



"All One In Christ"

THE UNITED CHURCH OF ZAMBIA

SYNOD MISSION AND EVANGELISM DEPARTMENT

26TH MARCH, 2023 MISSION SUNDAY SERMON OUTLINE

THEME: UNDERSTANDING THE TIMES AND WHAT TO DO,

1 CHRONICLES 12:32

SUB THEME: "SUB THEME: RESOURCES FOR THE COMMON

GOOD

BIBLE READING: ACTS 2: 42-47

INTRODUCTION

This first Mission Sunday in 2023 is a special Sunday wherein we take time to look at the mandate of the UCZ as a Missional Church. As a consequence, we will reflect on the theme: RESOURCES FOR THE COMMON GOOD.

In our attempt to have a clear understanding of our theme, let us try to dissect the theme. The word **resource** can be defined as **'a source of supply or support, it is an available means, or a natural feature or phenomenon that enhances the quality of human life'**. On the other hand the phrase **'Common good'** can be understood as **"the benefit or interest of all or that which is shared by and beneficial to all or most members of a given community"**.

Conclusively, resources for the common good in the case of the Church is the things and blessings God has given each one of us to benefit Christians and those that not yet Christians.

BIBLE EXPLANATION

The book of Acts of the Apostles which is traditionally believed to have been written by Luke, is a story of men and women who took the commission of Jesus seriously and began to spread the news of a risen Saviour to the remotest corners of the known world. Each section of the Book focuses on a particular audience, a key personality, and a significant phase in the expansion of the gospel message.

The text we have read highlights the unity and intimacy of the first Christian community, which was marked by a commitment to apostolic teaching,

fellowship, the breaking of bread (probably with other larger meals) and prayer which were offered in house meetings and also in the temple area.

We are informed that the disciples did all things in common, some have seen this as a socialist arrangement, but a deeper study clearly shows otherwise because the giving of things was done voluntarily and that people still had personal possessions. There was great generosity amongst the believers. For the author, this is a way of expressing that all (disciples) had adopted an attitude of mutuality, sharing their individual material possessions with one another as fellow members of the household of faith.

The author also highlights the fact that there was overwhelming joy the new community was experiencing, for they received food with glad and grateful hearts. The sense is that such fellowship did not stem primarily from obligation or selfish motives but from genuine gladness and sincerity of heart as a result of the Spirit.

After all these great activities and occurrences, we note that the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved. As a result, there was great joy amongst the believers. Although persecution would soon come to the Church, for that time the radical unity and philanthropy of the new community seemed to elicit admiration of even those who were not part of the community.

My brothers and sisters, in reflecting on the sermon titled “**RESOURCES FOR THE COMMON GOOD**”, we will speak about the two mandates of the mission of the Church which are evangelism and social political aspects;

POINTS FOR REFLECTION

1. RESOURCES FOR SPIRITUAL GROWTH

It has been noted that the early church was devoted to important spiritual activities that ensured their spiritual growth. Some of these included among others listening to the Apostles teaching, breaking of bread, fellowship and prayer. These aspects are spiritual fuel for the Church if it has to go forward. We are called to be a missional Church and we have to go out there and impact a generation for Jesus. But we can only do this when we are spiritually empowered.

My brothers and sisters kindly note that studying the word of God is paramount. But unfortunately of late people have deserted the study of the word. We need to reinvigorate the study of the word so that we get the mind of God concerning our lives. In this vein, leaders should be willing to teach and the member should equally be enthusiastic to learn the word of God. Secondly the aspect of fellowship was always emphasized amongst the early Christians because they knew that there is power in fellowship. I urge everyone to improve on this aspect. Let us all enjoy fellowship, it really helps.

Thirdly, the first Christians were breaking bread together, this aspect is slowly losing its significance in our Church. We ought to realize that the sacraments are an important resource for spiritual growth. The Church was instructed to continue celebrating this meal until the return of Jesus. All members ought to be excited when they hear that the Church is having Holy Communion.

Last but most certainly not the least, the early disciples were devoted to prayer. We have to be devoted to prayer in our homes and at Church if we are we are to make impact as a Church. Note that the prayer of faith will help bring peace, blessing, and order and ensure that the other components of Christian living are enhanced and conducted properly. Beloved in the Lord, note that the changed lives and unity of the community of believers were evident to others in their community. People saw that these were different through the way they conducted themselves.

2. RESOURCES FOR SOCIAL-POLITICAL IMPACT

Brothers and sisters in Christ, it is not only devotion to prayer, sacraments and fellowship that we ought to work on and conduct respectively but we are a missional church and we have to go out there and impact and influence the social political component of the world positively.

The early church loved to share their possessions and it is through this giving that helped not only themselves but even those that were joining them. This shows that the disciples were helping themselves but also helping the outside community.

Beloved in the Lord, let us give freely to God and to His work, because it is God himself that have not only enlarged us, but enriched us with a lot of blessings. We have gotten the wealth from Him, and therefore it is fit that devote it to Him and use it for Him, and thus make a grateful acknowledgement of the favours we have received.

My brothers and sisters in the Lord, be reminded that the best use we can make of our worldly wealth is to honour God with it in works of piety and charity. Giving is showing appreciation to God for what His has done in our lives. We are what we are by the grace and goodness of God.

- And that when we have been blessed with some remarkable success in our affairs, and have had, as we say, a good turn, it may be justly expected that we should do something more than ordinary for the glory of God, in some reasonable proportion of it, to the Lord of the whole earth. Giving is consecrating and protecting our gain. In other words, Giving to the work of God is our insurance policy, we cannot progress as a Church without the grace of giving among Christians. Giving to God is important in the Church. No Church can survive without the giving of its members. The mission of the Church is fuelled by the generous giving of its members.

CONCLUSION

We humbly appeal to all Christians that we all strive to develop the attitude of sharing the resources for the common good in spite of all the challenges that surround us economically and otherwise. Remember, giving should not be done by force, but we should do it willingly, without complaining. Giving is a grace because it is an opportunity to do good and an act of God, He moves our hearts to give.

May, God be with us, protecting and empowering us all. Amen

**THE MISSION AND EVANGELISM DEPARTMENT WOULD LIKE TO
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SERMON OUTLINE FOR THE MONTH OF MARCH 2023.**

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