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**THE UNITED CHURCH OF ZAMBIA**

**MISSION AND EVANGELISM DEPARTMENT**

**YOUTH WEEK LESSONS AND SERMON OUTLINE**

**7TH TO 13TH MARCH, 2022**

**UCZ THEME: ALL ONE IN CHRIST- JOHN 17:21**

**SUB- THEME: A CALL FOR CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT**

**READINGS: DEUTERONOMY 1:6-8, I CORINTHIANS 9:24-25**

**MONDAY – 7TH MARCH, 2022**

**THEME: THE NEED TO START AFRESH**

**READING: LUKE 15: 11-24**

The parable of the Prodigal (wasteful, reckless) son was among the teachings Jesus gave mainly to respond to those that argued against his involvement with the marginalized in society. From the point of view of Christ, society needed to welcome and celebrate the recovery of the lost.

In this narrative, our focus is mainly on the character and actions of the Prodigal son and how it could help the young people of today to start afresh. In life, we all at some point become reckless and wasteful. However, what is imperative is realizing the mistakes quickly and starting all over again.

**QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSIONS**

1. Refer to Luke 15:11-16 and list the mistakes made by the young son in the story. How does that relate to today’s life?
2. How does the lost son start afresh? Take note of his actions
3. What lessons can we learn from his Father?

**CONCLUSION**

Today take stock of your life and learn from your mistakes. What is key is not to cry over ‘spilt milk’ but regain your strength and start afresh. Just like we reboot computers, we too can reboot. To reboot is to start up again or restart.

You can restart your academic journey, business, relationship and much more your spiritual life with Christ.

**TUESDAY – 8TH MARCH, 2022**

**THEME: ACQUIRE SKILLS- KEEP LEARNING**

**READINGS: GENESIS 4:1-2, DANIEL 1:17, MARK1:16**

One of the goals you must pursue this year and beyond is learning a new skill. In our present world, there is emphasis on acquiring life skills that can make you make ends meet. Skills make us become better and through that, us the young people could contribute to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of our country. What skills do you have and what skills should you acquire? Let’s learn from the biblical examples of the Cain and Abel, Daniel and the first disciples of Christ.

**QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSIONS**

1. What skills do we see from the characters – Cain, Abel, Daniel and the first disciples? What lessons do we learn from the same?
2. What skills should we learn as youths of today?
3. There is a saying that *‘learning doesn’t end’*. Please discuss the importance of learning.

**CONCLUSION**

Keep learning! Acquire skills like fish farming, poultry rearing, playing musical instruments, cake making, decorating, plumbing, phone repairs and become your own boss. You can do even those jobs others consider as second-class. Become skillful and excellent. This will make you a hero one day and posterity will celebrate you. Keep learning. The beauty about learning life skills is that, nobody will take it away from you. If you know you know!

**WEDNESDAY – 9TH MARCH, 2022**

**THEME: SAVE AND INVEST**

**READINGS: GENESIS 41:25-36, MATTHEW 25:14-30**

Life is full of ups and downs. In business, they call it the business, trade or economic cycle. In some seasons you will experience a boom (expansion), peak and in others, contraction (recession) sometimes even at lowest point.

Those who are wise will know how to respond to such moments by applying necessary strategies. Today we want to discuss the principles of saving and investing by learning from the Joseph’s formula and the story of talents in the Gospel of Matthew.

**QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSIONS**

1. In your own words, explain what saving and investment is.
2. Using the biblical account of Joseph and the story of talents, explain what saving and investment is and its benefits.
3. How can we save and invest as youths?

**CONCLUSION**

A lifestyle of saving and investment is the way to go. Practice it! When you have plenty today, please don’t just think of consuming everything, there is also tomorrow. Today you and I can start small, this is what saving and investment are all about. You can open a savings account or even start with what is now trending- *“Village Banking”*. The UCZ has developed an investment policy. Get a copy and read its contents. Let’s start saving and investing today. If you start now as a young person, by the time you reach 50 years, you will be a millionaire.

Save and invest now!

**THURSDAY – 10TH MARCH, 2022**

**THEME: OPEN YOUR EYES**

**READINGS: MARK 10:51**

Saint Francis Secondary School in Mungwi District of Northern Province, has a motto “*That I may See*”. This motto is a caption of the response the man who needed sight gave to Christ. The question was *“What do you want me to do for you?”*

We really need to open our eyes! We need sight. Not just the physical sight, but social and economic sight. We need enlightenment. We need another awakening.

**QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSIONS**

1. If you were asked like the man in the passage we read today, what answers would you give?
2. Sight is priority? Why do you think we need sight as young people of today?
3. Explain areas of life socio-economic and political aspects, which calls for sight opening in us the young people.

**CONCLUSION**

We need to open our eyes as young people. We must pray that Christ opens our eyes so that we may see. Many of us today the young people in church and in communities have eyes, but we don’t see. Now is the time that we must remove the *“scales”* from our eyes so that we may gain understanding. It’s time to see. See what others can’t see and contribute to the social, economic and political world.

