

(Through the Bible) 1 Chronicles 12-17

by Chuck Smith

The sermon emphasizes the importance of loyalty to God, proper worship practices, and maintaining joy in the face of challenges through the story of David and his mighty men.

Duration: 55:31

Scripture: Romans 12:1, Ephesians 1:3-4, Ephesians 1:7, Ephesians 1:11, Ephesians 1:13, Ephesians 4:1

Topics: "Through The Bible"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of responding to what God has done for us rather than relying on our own efforts to earn His blessings. The speaker refers to the book of Ephesians, where Paul spends three chapters explaining all the things that God has done for believers. The speaker criticizes the use of pressure tactics and worldly methods to raise funds for God's work, stating that if God guides a project, He will provide for it. The sermon also mentions the story of David, who was overwhelmed by God's blessings and promises for him and recognized the impossibility of adequately expressing his gratitude.

Transcript

Now, in chapter 12, these are they which came to David to Ziklag, because he yet kept himself close because of Saul, the son of Kish. And they were among the mighty men, the helpers of war. They were armed with bows, they could use both the right hand and the left hand in hurling stones and shooting arrows out of the bow, even of Saul's brethren of Benjamin.

And so these guys had practiced throwing with a sling with both hands, in case one hand gets injured or something, then you use the other and keep going at it. And they, to throw the sling with the left hand was, was sort of a special kind of an art in those days. The guys were sort of set apart and they would develop, they would practice to develop great accuracy with a sling.

A sling is an interesting little weapon, actually. And you can develop quite a bit of accuracy with a sling. And of course, the stone that you can use in a sling is much larger than a stone in a slingshot.

If you're using a slingshot, then you need small little stones like marbles. But with a sling, you can actually, the best stones are about so big around. And so you can do a lot more damage with a sling than you can with a slingshot.

And you can become extremely accurate because you get your two leather strips. And of course, you have a leather pouch in which you set your stone, about the size of your hand. And you set the stone in that leather pouch.

And then one of your leather straps is longer than the other. And you take the longer one and wrap it around your hand. And you hold it with your three fingers.

And the other leather strap is long enough that you hold it with your two fingers, like so. And then you get this thing swinging. And of course, the longer your straps, the greater distance you can actually throw these rocks.

And you can throw these rocks a huge distance if you get these, you know, get some real long straps and you get a big enough rock. And you get that thing swinging out there. You get the momentum going as you swing it around in the air.

And then on the last swing, you take it around and you let it fly over your head. And you bring it with an overhand thrust. And you let go, when you bring it over your head with the overhand thrust, you let go of these two fingers, you know, the finger and the thumb.

You let go of the one strap. And I'll tell you, that rock shoots out of there. And you can throw them just a long distance, 300 feet or more, these huge stones with a sling.

So it is quite a weapon. And these fellows would practice not only with their right hands, but they practiced throwing with their left hands too, these slings. And so it was really a very effective weapon in battle, because you could start wiping out your enemy much further than what you could throw a rock.

And so, of course, it was with the sling that David wiped out the giant. Now, these men that came to David were skilled with the use of the sling and also with shooting arrows. And then also came to David while he was in the land of the Philistines in verse 8, those from the tribe of Gad.

Now, these men who came from the tribe of Gad were men of might, men of war, fit for battle. They could handle the shield and the buckler. And their faces were like the faces of lions.

So I would imagine that they just had full beards and looked real tough. And they were as swift as deer upon the mountain. Of course, in those days, I imagine that they actually were in much better physical shape generally than we are.

Because, you know, they didn't have cars and bicycles and stuff like that. They had to run or walk wherever they went. I go over to Israel today and I watch these shepherds as they walk up the hillsides and as they are following their flocks and so forth.

And I think they must be in great shape because if you don't think so, you go out and try and run up the hillsides like they do. And you'll really be panting before long. But you really get in good shape.

And these men were all in tremendous physical condition. Fast, fleet-footed, and powerful guys. And they began to gather unto David.

And then we are told of those that came from the tribe of Benjamin. In verse 16, David went out to meet them. And he said unto them, If you come peaceably to help me, my heart will be knit to yours.

