23RD OF DECEMBER 2017

**AS THE LORD GOD LIVES; BEFORE WHOM I STAND**.

In 1 kings 17:1, Elijah a relatively unknown prophet proclaimed the above phrase.

The striking thing about the event is the boldness which Elijah exhibited.

The question that comes to mind here is: what gave him such boldness and confidence?

That was the era when king Ahab; who had no regard for God 's law, led the Israelites to worshipping Baal and God was angry with them.

Then God raised up a totally unknown man of Gilead- Elijah; whose message was blunt and direct. A man without any pedigree and title, who had lived in obscurity all his life but who without doubt has been standing before God.

Similarity in Acts 3&4, the bible recorded one of the most remarkable event; where a lame man at the beautiful gate was healed.

Specifically, the bible in Acts 4:13 -says: "Now when they saw the “boldness”of Peter & John and perceived they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marvelled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus(standing  before God).

Relying on the full account of the above stated events involving Elijah and Peter; it is obvious the opposition often  resort to intimidation against messenger of God.

In this present despensation; the preaching of the Gospel has become so adulterated that preachers now only preach sermons to please the congregation.

The practice now, even in Bible-believing churches is about preaching what itching ears want to hear.
2 Tim 4:3.

I mean sermon  like: "everything na double double oo" ,instant alert on your phone, going shopping without money in your pocket but coming back home with bags full of goodies, getting contracts you did not even bid for, etc.

People of God, I  am curious to know: where are the Elijah,Moses, Ezekiel, Peter, Paul and John the Baptist of our time; preparing the Church of God for the second coming of my Lord Jesus Christ?

Comedians and motivational speakers have taken over the altar of God.

"Men of God" are now more popular in the political arena; talking about politics and contracts than preaching the Gospel.

However, it is important to note that
the ministry of speaking about Jesus or preaching God's word is not for  entertainment celebrities or for  politicians nor for the "spiritual elite" alone, but rather for redeemed believers who constantly stand before God.
Acts 1:8.

As it was during the early Church; where the Priest, Captain of temple & Sadducees tried to challenge the authority of Peter & John, so it is today where the "spiritual elite" will try to undermine anyone preaching true Gospel of Jesus  which they fail to preach.

To this end, the focus now should be on proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ with love and boldness even in the face of opposition without fear and favour. Daniel  3:17-18.

The intention of the High Priest was to intimidate Peter  and John but they were stunned by the boldness  displayed by the disciples.

The boldness of Peter should not come as a surprise though; as Jesus Christ has told him:

**"that thou art Peter and upon this rock I will build my Church and the gate of hell shall not prevail against it,”** Mathew 16:18.

That incident in Acts 3&4  was prophecy being fulfilled in Peter's life.

I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation...
Romans-1:16.

Though, the true message of Christ may seem offensive; as it bothers on people's pride and their most treasured possessions. Notwithstanding,we ought to preach it.
Jeremiah -26:2.

A proverbial adage says:

**"You only fear the One who sends you on errand; you are not to fret about how or who to deliver the message to".**

Is quite ridiculous these days of the social media reign; where one experiences incessant infringement on one's privacy, to the extent that on Whats App- you find yourself being dragged to a group you never consented to and yet they try to place restriction on what you share.

My allegiance is to my Lord Jesus. Consequently, I am obliged to share His Gospel where ever and whatever platform I find myself. Mathew 5:16.

The Gospel of Jesus is too good not to be shared. Acts 4:20.

The Lord is my light and my salvation whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid? Psalm 27:1.

In Acts 4:31, the early Church prayed and received boldness to preach the "Gospel as it is".
As long as the Lord lives and by His grace, we shall continue to be courageous enough to speak (preach) the undiluted Gospel whenever we feel the urge to do so; obviously not for recognition sake nor for approval (God choses and calls His own) but rather because it is the right thing to do. 1Cor 9:16.

**“For God has not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, of love and of a sound mind”**

. 2 Tim 1:7

In conclusion, before Elijah stood before Ahab and well before Peter & John spoke with "boldness" before the High Priest; they have spent time alone  with God praying  and meditating His Word.

**Time before God prepares one for time before men**. John 15:5-

**"I am the vine, ye are the branches, he that abideth in me and I in him , the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing".**
Remember, Christmas  season is all about Jesus.  Win and care for a Soul today even as you celebrate Jesus.

This is the best gift He demands from you. Mathew-25:40

Merry Christmas.

Signed, Bro Cole