**FRIDAY – 11TH MARCH, 2022**

**THEME- BE AND DO YOUR BEST**

**READING: ECCLESIASTES 9: 10, GALATIANS 6:9**

We have read reports in our country of shoddy works, particularly to do with construction works of public infrastructure. Shoddy or low-quality jobs, come as result of engaging cheap labour, using low quality materials and sometimes poor supervision. Poor performance has become a norm and its slowly defining us, because we never want to work hard. Quality and excellence must be our goal in this life. The starting point is you and me.

**QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSIONS**

1. What are some of the reasons we have poor performance or results in our lives as young people? Discuss.
2. What are the consequences of poor performance?
3. How can we become better? Apply the lessons from Ecclesiastes 9:10, Galatians 6:9
4. Do self-evaluation of your performance and share what you intend to do well in 2022 and beyond.

**CONCLUSION**

Excellence will always be rewarded in this life. Today’s lesson is a call for excellence to the youths of this generation. Youths are full of energy and life. This energy and life must translate into usefulness and good results. Young people must therefore, purpose in their hearts not to exhibit mediocrity. They should instead focus on doing the best and much more becoming the best. Be and do your best in every aspect of your life. Excellence is the way to go.

**SARTURDAY – 12TH MARCH, 2022**

**YOUTH DAY CELEBRATION (PRACTICAL ACTIVITY)**

**ON THIS DAY YOUTHS ARE ENCOURAGED TO DO SOME PRACTICAL ACTIVITIES. THE FOLLOWING ARE SUGGESTED:**

* Do community work- cleaning at the Church, Manse, Hospital, Market, or bus station, etc.
* Education visit to skills training centers;
* Form village banking groups;
* Where practical do radio talks about your activities as UCZ Youths;
* Invite experts in Agriculture, Business etc to give a public talk especially on small medium enterprises and cooperatives.

**THE UNITED CHURCH OF ZAMBIA**

**SYNOD MISSION AND EVANGELISM DEPARTMENT**

**2021 YOUTH SUNDAY SERMON OUTLINE**

**UCZ THEME: ALL ONE IN CHRIST**

**SUB- THEME: A CALL FOR CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT**

**READINGS: DEUTERONOMY 1:6-8, I CORINTHIANS 9:24-25**

**INTRODUCTION**

Japanese have developed a philosophy, which is called the Kaizen approach. Are you familiar with the Kaizen approach? It is a composition of two words, *kai and zen* which means “change” and “better”. It is also known as the method of **continuous improvement.** This year we want to share on a theme as young people titled: *“****A call for continuous improvement****”.* This is ideally about the need to upgrade and become better all the time. There is need for continuous improvement in all that we do.

**BIBLE EXPLANATION**

The narrative in Deuteronomy is basically an instruction or message from God on the need to move on after delaying for forty years in the wilderness by the Hebrew people. On their way to the land promised to their ancestor Abraham, the freed Hebrews found themselves wondering in one place. The instruction was that, they needed to resume the journey. Take note of the message: *You have stayed long enough at this mountain. Break camp and advance or move on*. This was a call to come out of the comfort zone and move to a better place.

This account is similar to the writings of Paul on the need to run better in a race. His appeal to his readers using the example of athletes, is that we must run in such a way that we may be victorious. The message is about running with the aim to be victorious at the end and so the lessons drawn are that:

1. **MOVE OUT OF THE COMFORT ZONE**

A call for continuous improvement is a call to move out of the comfort zone. We all sometimes fall in the trap of being comfortable when we seem to be doing better and think we have arrived. The journey is still on, we must move on and do better, and the best is yet to come. Never relax because of one achievement.

1. **TAKE CHALLENGES AS OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT.**

Today you may not be doing well after making mistakes. Our past and present mistakes should help us improve and do better. You may fail in an exam or your business may be making losses. This challenge should not make us give up. Instead, a wise youth, will learn from the mistakes and do better. We ought to learn from mistakes and take challenges as opportunities. The Hebrew people overstayed at a mountain but were told to move on. Let’s not allow the past failure define us. Move out of fear and make progress.

1. **CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT MUST BE OUR LIFESTYLE.**

Life is a race and serious athletes continue to practice and train vigorously. When competing in a race, their goal is winning. We too must develop a winning attitude especially us the young people. Further we must develop a mentality of upgrading- continuous improvement. Innovation, creativity, hard work, discipline and commitment must be promoted. We must love excellence and ensure that we keep learning and perfecting our skills. We must never think we have arrived! Never be complacent. Keep moving and keep improving.

**CONCLUSION**

Young people are among the greatest resource we have as a Church and Nation. Therefore, young people must be vigilant in matters of personal upgrading in terms of school, skills, business and much more technological advancement. This year and beyond, both young and elderly people must embrace the Kaizen approach. An approach that demands for continuous improvement and doing things right the first time. Never remain at one level. Pick up your bags and advance. Move on! You have stayed long enough at one level. Run to win.

***AMEN!***

**THE MISSION AND EVANGELISM DEPARTMENT WOULD LIKE TO THANK
REV KASONSO DAVIES SIKAZWE**

**CONSISTORY CHAIRPERSON- UCZ MWANDI MISSION**

**OF WESTERN PRESBYTERY FOR PREPARING THE**

**2022 YOUTH WEEK LESSONS AND SUNDAY**

**SERMON OUTLINE**

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