But if you come to betray me to my enemies, seeing that I haven't done any wrong, then the God of our fathers look upon it and rebuke it. And the Spirit came upon Amassi, who was the chief of the captains. And he said to David, Thine we are, and we are on your side, thou son of Jesse.

Peace be to thee. Now, here David, of course, becomes a beautiful type of Christ who had been anointed to be king over Israel, and yet Saul had despised him and rejected him, and had forced him out of the land. And David is now waiting for God to give the kingdom over to him.

But while he is waiting, men began to pledge their allegiance and loyalty to David. They began to gather unto David. Even as the Scripture said, Therefore, let us go out of the camp, that we might, you know, be identified with Jesus Christ.

And so they began to leave the camp and come out to David. And day by day, they gathered until it became a mighty host, like the host of God. And so, they were men who made their commitment.

We're yours. We belong to you, and we're on your side. And so, then when Saul was slain, these are the men that made David.

They came down to Hebron, and they said to David, Come and rule over us. From the tribe of Judah, there were 6,800. From the tribe of Simeon, there were 7,100.

From the tribe of Levi, 4,600 men. From the tribe of Benjamin, 3,000. From the tribe of Ephraim, 28,000 came down.

From the half of the tribe of Manasseh, 18,000. From the tribe of Zebulun, men of war, all armed for war, 50,000 that were able to keep rank, and they were not of double heart. That says a lot of a person.

One of the weaknesses is a person who is double-minded, or a person who has a double allegiance. These men were not of double heart that came from Zebulun, 50,000 of them. From Naphtali, 1,000 captains with 37,000 men.

From the tribe of Dan, expert in war, came 28,600 men. From the tribe of Asher, those that went forth to battle, 40,000 men. And from the other side of the Jordan River, the Reubenites, all armed for war, and the Gadites, and half the tribe of Manasseh, there came 120,000 men.

All men of war that could keep rank. They came with a perfect or a complete heart to Hebron to make David the king over all of Israel, and the rest of Israel were with one heart to make David king. Don't you imagine that as they came then from Hebron back to Jerusalem, that they were a tremendous host of guys as they gathered to David.

Now, they had a big party down in Hebron. They started bringing donkey loads of food and bread from all over the place to feed this. You know, this many guys come to visit you, you got to feed them.

And can you imagine the logistics involved in feeding a crew like this? And so they brought, it says, the bread on donkeys, and camels, and mules. And they had a big party and all. And it says there was joy in Israel.

Now, in chapter 13, David said, look, if it's your purpose to make me your king and all, if it seems good to you, and if it's of the Lord, then let us bring back the Ark of the Covenant that we might put it here at the tabernacle in Jerusalem. And so they came to Kirjath Jerom, where the Ark of the Covenant had been

placed. And they carried the Ark of the Covenant on a new cart that they had made.

And Uzzah and Ahio were driving the cart. And David and all of Israel played before God with all their might, and with singing, and with harps, and with psalteries, and timbrels, and with cymbals, and with trumpets. So here, if you can now get in your mind the picture, they've gone down to Kirjath Jerom to bring the Ark of the Covenant and all of the celebration, you know, the bands, the music, and out there dancing with all their might before the Lord, and singing with the psalteries, and the harps, and this great time of rejoicing.

We're bringing the sign of God's covenant with Israel back to dwell with us there in Jerusalem. And suddenly, the cart began to wobble, and it looked like the Ark was going to fall off the cart. And Uzzah, one of the drivers, put his hand up to steady it so it wouldn't fall.

And the wrath of God was kindled against Uzzah because they were strictly forbidden not to touch the Ark. And Uzzah died. And suddenly, all of the mirth ceased.

The songs, I mean, it was serious, it was sober. God moved on the scene, and it brought a real note of sobriety to the whole thing. And David said, hey, I can't dwell with anything that is that holy.

He said, leave it here, I'm going home. And so, they just left the Ark of the Covenant there in the house of, what was it, Obed-Edom. And he called the name of the place Perez-Uzzah.

Now, Perez means a breach. God made a breach against Uzzah. And so, the Ark there was placed in the house of Obed-Edom.

