

EXPLORING OPPORTUNITIES IN TIMES LIKE THIS (POST COVID EXPERIENCE)

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“The night taught me never to fear the dark times, by giving way to the dawn of a new day.” – Michael Bassey Johnson

Issues

- A quick look at the words and concepts
- What Covid did to us?
- Is there a problem with the times or the climes?
- What is God pointing us to?
- Areas to ponder...
- Final thoughts

A look at the key words...

Explore:

To travel through (an unfamiliar area) in order to learn about it.

Inquire into or discuss (a subject) in detail.

Examine by touch.

Opportunity :

a time or set of circumstances that makes it possible to do something.

There is a season (a time appointed) for everything and a time for every delight *and* event *or* purpose under heaven—Eccl. 3:1 (Amp)

Covid 19

Coronavirus disease 2019 is a contagious disease caused by severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus. The first case was identified in Wuhan, China, in December 2019.

There are 227,185,960 confirmed cases globally, 200,957 in Nigerian and 2,647 deaths recorded (as at 17/09/2021).

Symptoms of COVID-19 are variable, but often include fever, cough, fatigue, breathing difficulties, and loss of smell and taste.

Preventive measures include physical or social distancing, quarantining, ventilation of indoor spaces, covering coughs and sneezes, hand washing, and keeping unwashed hands away from the face. The use of face masks or coverings has been recommended in public settings to minimize the risk of transmissions. Several vaccines have been developed and various countries have initiated mass vaccination campaigns.

What has Covid 19 done to us?

- **Health:** The COVID-19 pandemic has led to a dramatic loss of human life worldwide and presents an unprecedented challenge to public health, food systems and the world of work.
- **Poverty:** The economic and social disruption caused by the pandemic is devastating: tens of millions of people are at risk of falling into extreme poverty, while the number of undernourished people, currently estimated at nearly 690 million, could increase by up to 132 million by the end of the year.
- **Economic stress:** Millions of enterprises face an existential threat. Nearly half of the world's 3.3 billion global workforce are at risk of losing their livelihoods. Informal economy workers are particularly vulnerable because the majority lack social protection and access to quality health care and have lost access to productive assets.
- **Social life:** other major events are just now picking up. There was a drought of social events and means of fraternizing, bearing down on the mental and emotional state of many persons negatively.
- **Soul stress:** many general spiritual exercises had to be at best modified, at worse put on hold to accommodate the realities of the pandemic. Door to door evangelism, length of church services, meeting venues, prayer meetings, church revenue, attendance all were/are affected. These things have a ripple effect on us all.
- **Education:** there was a compulsory closure of schools. Only those who could afford theoretical electronic based learning could attempt to continue. This forced a lot of youths to lose valuable time, disrupt their plans for settling into new jobs and other lifetime opportunities.
- **How did covid affect you personally?**

What has changed about the times?

- The challenge of lesser hands needed.
- the challenge of needed soft skills.
- The challenge of smarter choices.
- The challenge of more personal time on your hands.
- The reality of change and needed flexibility.

What is God pointing us to?

- The earth is the Lord's and its fullness. *Ps. 24:1*
- Nothing has humbled the world and civilized economies in recent times like covid 19. This again reminded everyone of the finiteness of human wisdom. *Isa. 2:11,17*
- Trusting in human inventions and advances is a hoax. ***Jer. 17:5***
- There's room for more advancement. There's opportunity for growth in every sector. ***Prov. 25:2***
- Only those who are wise will capitalize on the challenges and forge ahead to stop complaining and gather gains. ***1 Chron. 12:32***

Areas to ponder...

- Opportunities for spiritual growth.
- Opportunities for doing what you always wanted to do.
- Opportunities for better family time.
- Opportunities for personal development (how have you grown?).
- Opportunities for business development and self empowerment.
- Opportunities for service.

Opportunity for spiritual growth.

- **Adversity should bring us closer to God. It is when we are weak that God's strength is manifested in us. *2 Cor. 12:9-10.***
- **Uncertainty tries our faith. Patience is born and forged in the fires of faithful waiting on the Lord. *James. 1:3.***
- **When all else fails, we have an anchor. When the world caves in, we stay strong and remember our eternal hope, focusing on the things that matter more... *1 Peter. 1:3-4, 5:4***

Opportunity to reinvent / rediscover yourself

- What is that gift you've been given that you've ever really had time to explore?

- Is there something you're passionate about but have ignored all these years?
- what's the quality of your circles? Have you gotten friends that challenge you to try something new in the face of new realities? **Prov. 27:17**
- Have you improved on the way you do business? Do you have partners that spur you to greater works?
- Are you ready to try something entirely new? If what you are used to isn't working, is there a chance you can be useful some other ways? **Phil. 4:12-13.**

Opportunity for better family time

- The biggest strain on most marriages is lack of spending quality time together.
- Parenting is about influence. Influence grows with time invested in deliberate impartation of values. *Deut. 6:7-8*
- Have you made deliberate adjustments to accommodate quality family time? Is your wife/ husband happy about being married to you? Do your children really know you and vice versa?

Opportunities for personal development

- Are you all you can be? Have you reached the peak of your powers?
- The regret of our fathers must not be replicated in us!
- What are your options: Further education? Relocation? Skills acquisition? Professional exposure?
- Start with the little things: pick a book and/or a mentor. Your most valuable capital is time.
- What can you do with what you have left?
- Set new goals. Make it SMART and do your SWOT.

