

Mandated in the midst of Mayhem: A Call to Excellence

We are living in such a strange and extraordinary time. A time that is rife with uncertainty, distress and sorrow. Where fear is so thick you can almost touch it.

We've reached the stage where the Covid-19 pandemic has invaded our personal space. The statistics are no longer just numbers, but names of family, friends, classmates and colleagues.

It is easy to see how and why many would buckle under the weight of such physical, financial and emotional turmoil and yet, with all of that said, the situation demands the very best out of us.

We are called to not merely survive this pandemic, but to actively create a better world for the time after this, and that mandate demands that we possess a spirit of excellence such as has never been seen.

It demands that we be diligent in times of disaster, devoted in times of distraction and that we be disciplined and devoted warriors who are working to effect positive change in our communities.

One of the ways in which the Corona virus pandemic has impacted us – and I dare say that this is one of the greatest positives we can draw – is that it has exposed the systemic rot and weaknesses that we had learned to live with and had almost accepted as normal.

We had come to a point where we had accepted that our public healthcare system was poor, that the level of service at government institutions was such that you had to beg people to do just the minimum level of what they were employed to do.

We had reached a point of tolerance for a failing education system that further disadvantaged another generation of our children as the acceptable norm.

We were living in a time where we expected our leaders to be corrupt and that there would be no consequences when they were caught.

The pandemic has exposed us to the glaring poverty, inequality and the many societal ills and evils we tolerated simply because they did not affect us directly.

We needed a crisis to be the mirror that would show us how indifferent we had become to the true state of our nation.

In happier times it is easy to turn a blind eye and choose to focus only on things that tickle our fancy, but we can no longer bury our heads in the sand like ostriches. We must embrace this season as a rude awakening.

These difficult times force us, as a country, a city and as a community, to revisit the fundamentals.

We are forced to relook and interrogate who we are and what it is that we represent, remembering that if you stand for nothing you fall for everything.

It is time for us to recheck our convictions.

Is there any driving passion that still burns so fiercely within us that it displays our uniqueness for the world to see?

Do we still have that one reason that wakes us up every morning and causes us to keep dreaming, to keep on hoping and to keep striving for more?

We need to take this time to review our relationships, restore balance to our fluidity and rediscover our mandate.

Sometimes it is the worst things in life that usher us into the best things in life.

A Biblical example is in 740 BC – the year that King Uzziah died after reigning for around 52 years.

Struck by the death of the king and the ensuing uncertainty about the future, the prophet Isaiah turned to the Lord and had a vision of God's plans for him.

This time and season are compelling the church to reach out and open its eyes as Isaiah did, to check its convictions, clarify its mandate and clearly discharge all its ministry mandate.

This dire state of disaster is placing an unprecedented demand for service integrity on the authorities at all tiers of governance.

Our leaders have used their positions of service as platforms of self-enrichment for long enough.

All of us, collectively and as individuals, need to commit to a spirit of excellence that will distinguish us and not be driven merely by a desire for affluence, for when we are driven by the latter we become destructive.

Selfless service is key and being a blessing is paramount. History remembers the bold and judges the fainthearted.

The present demands excelling service integrity and convicted leadership out of each of us. It demands that we be ready to preserve the next generation, whatever it takes.

The stakes are high and my prayer is that when COVID 19 is over, we will all be converted citizens of this amazing country.

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