And David went back to Jerusalem. He was angry at God. Angry because God stopped this glorious celebration and stopped David's intent of bringing the Ark of the Covenant back to Jerusalem.

Now, in this, we find a right thing being done in a wrong way. Now, it is not only important that we do right things, but it's important that we do right things in right ways. When the Philistines captured the Ark of the Covenant, when they were in battle against Saul, you remember the story how that everywhere the Ark of the Covenant went, boils would break out on the Philistines? And so finally, in every city, the men would get boils all over them where the Ark of the Covenant was brought.

And so finally, as they started to take it to another city, the men from the city came out and said, oh no, you're not bringing that thing here. We don't want it in our city. And so, the Philistines then went to their prophets and they said, what shall we do? And they said, send the thing back.

Take an ox and make a cart and put it on the cart and just turn the cows, actually not an ox, but turn the cows loose. And if the cows go right back to the camp of Israel, you know the thing is of God and let the thing go, don't touch it. If the cows just sort of roam around like they're lost, then you know that it was just all coincidental that boils happened to break out of here.

And so they took these cows and they made this Ark and they put the, they made the cart, they put the Ark on it and they turned the cows loose and they started just mooing and going straight towards the camp of Israel. The Philistines followed them and watched them go right on into the camp of Israel. Of course, when it came into the camp of Israel, there was great rejoicing all.

Now, the idea is when David then decided to bring the Ark back to Jerusalem, a good desire. But what did he do? He copied the method of transportation that was used by the Philistines. Now, God in the law had commanded that whenever the Ark of the covenant was moved, that it should be borne by four of the priests on staves.

The Ark had these golden rings on the side and they would put these sticks through these rings so that they wouldn't touch it. And there would be four fellows that would hold these staves on their shoulder and the Ark would be, of course, in the middle of them. And that is how the Ark was to be transported.

That was under the law of Moses. Now, David was doing a right thing, but he was doing it in a wrong way. He was following really the worldly pattern of the Philistines in taking a cart, making a cart and oxen and pulling it.

He was following the Philistines' way of doing things. Now, I do believe that the church is guilty many times, or parachurch organizations are guilty many times of trying to use worldly methods for doing the work of God. Now, that which we seek to do is right.

We seek to bring men to Jesus Christ. But we get a bunch of suede-shoe Madison Avenue advertiser men and we say, now set up a program for us. An advertising program and all.

And we're trying to use worldly methods to do the work of God. Now, you're trying to do a right thing. You want to get men to Jesus Christ, but you're doing it in the wrong way.

God didn't say that we were to get fancy advertising schemes and all of this kind of stuff to bring men to Jesus Christ. A lot of work for God, legitimate work that should be done, is done in a wrong way. And so, because we have been doing things in a wrong way, then we've got to raise funds to support the wrong way method of doing things.

And we make a travesty of God by the way we get up to raise funds. It is a shame. The methods that people use to extract money for the so-called work of God.

I am embarrassed as a Christian of the junk that goes on on television in their fundraising efforts and methods. It, to me, is an absolute embarrassment. And they are motivating people the wrong way.

Now, Moses had to raise funds for the building of the tabernacle. What did he do? All of you that would like to contribute to the building of the tabernacle, just bring it in and dump it. He didn't go around getting pledges or jumping up and down and running around the place, putting on a show.

And the people started bringing the funds until finally they had to stop. And they say, stop, stop, we've got too much, quit. No more, you can't give any more.

Didn't make it, that's too bad. Now, Paul the Apostle tells us in the New Testament, writing to the Corinthians, he said, Now every man as he's purposed in his own heart, so let him set aside for the Lord. But don't let your giving be out of constraint.

Never should your giving to God be pressured giving. It is wrong to seek to pressure people to give to God. And yet, how many times we notice that the whole tactic is that of pressure tactics.

Professional letter writers to write the appeals and all kinds of idiotic gimmicks are used by these people to raise funds. When a person has to degrade to those type of efforts, then something's wrong with the work

that they are seeking to do. I am thoroughly convinced when God guides, God provides.

