

Date: **16th July, 2017**

Series: **STAR WITNESS**

Topic: **Unashamed: Proud to Preach**

One of the best things we can do is to realize that God did set goals for us when He sent us to this earth. In other words, our purpose predates our forms or shapes. Our shapes, colour, and sizes are perfect for the different assignments God sent each of us here on earth for. God is at work in the world and he wants us to join Him in His work here, part of which involves the salvation of souls.

One of the core curriculums of discipleship is soul winning. Soul winning becomes a culture for you when your life walk with God is contagious; when you can speak so easily about the gospel to anyone in a manner that is as unprompted as sneezing!

We ought to be able to review our lives and see that we are on track to accomplishing our purpose here on earth, which is being a *minister* to the body of Christ and on a *mission* to the unsaved world. God wants you to be fluent in the execution of both aspects of your assignment.

You do not just exist to make a living – your mission has to be more than your occupation, vocation, career, personal goals, and concerns of life; it should give your life meaning and must outlast you.

We all desire success in life and success is defined as the accomplishment of goals, yet critical stories like the parable of the rich fool, in Luke 12:17-20 point to the fact that we have to expand this definition of real success to include the achievement of God's purpose for our lives or at least the alignment of our mission with God's own mission for us.

“The best use of life is to spend it on something that will outlast life” – William James

Only the kingdom of God lasts forever and that is why we must live purpose driven lives, bearing in mind that one fundamental thing that features in God's mission is souls.

Jesus promised power with the outpouring of the Holy Ghost (Acts 1:8), but today, people want to access and use this power to achieve every other goal or need apart from witnessing - not that applying God's power to our different circumstances is bad in itself, it is just reasonable thing to question why can we not use the Holy Ghost for one of His primary functions – witnessing to souls about Jesus. The same scripture shows that God wants us to be witnesses for Him in Jerusalem, signifying our immediate family; Judea, signifying our extended family and friends; then Samaria, signifying strangers and different people with whom we do not have things in common.

Soul winning involves God making use of what you have, to reach several souls so as to pull them into His kingdom. What do you have that God can use - your voice, time, specific skill, resources? Peter gave his boat (Luke 5:1-4), with great rewards following thereafter.

So why are we reluctant to engage in soul winning? One problem is that many of us see soul winning as an assignment to only tell people to stop sinning, but it really is an assignment to tell people that help is available, and we all know that nobody runs from help. If people are running away from your message of the kingdom it means you are not presenting it well; it is, after all called the good news and people want good things. We also come up against shame, and the first step in making progress with our soul winning efforts is to deal with the shame factor. The Apostle Paul had to boldly declare that he was unashamed of the gospel of Christ (Romans 1:16).

Shame comes from a sense of having done wrong, so could it be that there is something in the mind of believers that makes us feel we're doing wrong by preaching the gospel? Where does the shame about preaching come from? It comes from:

- Popular culture, which projects that a life of sin is cool; this is based on a reprobate mind.
- The fear of rejection; some of us have no fear of rejection regarding sending and resending countless business proposals but allow ourselves to get stumped when it comes to preaching the gospel.
- Fear of being called a hypocrite, which comes from a sense of inadequacy, of unworthiness, or of past personal failures. The Samaritan woman whom Jesus spoke to at the well, in John 4, did not allow her past failures in marriage prevent her from being an effective witness; Peter also did not allow his past failure of denying Jesus stop him from accomplishing God's mission through him.
- Sometimes, it is due to not wanting to be the odd one out, bending under the load of peer pressure, which is experienced not only by children but by adults.
- Sometimes, it is in not wanting to be aligned with the incorrect perception that a Christian is weak.

There are 3 things we should not forget, which will help in our soul winning efforts:

- i. The gospel is powerful
- ii. God specializes in using people, in spite of their issues, e.g., Rahab
- iii. God will hold you accountable for the people around whom He has sent you to (Ezekiel 3:18)

The challenge for this week is to speak to at least two people about the good news and to have at least one abiding soul at the end of the month.

Prayer:

- Lord, help me to fulfill Your assignment for my life.
- Ask for grace to be a witness, for your life to count for much more than looking good or earning a living.
- Lord, help me to want to be part of Your mission for our world