

ALL ONE IN CHRIST

**THE UNITED CHURCH OF ZAMBIA**

**MISSION AND EVANGELISM DEPARTMENT**

**2022 THEME: ALL ONE IN CHRIST-JOHN17:21**

**STEWARDSHIP SUNDAY SERMON OUTLINE**

**17TH JULY, 2022**

**SUB-THEME: GOD OWNS IT ALL**

**READINGS: PSALM 24:1-2; PSALM 89:11, 1 COR.6:19**

**INTRODUCTION**

A story is told of a woman who had finished her shopping and returned to her car and found four men inside it. She dropped her shopping bags, drew a handgun from her purse, and with a forceful voice said, "I have a gun, and I know how to use it! Get out of the car!" Those men did not wait for a second invitation. They got out and scampered in all directions!

The woman, understandably shaken, quickly loaded her shopping bags and got into the car. She just wanted to get out of there as fast as she could, but no matter how she tried, she could not get her key into the ignition. Unfortunately, she realized that was not her car. She got out, looked around to see if the men were near, loaded the bags into her own car, and drove to the police station to turn herself in.

The desk sergeant, after hearing her story, nearly fell out of his chair laughing. He pointed to the other end of the counter, where four men were reporting a carjacking by a woman with glasses and had a hand gun. No charges were filed. She thought it was her car, but it really belonged to someone else. The truth is: ‘***God owns everything’***. He owns that lady's car and the one she mistakenly got into. And He owns everything we call "***ours***." He owns it all.

**BIBLE EXPLANATION:**

**PSALMS**

These Psalms are about ownership of all creation, God owns it all, and He is the source. It is rich with the promise and responsibilities that go with GOD. It reminds us that, we are stewards, not the owners, of the creation. The trouble comes when we forget that and begin to think that everything in life belongs to us. We talk about our car, our land, our project, our house, our money, our Church or our School. When we begin to own God’s works, it definitely leads to our downfall and disappointments, because the center of ownership and sustenance shifts. We begin to think of control instead of stewardship or management on behalf of the real owner.

God still retains the purpose of life, the real meaning of things, which God has given us to manage on His behalf and to bless human community and environment.

The Psalm appeals for the concept of shared dominion and not absolute dominion over God’s creation. He asks us to let go! We need to remind ourselves that, everything belongs to God. It is His.

**1 CORINTHIANS**

Paul is open and clear here that, we were purchased at incredible cost, and so we are called to honour God with our bodies as well as our spirit and soul, and not to become slaves of the flesh with its ungodly pursuits. We must be true stewards of our bodies no matter what! We were created spirit, soul, and body. It was the Father who created our body. It was the Son Who redeemed our body, and it is the Holy Spirit who indwells our body. We should recognize the tremendous privilege we have - that we are a temple for the living God. Therefore, we must manage our bodies as good stewards on behalf of God who gave us the same.

**POINTS FOR REFLECTION**

1. **YOU HAVE A DIVINE RESPONSIBILITY AS A MANAGER**

If God is the owner, then I am the manager whom He has entrusted with His property. I must learn to think and act therefore, like His manager. A manager oversees the assets of the owner for the owner's benefit. A manager carries no sense of entitlement to the assets he or she manages. The job of a manager is to find out what the owner wants done with His assets and then to carry out His will.

This understanding entails us that, one day we will give an account on how we managed His resources. The manager is required of the owner to give account of his dealings. We are held accountable to God because He, as the Owner, has expectations of the manager. The Owner has complete right to a full disclosure of what's been done with His property.

Our understanding of property should not be limited to property (assets) like houses, but our own physical bodies, the environment, time, talents, material, businesses, institutions, financial resources and our mandate in our individual calling.

Our managing His property undergoes Key Performance Indicator (KPI) evaluation as an accountability tool of how close we were to the intent of the owner in managing his property. When we read Romans 14:10-12, the scripture reminds us that, one day we will stand before God and give an account of what we had done.

Each will give a personal account to God. God will want to know what we have done with the possessions He had entrusted into our care.

1. **STEWARDSHIP OF OUR BODIES**

As Christians, we know that our bodies do not belong to us; God has the right to everything we have, but we are the representatives of this body, called to be good stewards, and prayerfully living, preserving, and caring for bodies in a responsible manner.

The dress codes that we embrace in the Church today do not depict what the Bible calls modesty, the things we eat, the things we touch sometimes compromise the sanctity of the body. The owner will examine what we have done with the bodies God gave us. God, the Owner, expects us to take care of the body He has given us and use it for His glory.

God has entrusted us to manage time, possessions, abilities, and even our very being, all are to be used for His honor. We will be accountable for all these things God placed in our care and how we used them. God has high expectations that we will serve Him and grow to think and care for His gifts to us and love Him like He does.

**CONCLUSION**

If the examination were to be called today, if the Owner called you to give an account, what would the record say about your management evaluation and care for your body as the temple of the Holy Spirit? Would it reflect a humble belief that you are only managing what He owns? Would joy and cheer mark your life as one who took care of God’s body and resources? Remember that, your management and stewardship role in this life is an investment gaining heavenly treasure for you. We all need to rethink how we are spending our resources for Christ and His kingdom and how we were managing our bodies to God’s glory.

Just like that lady in our introduction was mistaken as she went to the wrong car, though hers was an honest mistake, it wasn't her car and wasn’t held accountable for her actions. Sadly for us, however, we will be held accountable for all that we do in our stewardship and hence, we are called to take full responsibility of our stewardship role.

**Amen!**

**THE MISSION EVANGELISM DEPARTMENT WOULD LIKE TO THANK THE REV.MANYANDO LUBINDA-BETHEL CONGREGATION KAFUE CONSISTORY LUSAKA PRESBYTERY FOR PREPARING**

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