And if you tell me that you're not getting the money to do this great program God has laid upon your heart, I'll have to say God didn't lay it upon your heart. When you have to resort to worldly ways and do things after the pattern of the world, it's not of God. It's not of the Spirit of God.

David made a tragic mistake. He wanted to do the right thing. There was nothing wrong with the desire, but he was doing it in a wrong way.

God never intended for us to use the Madison Avenue techniques to sell Jesus Christ to the world or to use all of these fundraising techniques that people stoop to. To raise funds for the work of God. Poor God.

He's almost broke all the time. He lives on the verge of financial disaster. If you don't come through this week, God's had it.

What kind of a God is it who never can take care of his own program? As I say, it embarrasses me. I'm humiliated by it. So, David said, hey, leave it here.

I'm not going to take that back to Jerusalem. They took it into the house of Obed-Edom and then God began to bless Obed-Edom tremendously because the Ark of the Covenant was there at his house. And so David said, hey, let's get the thing back to Jerusalem.

Let's do it again. Only this time, he'd gone back to the law of Moses. He said, let's have four priests.

We'll take and let them bear it between them and so forth and we'll offer sacrifices and unto the Lord. And so they went out again with the worshiping and with the praising, the offering of sacrifices before the Ark. They would go so many places and they'd offer a sacrifice and the priests were carrying it.

And David put on just a linen. He took off his royal robes as a king and he put on just a linen ephod, which was a sort of the robes that the priest wore in service. And he just put on sort of the priestly servant's garments and was with the people, among the people and dancing and praising the Lord as they brought the Ark of the Covenant into Jerusalem.

And his wife, Michelle, looked out the window and saw him out there without his kingly garments, dressed in just a linen ephod, mingling with the common people, dancing before the Lord, out there shouting and having a big time. And when she saw him, she despised him. So David had a great feast for all of the people as they gave to each of them bread and wine and a big portion of meat.

And then after blessing the people, he came home to bless his own family. And when he came into the house, Michelle said to him, well, didn't you look smart out there in a linen robe no less. Big deal.

Boy, I'll tell you, it wiped David out. Just, you know, he came in just overloaded with joy, blessing, oh praise the Lord. Isn't it amazing how easily Satan can deflate our spiritual balloon? You know, we can get so high and so joyous in the Lord, and oh Lord, You're so good.

You're so great. And Satan can rob us of that joy. And whenever you get in that state, he's seeking to do some little thing just to deflate that, you know, super feeling that you have.

A while back I was in the Safeway Market and every once in a while, someone will send some money and say, you know, have a steak for dinner or something. And I had some money that was sent and the little

note said, you know, have a steak for dinner. Well, they had some beautiful, thick top sirloin steaks.

And so I picked out one of these, you know, choice, beautiful, thick, thick top sirloin. I was going to take it home and barbecue it. And I said, Lord, I can remember the days when, man, all we could afford, we couldn't even afford hamburger.

And now able to buy this beautiful steak, oh Lord, You're so good. Oh, thank you, Lord. I just love You so much.

And I was just pushing the cart through Safeway, just really just worshiping the Lord and praising Him. Just a beautiful time. And I pulled up to the check stand, just could taste that steak, just praising the Lord.

And some short little fat guy smoking a cigar pulled, he came up and he just pushed my cart and stood right in front of me, got in line in front of me. And my first impulse was to grab the guy by the collar, turn him around and say, Hey, fatty, who do you think you are? And hope that he'd take a swing at me. Oh, how I wanted to level him.

I was so upset. And beside that, smoking that stinky cigar. And I thought, the very idea.

I've never seen anything like this. I've heard of it. I've never seen it.

This guy needs to be taught a lesson. And the Lord spoke to my heart and He said, Oh, what joy and praise all dissipated over a smelly cigar. And I said, No, Lord, I'm not going to let him get the best of me.

I didn't have to smell the cigar. I took my cart and I went walking again through the store. Get my joy and peace back again, you know.

I made a few rounds through the store until he got out the door. And then I went back up to the check stand and went out. But I thought, Oh, how easy it would have been for me to have lost my joy.

