

19 - Continued Testimony of Jesus Abbey

by Ben Torrey

God's amazing provision and plan for the Three Seas Center were revealed through the story of two brothers and their reconciliation.

Duration: 9:19

Scripture: Genesis 4:7, Psalm 37:4, Proverbs 3:5-6, Matthew 5:23-24, Romans 8:28, Ephesians 3:20, Philippians 4:19

Topics: "Testimony"

Description

In this sermon, Ben Tory shares a tale of two brothers and how God is working to provide for the building of the Three Seas Center in Tebek, Kang Wando. The center is a multi-million dollar project that aims to bring reconciliation between North and South Korea. The story begins with a woman who played a key role in reconciling two brothers, which led to the start of the building project. The city has a strong interest in the project as it aligns with their overall development plan for the region. Through this tale, Ben Tory highlights the amazing ways in which God provides and works in mysterious ways.

Transcript

Good evening, this is Ben Torrey. It's good to be back with you again. If you have been listening to these broadcasts during the past month, then you have heard quite a bit about the work that God has called my wife and me to do at the Three Seas Center in Tebek, Kangwondo.

You have also heard about how God has been leading me in terms of trusting Him for the financing. The wonderful thing about working for God is that you never know what He is going to do next, how He is going to provide for His work. This evening I want to share with you a tale of two brothers, and how God is working to provide for the building of our center, a multi-million dollar project.

A bit of background first. This is actually a review for those of you who were listening last week. The land where we live and where our Three Seas Ranch is located is leased by Jesus Abbey from the Korean government to raise livestock.

A number of years ago, a special law went into effect that made it possible to apply to the forestry department to receive permission to build a youth training center, if we got permission from both the forestry department and the city of Tebek. We spent over five years working to get our detailed plan approved. There was one point where I had completely given up any expectation of getting approval and was thinking of alternatives.

I knew that God had called us to Korea to set up an educational program for the people that He was calling to North Korea. That meant that if we weren't going to get the youth training center to use, then there was a different way to do this. We began developing Plan B to pursue the objective on a much smaller basis with what we had already.

However, God clearly had the original plan in mind. Just a year ago, in mid-May, our detailed plan was unexpectedly approved. I was overwhelmed, both by the fact that we had the plan and by all that it required us to do.

The project, as laid out in the approved plan, is a \$20 million project, roughly. At that point, we didn't even have enough money to buy tents for our summer work camp schools, let alone begin a multi-million dollar construction program. As I prayed about what we were to do and struggled with my own sense of total helplessness before the enormity of the task, I knew we needed time.

The terms of the permit required us to begin construction in 180 days, about six months. I knew that there was no way we could do that. I finally felt that God was leading me to go to the city and ask for an extension until the approved, and I promised we would begin work in April of this year.

Well, April came, and as you know, up until a couple of weeks ago we hadn't started and did not know how we were going to finance this year's work. We had broken the whole project down into four annual phases. The reputation of Jesus Abbey was on the line with this one.

In order to do the first phase this year, as stipulated by the permit, we would need to start everything this spring. That's why I had said April. We could not begin work until we brought in a general contractor capable of doing the project.

That would require, we felt, having at least two million dollars in our account. We began the month of April with about a hundred and fifty thousand dollars that had been given to us last year by benefactors who had built a large building for Jesus Abbey some ten years ago. The couple did not have much that could be used for something like this and had no thought that they were to help us in this way.

As it happened, they received some funds unexpectedly and were prompted by God to give them for this project. That money came in at a critical time for us, but it wasn't anywhere near two million. However, we knew we had to move ahead, so using those funds and some others that had come in, we began surveying for our construction project last month.

It wasn't breaking the ground, which is what I had said we would do, but it was enough to keep the city happy. The city has a strong interest in our bringing the project through, as it is a major component of their overall development plan for the region. When I shared with you a couple of weeks ago about faith financing, I still did not know how God was going to do this.

This brings me to my tale of two brothers. It's also tied in with the benefactor who gave us that \$150,000 gift last year. He is a member of one of the large Korean chaebol families, although not in the main line of inheritance.

He was in line, however, to receive a fairly large construction business. For reasons that I don't fully understand, his younger brother ended up with that business, and relations between the two brothers went sour. We were not aware of all the family dynamics, but we did know about his and his wife's interest in Jesus Abbey, as well as their faith in God.

It was natural for us to let them know about our plans with the hope that they might help us. Remember, I said here two weeks ago that the Lord had me looking for partners whom he would call to participate with us. Well, I thought this couple might well be such partners.

They, however, had no sense of this, nor did they have any significant resources to offer. Instead, the two brothers ended up in court fighting one another. As I became aware of these family dynamics, I stopped thinking of them as potential donors and began focusing in my prayers on the discord between the brothers.

We all started praying for the Lord to bring reconciliation. At one point, the wife had indicated to us that if they won the court suit, they would be able to make a very significant contribution to our work, and asked us to pray that they would win. I could never pray that way, but did pray that God would bring His resolution to the situation and reconciliation between the brothers.

I also had the sense that this was a test for us as well. How would we respond in this situation? Eventually, as the suit dragged on and time went by, I put all of this out of my mind, other than continuing to pray for the family. My wife and I had a strong sense that God had brought them into our lives for the purpose of this prayer.

The wife came to Jesus Abbey for Easter in order to pray and seek God's will. I was away at the time and was not aware that she had come. She was quite distressed over the whole situation, the trouble between the brothers, and the knowledge that we needed two million dollars to start construction in April.

It was already April and we did not have the money. A dear friend and godly man had just recently counseled them to stop pursuing appeals to the suit. They did so, giving up any hope of getting the company and any money from it.

While she was at the Abbey, she felt the Lord moving her to urge her husband to forgive his brother and seek a reconciliation. In a startling and wonderful way, that is exactly what happened just a few weeks ago. With the reconciliation, the younger brother unexpectedly shared with his older brother a large portion of the inheritance.

The older brother then challenged his younger brother to use the construction company to build the 3C Center if he, the older brother, put up two million dollars, money that his brother had just given him. The problem for the younger brother is that while two million is a nice round number, it is only one-tenth of the cost of the whole project. Construction companies in Korea do not like to get involved with church or non-profit organizations on major building projects because they are notoriously fraught with problems, delays, and lack of funds.

If he contracted to do the work, he ran the great risk of being caught in the middle if we failed to acquire the other 18 million needed. However, he was so moved and challenged by his brother that he went to the Lord as well. He is an elder in the church.

Just this past week, he agreed. One thing was important for us is that we put up a hundred and fifty thousand dollar down payment when signing the contract. That's how much we already have.

We were faithful to move forward with the limited funds that we had. God moved two brothers to be reconciled and out of that reconciliation began the work of building a training center that he intends to be used to bring reconciliation between North and South Korea. This tale of two brothers has become a tale

of two nations.

Isn't God wonderful and amazing in how he does things? By the way, the woman who set all this in motion told me as she rejoiced in what God had done that she felt like a bystander watching all of this unfold. Praise God. Good night.

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