

**GRADUATION GUEST SPEECH FOR THE 2023/24
UNIVERSITY OF GHANA SCHOOL OF LAW'S CONGREGATION**

By

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Allow me to express my profound gratitude to the management of the University of Ghana through the able leadership of the Provost of the College of Humanities and the Dean, School of Law for finding me worthy of invitation to be the Guest Speaker today.

To the Graduands, I share in your pride and Joy and that is why I quickly accepted the invitation to be here without hesitation.

My heartfelt congratulations to you all and your families as well as the distinguished legal scholars led by your eminent Dean of Law, Professor Raymond Atuguba, who prepared you for today's momentous milestones in life.

I speak to you today as someone who, in 1986 (38 years ago) was once also a newly graduating law student (LLB) and (LLM) in 1990 and PhD in 1997. As such, I remember being filled with a mixture of excitement and optimism but also, at the same time, like some of you today perhaps, a sense of anxiety at the challenges ahead. While LLB is a minimum entry point to your legal career, LLM is always of added advantage and PhD is a terminal degree that widens your horizon and puts you on a more comfortable stance in a competitive global market over your peers.

The challenges of navigating the Job Market and Managing the transition from student life to the life of a working professional in a disruptive, digital, creative and knowledge based global economy should not be underestimated.

Notwithstanding these challenges, because law is a problem solving tool and the legal profession is a dynamic one you are well placed therefore to adapt to new developments and flourish in the modern world.

The BIG QUESTION IS HOW? Let me offer you a few thoughts, gathered over the course of my 38 years legal career, that I hope will be of practical benefit. Many colleagues and observers frequently ask me, “how come you are able to sustain a lifestyle of having one leg in academia, another leg in government and other legs in civil society and consultancy services?” My response has always been the following points of collected thoughts, basic common sense and lessons from avoidable mistakes that we make in life:-

First, I chose to be in academia due to its flexible work environment that allows one to make an impactful difference on others and to render services to the nation and humanity at large.

So I dreamt big and high beyond the sky, like an eagle bird knowing that Law is an evolving subject and the legal profession is a dynamic one that is full of choices and limitless promises.

Hence, recognize that our education in law, and life, is a long term and ever continuing process. When you have a dream to realize, you will face a lot of challenges in life. But NEVER give up, withdraw or allow yourself to be limited by anything. You must strategically overcome them with a sense of OPTIMISM, HUMILITY, DILIGENCE, COMMITMENT AND AUDACITY OF HOPE.

Legal education prepares us to solve complex relationships or socio-economic and political challenges facing our nations or humanity using knowledge from various fields of law as our strategic framework. It enables us

therefore to see challenges as chances to grow and learn, not as things to avoid or fear in life.

Second, take a cue from the attitude of an eagle bird in problem solving and grabbing opportunities due to the following reasons:-

- It enables you to keep your vision right, remain consistently focus in life, and let the sky bow to your sheer determination to succeed, your preparedness to grab every opportunity that comes your way and turn both your dreams and opportunity into a positive outcome that benefits humanity, your nation and community.
- It prepares you to be a multi-tasking problem solver using the guiding Principles of Fairness, Justice, Equity, Equality and Truthfulness etc, embedded in your legal education and the knowledge of every aspect of law, such that you become the VOICES for Justice, Fairness, Equity, Equality before the Law and Equal Protection of the Law;
- It further prepares you to be creative/innovative in finding legal solutions to challenges facing your Community/Nation/Humanity in whatever future capacity you find yourselves.
- So always keep an open mind and be ready to question your own conclusions in order to test them. And know when to admit you are wrong;
- Remember the popular sayings that “knowledge is POWER, MONEY and SECURITY”, YES, they apply to Law/Legal Education, only if your KNOWLEDGE OF LAW IS CURRENT and RELEVANT. This requires your commitment to continuing legal education in order to keep yourself abreast of emerging fields of law or current legal issues and challenges facing humanity and your nation.

Third, finally, GIVE BACK to your community by making a difference:-

- As you prosper in future, show gratitude for your good fortune by giving back to your community in kind or cash or time or by motivating or mentoring others for a more prosperous and secured society.
- And we must never forget that we have a crucial role to play in addressing some of the conflicting and competing national and global interests that surround us in today's disruptive world characterized by digitalization, competition, creativity, innovation and complex relationships.
- In giving back to your community, remember to be the Voice for Justice, Equal Protection of the law and more importantly, a problem solver.
- Remember, as you all navigate through the expected or anticipated challenges of life, the saying: - **“OUR GREATEST GLORY IS NOT IN NEVER FALLING, BUT IN RISING EACH TIME WE FALL”**.

In conclusion, I do not pretend that these are the only pieces of advice or takeaways that you will need today and in your future careers, but they are, I believe, worthy of your kind consideration.

As for today, take time to pause and celebrate successful completion of this state of your legal education. Remember to be like an EAGLE and believe that you can fly above the storm, NOT with PRIDE, but with a sense of PURPOSE in life.

If you cannot be like an eagle bird, attitude-wise, then be **“AN IMPACTFUL EXAMPLE”** to others in your personal, public or professional life.

THANK YOU FOR LISTENING
CONGRATULATIONS, ONCE AGAIN !!!!!