God has been so good. Now, one little adverse thing comes along and, you know, the joy dissipates so rapidly. Oh, how I'm sure how Satan delights in robbing us from our joyful experiences in Christ.

I'm sure that he is just thinking up ways by which he can dissipate and see how fast he can dissipate that joy, Lord. You watch it the next time you have a real high in Jesus. Watch how he's going to come along and try and deflate it.

You know, he'll use some irritating little thing to just turn you out of the spirit into the flesh. And man, it's so easy to turn from the spirit into the flesh. And that's, of course, his purpose.

Get me in the flesh and then he just makes mincemeat out of me. You know, he can just defeat me. As long as I'm in the spirit, I can have a glorious victory over him.

And so, David in the spirit out there worshiping, and suddenly, man, it's gone. Here's his wife just giving him a bad time. Now, Hiram, the king of Tyre, sent David down cedars and workmen and so forth to build a palace for David.

And while David was in Jerusalem, he took more wives and he had more sons and daughters and their names are listed there in chapter 14. And the Philistines came against David, spread themselves in the valley of Riphia. And David inquired of God, saying, shall I go up against the Philistines? Will you deliver

them into my hand? And the Lord said, go up, I will deliver them into your hand.

So they came to Baal-perazim. And David smote them there. And David said, God hath broken in on my enemies by mine hand, like the breaking forth of waters.

Therefore, they called the name of the place Baal-perazim. Now, it is interesting to me how that David sought guidance from the Lord and asked direct questions and received direct answers. I think that it is important that we ask God direct questions.

We seek the guidance of the Lord by asking direct questions. Too many times, we have our plans all set and then we say, now, God, please bless my plans. Rather than seeking the guidance of the Lord and asking direct questions, Lord, shall we go up? Lord, will you be with us and deliver them into your hands? Asking direct questions, he received direct answers.

And I believe that you can ask God a direct question and get a direct answer. I had an old Oldsmobile car and it was beginning to use a lot of oil. And I said, Lord, what's causing this silly car to use so much oil? And the Lord spoke to me and said, look at the speedometer.

And I looked down and I was doing 80 miles an hour. So, I slowed down. In those days, the speed up was 65.

I slowed down to 65. And he said, you got a lead foot. That's why it's using so much oil.

So, I just started driving slower. I was, of course, having to drive to Idlewild three times a week. And up the mountain, man, I had all those curves all wired and, you know, just floorboarding up the hill.

And when I started driving like a normal person should drive, car quit using oil. So, thank you, Lord. Direct question, direct answer.

And I do believe that you can ask God direct questions and start listening and start getting direct answers. David was asking direct questions. God began to give him direct answers in guiding him.

Now, the Philistines came up again. And rather than just, you know, all right, let's go again, fellas, add it once more. He waited and inquired of God again.

And he said, shall we go up? And the Lord said, no, don't go up. But go around behind them and wait. And when you hear the sound of the wind in the top of the mulberry trees, then attack.

So, David went around behind the Philistines and they waited there. And when the wind began to blow in the top of the mulberry trees, then David and his men attacked and they wiped out the Philistines the second time. And the fame of David and the fear of David spread throughout all the lands.

And it was then at this point that David brought back the Ark of the Covenant, doing it after the manner that God had prescribed to Moses, bringing it back the right way. In chapter 16, they brought the Ark of the Covenant and they set it in the midst of the tent, the tabernacle that David had pitched for it. And they offered the burnt sacrifices and the peace offerings before God.

And then David ordered a choir. And he appointed certain of the Levites to minister before the Ark of the Lord and to record. Now, that idea of recording was for remembrances, to record the things that God had done so that the people could remember the glorious works of God.

And so, part of the psalms are psalms of remembrance. Psalm 38 and Psalm 70, you'll read the titles above the psalms. Psalm of David for remembrance.

These are what they call the recording psalms or the record psalms, to make a record of what God had done to bring the people into remembrance. And then some of the psalms were those of thanksgiving, giving thanks unto the Lord. And then other psalms of just praise to the Lord God of Israel.

Now, Asaph was the chief musician appointed by David. And next to him, Zechariah and these other fellows. And Asaph made a sound with cymbals.

