



"All One In Christ"

THE UNITED CHURCH OF ZAMBIA

SYNOD MISSION AND EVANGELISM DEPARTMENT

2023 HARVEST WEEK / SUNDAY SERMON OUTLINE

**THEME: UNDERSTANDING THE TIMES AND WHAT TO DO, 1
CHRONICLES 12:32**

SUB THEME: THE GIVING ATTITUDE- DEUTERONOMY 8:12-20

INTRODUCTION

We want to take time to thank God for yet another opportunity to celebrate the provision, sustainance and preservation of God in this year of the Lord 2023.

One of the three major annual celebrations God had instructed the children of Israel to observe used to take place at the close of every Agricultural year (Exodus 23:16). It was a time of rejoicing and thanksgiving to God for the blessing of Harvest. This is the concept of Harvest we have adopted; every year, we set apart a time to rejoice and give thanks to God for the blessing of harvest realized from our various professions, skills, talents and agricultural produce. This is done with an understanding that it is God who has given us the ability to create wealth according to Deuteronomy 8:17-18

This Year`s harvest will be celebrated under the Sub-theme, **"THE GIVING ATTITUDE."** Giving is the art of willingly letting someone have something without expecting to be paid for it while attitude is a settled way of feeling about something or someone.

MONDAY

TOPIC: VALUING OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD

BIBLE READING: 2 SAMUEL 24:24

INTRODUCTION

It is a well known fact that the value of something is expressed by how much we are willing to spend or pay for it. Consequently, how much we spend on it determines how much we will care for it. In this lesson, the patriarch David helps us to understand what it means to give importance to the value of what we give to God.

BIBLE EXPLANATION

The passage read precedes an account of David's sin when he conducted census against the will of God. This sin attracted a plague on the land of Israel, claiming about 70, 000 lives of men. David heeding the instruction of the prophet Gad, he went to Araunah to buy a piece of land on which an altar to God was to be erected and oxen to be given as a burnt offering sacrifice.

When the king David named the purpose for his visit, Araunah offered without any price his land, oxen and all the materials needed for a burnt offering to God. However, David refused, stating that he could never offer to God that which did not cost him anything. One thing to note is that whether David got these for free or not, it was still going to be the same land, same oxen and wood to be used in the sacrifice. The only concern for David was the value placed on what he was giving to God and his willingness to pay for it..

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Why did David refuse to give to God a sacrifice that did not cost him anything?
2. In which ways do we as Christians sometimes fail to place value on what we give to God?
3. Why is it important to place value on what we give to God?

CONCLUSION

The value we place on our relationship with God is expressed in what we are willing to give to Him, be it our time or other resources available to us. Some of us have no problem with spending our resources on things which satisfy our ego, yet we find it hard to give back to God. As a matter of fact, most of us give to God from what remains after spending. Let us learn from the attitude David had explicitly portrayed in the passage read. **Amen!**

TUESDAY

TOPIC: BEING GRATEFUL

BIBLE READING: PSALM 68:19

INTRODUCTION

During a memorial service held in honour of Zambia's founding father, the late Dr. Kenneth Kaunda by the people of North Western province, His Grace, the Reverend Bishop Moses Gondwe, North Western presbytery gave his sermon titled, **"It Mattes to be grateful"**. In his homily, he challenged the nation to be grateful for the many things we have.

BIBLE EXPLANATION

The passage under review highlights a grateful attitude. The author abruptly moves from talking about what God had done for the nation of Israel. He then connects it with praise upon realizing that God had actually been saving the nation of Israel on a daily basis and that he was constantly bearing their burdens. The Psalmist was well aware of where they were coming from as a nation. This realization could only be attained by one who after attempting to count the blessings, realized that it was not possible to tell it all than simply being grateful.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Why do we as human beings in most cases find ourselves complaining instead of being grateful?
2. How can I build a grateful attitude?

CONCLUSION

Being grateful does not rule out the fact that we will encounter challenges along the way. Truly, God has been good to us and that He will always be. This is reason enough to give us a grateful attitude in all situations. **Amen!**

WEDNESDAY

TOPIC: REJOICE ALWAYS

BIBLE READING: PHILIPPIANS 3:1 & 4:4

INTRODUCTION

We are living in a world that has a lot of people fighting with mood swings, even those we know to be strong do succumb to the pressures of this world. Our today's lesson is pointing us in the way of joy. To rejoice is to express great happiness about something. It is synonymous with the word celebrate.

