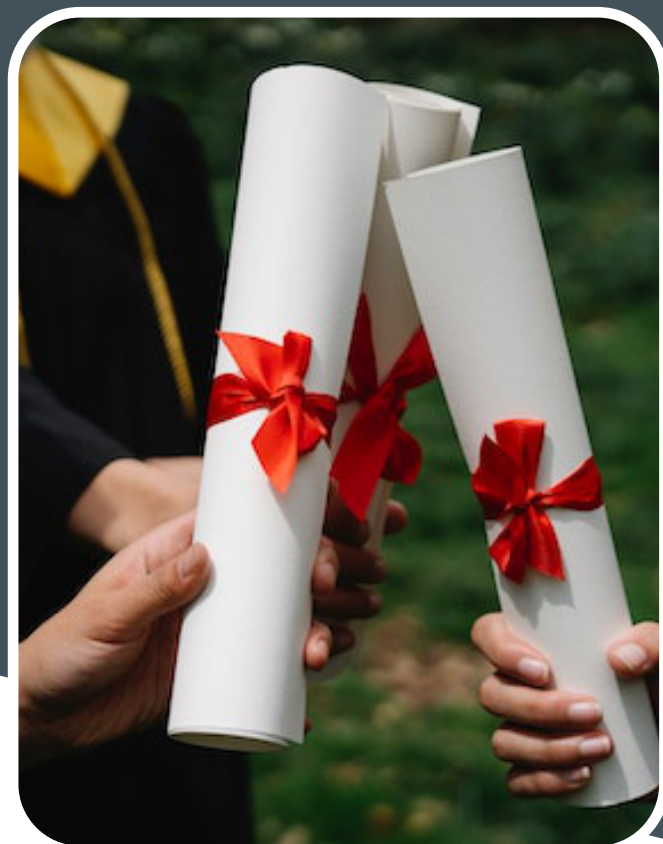


AUGUST MONTH of EXCELLENCE

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Then this Daniel was preferred above the presidents and princes, because an excellent spirit was found in him; and the king thought to set him over the whole realm. Daniel 6.3.

This one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forth unto these which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of high calling of God in Christ Jesus Philippians 3. 13.

Excellence is a spirit. It is the spirit that good coaches instill in their wards so that they continue to win effortlessly. It is a spirit that seeks to excel or outdo all past performances by self and others. The result of an excellent spirit is to be exceptional, outstanding, superior and exemplary. Both God and man prefer and accord special significance to excellence. Indeed, our God is excellent in name, power, judgement and even in creation (Ps 8.1, Job 37.23). After he created all things everyday, He satisfied Himself that all was good and indeed very good. He looked more closely and discovered that the man needed to have a help meet for him...He then created Eve, the first woman (Gen. 1.25, 31; 2. 18, 21).

Since the path to excellence is diligence, kings and leaders everywhere continue to seek for the diligent to serve them. (Prov. 22.29). It paved way for Joseph to rise from prison to Prime Minister position in ancient Egypt against all protocols. Ditto for Daniel, a captive from Israel to becoming the Prime Minister in Babylon and Queen Esther in Persia. These were three great empires of the distant past whose accomplishments continue to astound modern archaeologists and scientists. Excellence is what makes us humans prefer one product to another because we all want better quality.

God rewards excellence with gifts beyond our own expectations. The woman already called 'great' helped

her family to excel in their giving by inviting Elisha to eat food and experience the hospitality of their home. Her family got more than expected as the Man of God prophesied a child into her life even though she did not believe it possible. Yet it happened (2 Kgs 4: 4-17)! Similarly, king Solomon gave the Lord an excellent gift--1000 burnt offerings, no one had done this before. The result: God gave him a blank check to ask for anything and he became the wisest king ever (1 Kgs 3: 3-13).

Peter after experiencing what many would call a bankruptcy also gave his boat to the Lord to use to preach and the person who would have died as a failed fisherman became the greatest leader of a band of apostles who turned the world right side up (Lk 5: 1-11) and is celebrated till today.

July was our month of glory. It is followed by this month or season of excellence. And as we seek to excel in our body, soul and spirit, the Lord is prepared to give us beyond our expectations. The spirit of excellence is distinguished from the spirit that prides itself of tradition, mediocrity or stagnation. The key is to commit yourself in your true personality to an excellent spirit--like king David and the apostle Paul (Ps 103.1; Phil 3.13). The One who can do more than we can ask or think always amazes and embarrasses the one with an excellent spirit with awesome blessings beyond expectations (Eph. 3. 20). In our homes, work, ministry and business God calls to a life of excellence that make us men and women of great impact and significance.

Welcome to the month of Excellence.

Dele Olowu, August 2023.