They played, of course, a psaltery, whatever type of instrument that was, and with harps, whatever a harp was in those days. Now, on that day, David delivered first this psalm to thank the Lord into the hand of Asaph and his brethren. So, David gave them the lyrics, and these guys started singing and worshiping the Lord with this psalm.

Give thanks unto the Lord, call upon His name, make known His deeds among the people. Sing unto Him. Sing psalms unto Him.

Talk ye of all His wondrous works. Glory ye in His holy name. Let the heart of them rejoice that seek the Lord.

Seek the Lord in His strength. Seek His face continually. Remember His marvelous works that He hath done, His wonders and the judgments of His mouth.

O ye seed of Israel, His servant. Ye children of Jacob, His chosen ones. He is the Lord our God.

His judgments are in all the earth. Be ye mindful always of His covenant, the word which He commanded to a thousand generations, even of the covenant which He made with Abraham and of His oath unto Isaac. And hath confirmed the same to Jacob for a law and to Israel for an everlasting covenant, saying, unto thee will I give the land of Canaan, the lot of your inheritance.

And when ye were but few, even a few and strangers in it, and when ye went from nation to nation and from one kingdom to another people, He did not allow any man to do you wrong. Yea, He reproveth the kings for their sake, saying, touch not mine anointed and do my prophets no harm. Sing unto the Lord all the earth.

Show forth from day to day His salvation. Declare His glory among the heathen, His marvelous works among all nations. For great is the Lord and greatly to be praised.

He also is to be revered above all gods. For all of the gods of the people are idols, but the Lord hath made the heavens. Glory and honor are in His presence.

Strength and gladness are in His place. Give unto the Lord, ye kindreds of the people, give unto the Lord glory and strength. Give unto the Lord the glory that is due His name.

Bring an offering and come before Him. Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness. Fear before Him all the earth, and the world also shall be stable that it be not moved.

Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice. And let the men say among the nations, The Lord reigneth. Let the sea roar in the fullness thereof, and let the fields rejoice, and all that is therein.

And then shall the trees of the woods sing out in the presence of the Lord, because He cometh to judge the earth. O give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good, for His mercy endureth forever. And say ye, Hosanna, O God of our salvation, and gather us together and deliver us from the heathen, that we may give thanks to Thy holy name and glory in Thy praise.

Blessed be the Lord God of Israel for ever and ever. And all of the people said, Amen. And they praised the Lord.

So glory, a psalm of thanksgiving and praise that David gave. The first that was sung in the establishing of the worship for the children of Israel as once again they built the tabernacle, brought the ark of the covenant, and began to establish the worship of God once more as the heart of the nation. And so David then appointed Asaph and his brethren to minister before the ark continually as every day's work required.

And the people departed to every man and David returned to bless his house after this glorious time of praise and worship and all. And then David in chapter 17 expresses his desire to build the house of God. And Nathan the prophet said, Good, do all that is in your heart, for God is with thee.

And it came to pass the same night that the Lord spoke to Nathan the prophet and said, Go and tell David My servant. Thus saith the Lord, Thou shalt not build Me a house to dwell in. For I have not dwelt in a house since the day that I brought up Israel out of Israel and to this day, but I have gone from tent to tent and from one tabernacle to another.

Wheresoever I have walked with all of Israel, did I ever speak a word to the judges of Israel whom I commanded to feed My people saying, Why have you not built Me a house of crystal? No cedars, sorry. I would like to say that I think that it is wrong for us to judge. We do not know the true motives of man and we only assume what motivations might be.

However, in the same token, I would like to say that I don't think that God has ever required that we build for Him some fancy place to worship Him. I believe that God can be better worshiped in nature than in a building. I only wish the weather permitted for us to worship outside.

I think that it would be a much more fitting cathedral to just worship God outside. In the Old Testament, when God instructed them in the building of the altars, God said, I don't want you to bring any tool on the stone. I don't want you carving fancy stones and all.

Just take the plain rock without bringing any tool on it and set it up for the altar because God didn't want people's attention to be distracted from Him to some fancy ornamentation. That man had built. Now, I don't really feel that God has changed.