BIBLE EXPLANATION

The Apostle Paul was one of the most persecuted apostles in scripture, yet always had a way of maintaining his joy. It has been reported that he wrote this letter to the Church in Philippi during

his two years house arrest. If anyone therefore was meant to be sad, it should have been the Apostle Paul. Contrary to his experiences, he counted it all joy and further went on to admonish the church to always be in a mood of celebration, despite the challenges they might have encountered along the way.

POINTS FOR REFLECTION

1. Happiness is a choice

What the Apostle Paul wants us to realize is that joy or happiness is a choice. We should resolve in our hearts to always be happy. We should never tie our joy to our material possessions and circumstances because such things are bound to perish and change respectively at one point or another.

As a matter of fact, most of us have even tied our joy to other people`s actions towards us. This is the reason why we get hurt and sad when they act contrary to our expectations. We should always know that human relationships will fail us due to our human limitations, but even when that happens, our joy must remain uncompromised because it comes from the Lord.

2. Let go of our past hurts and pain

The truth is that many of us fail to rejoice because of our past hurts and pains. We carry fresh wounds in our hearts so much that we don`t even remember when we last smiled genuinely. Someone rightly said that *“if you never heal from what hurt you, you`ll bleed on people who didn`t cut you.”* This will ultimately deprive us of the joy we are supposed to enjoy. We should never transfer our aggression on others but rather lift it to God in prayer. Harvest being time of continued celebration, we should allow God to heal us so that we start enjoying the joy of the Lord! The Holy Spirit relates well with a heart that is full of joy. This is why there is fullness of joy in the presence of God (Psalm 16:11)

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, rejoicing always does not suggest a life free of trouble, hardship and all. What it suggests is that in all situations, we should trust in the sovereignty of God. He will cause all things to work together for our good. **“So I say then, rejoice always” Amen!**

THURSDAY

TOPIC: PROVOCKING THE BLESSING

BIBLE READING: GENESIS 22:14-18 .

INTRODUCTION

Harvest is a command from God, it is one of the instructions we find in God`s word with which our obedience to Him is tested.

BIBLE EXPLANATION

The passage under review depicts a story of Abraham when God tested him by asking him to sacrifice his only son Isaac. Obeying God`s instruction, Abraham went to the Mountain of the Lord with the child. Just when he was about to sacrifice him, God called out from heaven through His angel and stopped him from doing so.

Having obeyed God, God provided an alternative sacrificial lamb for him and further blessed him because of his obedience. In other words, Abraham passed the test.

QUESTIONS DISCUSSION

1. Why did God ask Abraham to sacrifice his only Son?
2. Why do most Christians today fail to respond to God in a way Abraham did?
3. What can we learn from Abraham`s obedience and how we can provoke God`s blessing?

CONCLUSION

Giving to God is an instruction to every believer. We must understand that each time we obey, we attract God`s blessing. We are living in the world at a time when the subject of giving has been compromised , owing to the fact that many have abused it to self-gain. However, this does not rule out the importance of giving back to God as an act of worship. **Amen!**

FRIDAY

TOPIC: PARTICIPATING IN GOD`S WORK

BIBLE READING: MATHEWS 9:37

INTRODUCTION

The theme is suggesting that we are all expected to participate in God`s work. The theme is pointing us to a metaphor used by our Lord Jesus the Christ to mean that men and women should participate tirelessly in the work of God.

Our churches today have more of spectators than participants. We have people who are swift to criticize the efforts being made by a few in serving God but slothful in participation.

TEXT EXPLANATION

The text depicts a time when Jesus moved around the villages and cities preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom and healing all manner of sicknesses and diseases. When he looked at the multitude of people, he was moved with compassion because they were in a confused state due to lack of a Shepherd.

Jesus therefore, turned to His disciples, showing them that the work of God was calling for more people who would tirelessly work in God's field as it was massive.