Opportunities for business development and Self-Empowerment

In the event that you have just a hundred thousand, here are **20 BUSINESSES YOU CAN START WITH 100,000 NAIRA.**

1.BEDSHEETS / BEDDINGS PRODUCTION

Pay a visit to Lagos Island, or Oshodi where they sell bulk materials, pick good designs and I tell you the guys who will sew it for you are just within the same Market. You can start with less than N100,000 and diligently grow your money.

2. SHIRT PRODUCTION

A sweet side hustle. There are tailors in Lagos Island or better learn the skill it will save you all the heartbreaks imaginable. Taiwo Street in Lagos Island or Aba in Abia state is where you should be. Materials ranging from N700 – N1,000 per yard, sew for N1,500-N2,000 Sell for N5,000-N7,000.

3. BOXERS

Schedule a trip to Aba Market, The cost of production of boxers, you can get one for as low as N300, all you need is to package it in 3s, and use your social media handle to sell yours for N1200 if the market price is 2500 and gradually grow.

4. E-PAYMENTS and POS BUSINESS

You can get a POS machine from your Bank, and activate online banking: If you live in a place where banks aren't much you can handle e-payments for people and make your small change. I paid someone N200 to withdraw N10,000 in Ikorodu. ATM queue was crazy.

5. MOBILE and ELECTRONIC ACCESSORIES

Mobile and electronic Accessories such as Pouches, Chargers, USB cables, HDMI cables, earphones and more, can be sourced on Alibaba, Ali Express, Deal Extreme, etc. The more you buy the lower the price. And they are light so shipping won't be a burden. Sell on here or Jumia and co.

6. POPCORN

Children and adults love popcorn! We buy every time. Bags of corn, Sugar, Salt & Butter. The beauty of this is when properly made, its aroma will attract its customers. Manual sealing machine - N7,000/9,000. Popcorn Machine is N65,000 on Jumia. Popcorn can be served anywhere. It costs less than N40 to make a pack of popcorn.

7. BRANDING – SALES and CUSTOMIZING

Football team supporters always want to show how much they're rooting for a team. You can start to brand their names on T-shirts of their favourite clubs.

8. SNAIL FARMING

Snail farming in Nigeria is even more popular, due to its relatively cheap cost of startup and If you market your products well, your business will thrive. This is a business you can start from your backyard. Best in mind, snails take almost a year to mature so patience is key!

9. FAIRLY USED GOODS

Fairly used goods such as Jeans, Tops, t-shirts, shoes etc. They can be sourced at Badagry, even Cotonou. N100,000 can't get you a bale but you can select and mix them. Wash then and pack neatly. Marketing is all it takes, you'll sell and see your money multiply.

10. CLEANING SERVICES

Some people find it hard to clean their apartments 'cos they're busy from Monday to Friday and Saturday they have engagement and on Sunday all they want to do is rest. Your tools won't cost you up to N30,000 and you can clean 6 apartments a weekend.

11. HOME COOKING AND DELIVERY

You can cook a variety of meals well and apply customer service, People will pay good money for your services, You can run this from home.

12. DIGITAL MARKETING

The success of any business is in its ability to effectively reach its teeming customers and this is achieved by effective marketing: Get a used laptop and smartphone, temporarily, your smartphone can double as your hotspot persistence and passion is key.

13. CAKES AND CONFECTIONERY

This is one business that always comes to play, people celebrate, and bakers are always consulted.

14. ASO-OKE BEADING AND STONING

Aso-oke beading and stoning has become sometimes in vogue now, and this is another sweet business one can start with N100,000. You just have to learn how to bead and unlock your creative mind.

15. BEAD MAKING

I'm not sure there's really much to say here. All you need is training, passion, creativity, unique designs and styles, then adequate marketing. You absolutely don't need N100,000 to start this.

16. HOME SERVICE BARBER

This is another profitable small-scale business. The beautiful thing about this is you bring your services to your clients for an extra token above regular. The starting capital to get the equipment is very minimal and I'm sure you know we have rechargeable clippers at affordable prices.

17. TUTORIAL CLASSES

No matter your age, this is another well-paying job, either as part-time or full-time. Many families are willing to spend what it takes for their children's success and there's one subject you're well versed at. Just close the gap, meet their need for a fee.

18. INTERNET SERVICES

Forget the extensive coverage of internet and the fact that people can access it on their phones, Do you know how much applicants pay just to have Jamb applications filled online? You need a good system, printer & ISP. People pay as much as N1,000 per application.

19. PRODUCTION Of ZOBO, SMOOTHIES, COCKTAIL, SMALL CHOPS, CUPCAKES and CHINCHIN!

You'd realize the importance of this combo cant be ruled out. You can render these services with N100,000 startup capital + proper marketing, branding and packaging.

20. RE-INVEST YOUR SEED CAPITAL IN AN EXISTING BUSINESS.

Not everyone has the head for business but they can sniff opportunities. You can always sow your money as operating capital and draft an agreement on profit sharing.

You can at least support your investment by bringing customers so the business can thrive. Market it on all your social media pages and who knows.

Opportunities for service

- Know that on your way to growth, you'll need to start from under. *Mark. 9:34-35*
- No one climbs a ladder with his hands in his pocket!
- You'll yet earn, first learn.
- Building a lasting brand takes time, be patient.
- Your motivation MUST go beyond making money. What problem does your presence solve?
- Volunteer first, till you become the first choice!

Final thoughts...

- For every season of challenge in life, there are opportunities, but you must look keenly to find them.
- We are God's children and He desires to bless us. *Psalm. 100:3, Rom. 8:32.*

- We must position ourselves to receive the blessings of God, turn our excuses into good uses, stop complaining and start working!

There's something you can offer. You are more than you think.

I pray that God will open our eyes to see opportunities around us and get busy.

Phil 4:13

God bless you all. Amen.