I don't think that God is wanting to attract people to fancy architecture or to fancy ornamentations. I think the more natural that we can be in our worship of God, the more we are closer to the real heart and intent of God as natural as possible. And as I say, if the weather would permit, I would rather worship God outside.

I love to go up to the conference center and I like to take the classes outside and just sit there in the pine needles and you get that smell of the pine needles and you get the sound of the wind through the trees and you hear the blue jays and the squirrel is running up the tree and all. And I love to worship God in that kind of a cathedral with a blue sky above. And just nothing of man's handy work, nothing of which you can glory in the work of man.

Now, God said, hey, look, ever since I've been with you, I've been in a tent moving from place to place in a tent. And in all the time, did I ever say, build me a house of cedar? Did I ever ask for anything like that? No, I didn't. I'm content with a tent.

We've been praying what we should do here. We, of course, probably, we could use, let's put it that way, a much larger facility. It would be nice to be able to have just two services on Sunday morning.

As long as the Lord gives me strength, I love the three, I don't mind it. But it would be nice if we could have a larger church where we wouldn't have to put people over in the overflow auditoriums to watch on closed circuit TV. It'd be great if we could all be gathered together in one place to worship the Lord.

And we have the money that we could do it. And the board has been discussing. We've got the property and we've been discussing building.

But we more or less came to the conclusion that since we feel the coming of the Lord is so near, it would be better to take the money and use it in outreaches to get the gospel out to people than to spend it in a building. And so we can go through the inconvenience of having to put people over there and people, of course, fortunately, the weather is nice and some people are fortunate enough to sit outside. We've talked about getting some speakers like we had for the Easter sunrise service and put them out there so people could come and start sitting out there on the lawn.

And the overflow could just be out there on the lawn and you just sit out there and worship the Lord. We don't know what to do. We do need larger facilities and we're praying about them.

I even looked at some plastic cathedrals that is plastic domed kind of things. Pretty sharp, actually. And very inexpensive.

And, you know, they just take steel girders. It's sort of a glorified kind of a tent. And my wife doesn't like it.

But David desired to build a house for God. He said, hey, look, I'm living in this palace, this house of cedar, and God's living in a tent and I want to build a house. And Nathan said, oh, that's great.

Do what's in your heart. And God spoke to Nathan and said, go back to tell David not to build me a house. He can't do it.

I've been in a tent all the while. I got used to tent, sort of like it. I've never asked him to build me a house of cedar.

Now, knowing that this would be a disappointment to David, the Lord said to him, and thus saying to my servant David, oh, I like that. Oh, that God would say that my servant Chuck. Ooh, wouldn't that be neat? It would have God talk of you that way.

My servant. What a joy and what a privilege. Thus saith the Lord of hosts, I took you from the sheep coat, even from following the sheep, that you should be the ruler over my people, Israel.

And I have been with thee, whether so ever you have walked. I've cut off all your enemies from before thee. I've made thy name like the name of the great men that are in the earth.

Also, I will ordain a place for my people, Israel, and I will plant them and they shall dwell in their place and shall be moved no more. Neither shall the children of wickedness waste them anymore as at the

beginning. And since the time that I commanded judges to be over my people, Israel, moreover, I will subdue all thine enemies.

Furthermore, I tell thee that the Lord will build thee a house. You know, every once in a while, the Lord speaks to me of what he has done for me. And I just am overwhelmed.

And quite often when I start, you know, getting in my flesh a bit and think, oh, it'd be so nice to have this or, you know, oh, that would be great. The Lord speaks to me and say, hey, haven't I done enough for you already? Look what I've done. Aren't you satisfied? You want, I'll do more, but aren't you satisfied? Oh, Lord, so satisfied.

So satisfied. God just said, hey, David, look what I've done for you, man. Now, David was wanting to do something for God.

God says, no, I don't want you to do anything for me, David. Let me tell you what I've done for you. And let me tell you what I'm going to do for you.

You know, so often ministers are constantly telling people, you ought to be doing this for God. You ought to be giving more for God. You ought to be sacrificing more for God.