QUESTIONS FO REFLECTION

1. In what ways can we participate in God's work?
2. Why do most people in church today choose to be spectators and not participants in God's work?
3. What are the dangers of having more spectators than participants in church?

CONCLUSION

As we celebrate this year's harvest, we have to understand that actively participating in God's work is one of the ways we can give back to Him. **Amen!**



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2023 SUNDAY SERMON OUTLINE

THEME: UNDERSTANDING THE TIMES AND WHAT TO DO,

1 CHRONICLES 12:32

SUB THEME: YOU REAP WHAT YOU SOW

BIBLE READING: GENESIS 8:20-22; 2 CORINTHIANS 9:6-11; LUKE 12:54

INTRODUCTION

It is interesting to note that at times we expect life to give us more than what we invest ; we want to be loved more than we love, we want to be given more than we give and we want to know more than we study. It is even more disheartening to note how many of us have replaced the concept of hard work with prayer only, hoping to manipulate the results in our favour. Today we will take time to reflect on the theme titled, "You reap what you sow".

BIBLE EXPLANATION

Genesis chapter 8 presents us with the story of new beginning, following God's punishment on his earthly creation caused by the corruptions of humanity. On returning to the earth now cleansed from sin, Noah first offered sacrifices to God. Being pleased with the sacrifice, God determined in his heart never to curse the land. He further resolved to never destroy the earth by a flood again, not because he expected people to improve, for He knew they would be as sinful as ever.

As a matter of fact, if God dealt with people as they deserved, such floods would occur constantly. In His mercy however, he would allow sinful people to dwell on his earth. He also established the seasons, among which was the agricultural cycle of seed time and harvest time for all humanity. We see Jesus in the Gospel read acknowledging the existence of seasons.

In 2 Corinthians 9:6-11, Paul gives his Corinthian church an understanding that the magnitude of one's harvest would be determined by the volume of one's seed sown. He who is willing to sow will be supplied with seed, and it is from the seed that harvest will come.

POINTS FOR REFLECTION

1. God blessed the land to profit all

After God cleansed the land, He resolved never to curse it ever again. He did not do this for a selected few (Christians so to speak in our time) but for all. Note that land also covers any legitimate field of operation such as diverse professions and various businesses.

For long, many Christians have been left wondering why unbelievers seems to be doing better in these spaces. One of the major reasons is that the so called unbelievers have mastered the art of putting the land to use better than us.

Here is the truth we learn from the scripture read in Genesis, the land is mandated to give back to those who sow on it. Until we get busy with the land, we will continue shouting 'Amen' and 'I receive' without seeing results. Let's get busy with our God given land.

2. Sow bountifully

Scripture in 2 Corinthians has reviewed to us that a person who sows few seeds will have small crops but the one who sows many seeds will have a large crop or harvest.

Let us not make a mockery out of our faith by expecting to harvest heavily when we have not put in much. The other side of this scripture is calling upon us to be smart about what we plant. Let's take farming for instance; we should know the kind of crops to cultivate for maximum profit. Some crops in the face of business will only give us just slightly above our input while some will give us maximum profit. In business, we should know what to sell for maximum profit. Most importantly, we should learn from those who have gone ahead of us; where knowledge is limited, growth stalls.

3. Master the seasons

It is one thing to sow good seed, it is yet another thing to sow it at the right time. Just as doing the right thing at a wrong time is wrong, so is sowing a good and bountiful seed at a wrong time.

Let's not harvest during seed time. We are called upon to master the seasons and what to do. Most of us are living luxurious lives at the expense of formidable investments. We should always remember that whenever we eat our seed as individuals, families and as a church at large, we are investing in begging and we know that the honor of a beggar is shame!

CONCLUSION

All in all, God has blessed us with land and seasons. It is up to us to utilize them efficiently for maximum harvest. And always remember that a person will reap what he or she sows! **Amen!**

**THE MISSION AND EVANGELISM DEPARTMENT WOULD LIKE TO THANK
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THIS YEAR'S (2023) HARVEST WEEK/SUNDAY SERMON OUTLINE.**

**FOR ANY FUTHER DETAILS GET IN TOUCH WITH THE MISSION &
EVANGELISM DEPARTMENT ON THE FOLLOWING NUMBERS-**

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