or six years has started. I wish you a successful and colourful ending. In addressing you this morning, I chose to speak to you purposively on determining the end from the beginning. This opportunity and the platform created by today's event are to be jealously guarded if you must arrive at your destination with your banner unstained. This University, as you may be aware, is consecutively for more than 10 years now rated as most sought after and recently awarded the most outstanding University in Nigeria. The feat is rare but comes with its demands and sacrifices on both staff and students. As you may be aware, over 60,000 subscribed to this institution for this current session. With combined admission, a little above 11,000 were successful and admitted. This implies that it was a real competition and from every 6 applicants, only 1 is with the probability of being chosen. Your admission to this extent should therefore not be taken for granted or with levity. This success of yours should not be short-lived, you must do everything humanly possible to defend your current champion status otherwise the ending may be a story told!

As a university, you recall that as part of our obligations to show you the paths to follow, an orientation programme was organized with array of speakers on different issues. Of special note to me were the talks about your academic pursuit, personal and corporate security, health and belonging to recognized associations or clubs. I listened patiently and watched a number of you making jottings. I saw the future and passion for excellence in many of you that day. I knew in my heart that some of you have started creating the future you desire from the word go. It is never too late for those who might have not pictured the graduation day from orientation or this matriculation day. Incidentally, this matriculation is very pivotal and symbolic to me; it is the third since assumption of office

as the Vice-Chancellor. It is pivotal because those in 200 level or by Direct Entry now will be the last convocation for me as the Vice-Chancellor in 2027. It is symbolic because I am privileged to have the matriculation ceremony for a combined set of 2023 and 2024 now referred to as 2024/2025 set. You are indeed rare and lucky in the history of our University.

Dear Students, this University offers you a unique place to excel among equals. The agenda of my administration is vision 1: 10: 500. Our plan is to become the very first in Nigeria, among the first 10 in Africa and in the first 500 in the world. We are smart and deliberate about this by conscientiously creating opportunities that you can tap into as you sojourn here. We have created programmes that will add values and enable you to graduate with skills beyond the degrees. Presently, we have introduced U-INSPIRE programme for the purpose of developing entrepreneurship soft skills. The Centre for innovation and ideation is readily available to assist in incubating and nurturing your ideas, concepts and up to gestation. Many of you who are into content or digital creation; you are in the right university where your dreams will be supported. Our Technical and Entrepreneurship Centre currently have over 70 skills training programmes ranging from digital and local community based skills. The centre's talent hunt for this year is ongoing to showcase potentials and inherent skills of our students. I am pleased to inform you that you can take advantage of our Artificial Intelligence (AI) training and certification programme. As I promised your colleagues last year, the full transformation agenda on digitalization and full automation of our processes has begun. Your set will soon receive the smart multifunctional ID card that gives access to facilities and certain operations on our campus. We have put all these and more together for you to have a unique University life experience and suitable end. Do not come here to join the crowd but make your mark and be happy for the rest of your life.

Here at the University of Ilorin, we have zero tolerance for misconduct of any kind. The only reward for examination malpractice is expulsion. I urge you to familiarize yourself with the rules and regulations governing your stay on this campus as contained in the

Students Information and Regulations Handbook. Our degrees are awarded subject to being worthy in character and learning thus, shun any form of social vices including but not limited to indecent dressing and relating or identifying with unregistered societies. Belonging to societies not registered or recognized is one of the surest ways to end your studentship here in an unceremonious manner.

Dear students, in concluding this short admonition, I like to tell you a short story about integrity and ending as celebrated giant. There was a secretary who made a lasting impression on her boss and till date being celebrated. She joined the company after many secretaries have been sacked by the CEO. Many wondered how she would cope with the Boss whose intimidation and sexual harassment of previous secretaries could not be tamed. Truthfully, the Boss approached her after few weeks of joining the company with threats of sacking her if she did not yield to his sexual advances. The young lady insisted to stay on the path of honour unlike previous secretaries who compromised at their own peril. She approached the CEO one morning with her resignation letter and request for recommendation letter to another company. The Boss appealed to her profusely but could not help the situation. He later wrote the world ever most touching recommendation letter...He concluded in the letter "... you are about to hire most valuable asset of this organization in whom I saw integrity, loyalty without compromise and professionalism combined". When you lower your standard, it will still not change the perception and impression of you in the final analysis. Your loyalty to this University now and later should not be a subject of compromise rather think of value you can add on daily basis and importantly, be professional and master of the game. This university is known for raising giants whose exploits in various spheres of life are undeniable. They came, they saw and conquered. Their stories started like today but ended in praises and achievements because they took decisions that do not appeared to be popular; their decisions to become the very best in all they do were not applauded and determination in the face of obvious discouragements and distractions produced the giants in them as ambassadors of our great university.

Again, as I congratulate you, I urge you to see the end in an uncommon manner of becoming the very best and our ambassador of unstained banner. I look forward to celebrating with you and your family at the graduation. Have the mental picture of how the end will look like from now on!

God bless you, all.