You ought to be praying more for God. You ought to be, you know, witnessing more for God. And they're always emphasizing what you ought to be doing for God.

God says, hey, hey, no, no. I want to tell you what I've done for you and what I want to do for you. It's interesting.

The New Testament really emphasizes what God has done for man. But we hear so little preaching on that. So much of the preaching is what man ought to be doing for God.

And you hear so little of what God has done for you. And yet the whole emphasis of the New Testament is what God has done for you. And so what I do for God is only a responding to what God has done for me.

You see, my natural response for what God has done for me is all God is looking for. Hey, He's done so much for me. I just respond to it.

That's the truest service. That's the truest praise. That's the truest worship that you can offer to God is just the responding to what He has done.

Knowing and responding to the work of God is the true motivation behind anything that you ever do for the Lord. You never should be doing out of a endeavor to obligate God to do for you. Now let's get out and really work for God so that God will bless and our church will grow.

Let's get out and praise the Lord tonight so God will bless us. You see, work so God will bless it. No, that's the opposite emphasis of the New Testament.

The emphasis of the New Testament is what God has done for you. Respond to it. Paul spends the first three chapters of the book of Ephesians telling the people what God had done for them.

Thanks be unto God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. According to His abundant mercy, who hath chosen us before the

foundations of the world and predestined that we should be adopted as sons and has redeemed us by His blood, even forgiven our sins, that we might have this glorious inheritance in Christ Jesus. And then He sealed us with His Holy Spirit of promise, all of what God had done for them.

And he spends three chapters telling them. Then after telling them all God has done, he said, now walk worthy of the calling. Respond to God.

Respond to the work of God. Peter emphasizes what God has done. Thanks be unto God.

You see, it always begins with thank God for what He has done. Thanks be unto God who hath begotten us again unto a living hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead to an inheritance that is incorruptible and undefiled and fades not away that is reserved in heaven for you who are kept by the power of God. All of that is what God has done for you.

You say, well, don't I have some part in there? Yeah, he gets to that. But notice he puts God's part first, never man's part first. Never is it man's part first.

It's always God's part first and then man's response to it. So looking at Peter again, thanks be unto God who hath begotten us again unto a living hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead to an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, fades not away, reserved in heaven for you who are kept by the power of God. That's all God's part.

And then he gives you your part through faith. So easy. Just believe it.

Just believe it. Oh, how glorious it is what God has done. And God begins to unfold for David.

Look, David, I took you from the sheep, from following me after the sheep. I made you the ruler over my people. And I've blessed you.

I've given you. I've subdued your enemies before you. I've established you in the land.

And if that's not enough, I'll even do more for you, David. And I'm going to do more because, David, I'm going to establish a house through you. My King is going to come.

David, you're going to be. From you, the Messiah is going to come. And as God began to tell David what he was going to do for him, it was too much for David.

He said, Oh, Lord, what can I say? What can I say? Saber Nerola said that when prayer reaches its ultimate, words are impossible. What can I say, God? Too much. The realization of what God has done for you.

And that's what we need to know. Paul even prayed them for the Ephesians that they might know that God might give them the spirit of wisdom and understanding. That they might know God.

And that they might know what was the hope of their calling. And the exceeding richness of God's grace towards them in Christ Jesus. And the exceeding power that God has made available to us.

Knowing what God has done is so important. And in those days, shepherds who will teach them the knowledge of God. And that's what the church needs today.

They need to hear more of what God has done for them rather than being pushed into works for God. Told what you ought to be doing for God. That's what you hear all over the place.

That's the wrong message. What we need to know is what God has done for us. To know God, His glory, His power, His beauty, His majesty, His goodness.

And then we respond to what God has done for us. Father, we thank you for what you have done for us. Your goodness, your blessings.

Lord, they're too much. You're too much. Lord, we love you and we thank you.

Oh, how we thank you, Lord, for your beautiful work that you have wrought. How we praise you, Lord, for that power of your spirit. That we see it work around us day by day as you are gathering day by day a mighty host as the host of God.

Oh, Lord, help us, help us to understand more fully how much you really do love us. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

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