

September 27, 2015

“Build The Sanctuary” (Based on a sermon by James May)

1 Chronicles 22:19

Now seek the LORD your God with all your heart and soul. Build the sanctuary of the LORD God so that you can bring the Ark of the LORD's Covenant and the holy vessels of God into the Temple built to honor the LORD's name."

We have been following the Journey of God's people in the Old Testament. It started with creation in the book of Genesis and with Adam and Eve and then Noah. From Noah there were 10 generations until we go from the Founders to Family; Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph. Which brought God's people to Egypt and eventually as slaves in captivity in Egypt. But then God sent Deliverers, Moses and Joshua and through them God leads His people into the Promised Land. There we enter into a time of Judges like Deborah, Gideon, Samson, and others. But the people are not satisfied to have judges and ask for a king. So begins the era of Kings; Saul, David, Solomon. The kingdom lasted 120 years: Saul 40 years, David 40 years, Solomon 40 years. After the death of Solomon the kings became more and more evil and followed the religion, gods, and practices of the world around them. The Kingdom became divided; a Northern Kingdom called "Israel" and a Southern Kingdom called "Judah." The Northern Kingdom lasted a little over 200 years and was destroyed by Assyria (721 B.C.). The Southern Kingdom lasted a little over 300 years, and was destroyed by Babylon (about 600 B.C.). But God did not give up on His people. He called the Rebuilders, Ezra and Nehemiah.

The exiles coming back from Babylonian captivity had little recollection of the days before the Assyrian and Babylonian invasions. They had never seen the glorious temple of Solomon. Jewish tradition says that Ezra was the author of 1 and 2 Chronicles. If he is, he wrote these books to reassure the returning exiles that God was still at work in the promises He had given. He compiles a history for the returning exiles so they will know their heritage. If 1 and 2 Kings was written to explain why the nation was attacked, and the people captured and brought into exile, 1 and 2 Chronicles were written to explain that the returning exiles were still the people of God.

A woman who attended our church many years ago, told me that when her grandchildren wanted to hear a story, at bed time when she was tucking them in, or any time, she would tell them true stories about herself, about her family. She would make them sound like a story book, she would start off with, "once upon a time, there was a little girl..." etc. but they were her life story or stories of her ancestors. Sometimes she'd end with, "and that little girl was... me!" And the children would say, "you were little girl, grandma?" She did that because she wanted the children to know their heritage, where they came from. Ezra was doing the same thing when he wrote 1 and 2 Chronicles.

So the previous 12 books of the Bible end with God's people in captivity. The two books of Chronicles retell the same story and end at the same point. 1 Chronicles is pretty much the same story as 2 Samuel and it's about King David. King David has

come down to the end of his days as King of Israel and will make his son, Solomon the new king.

You may remember a few weeks ago when we pointed out that David wanted to build a temple for the Lord. But David was not given permission to build the temple, even though he had a passionate desire to do so. It must have been a great disappointment for David!

David loved God. He was a man after God's own heart. His heart was to build God a house to dwell in and to make God's house the most magnificent building that mankind had ever seen.

Oh that we could have that same great desire that David had to build a sanctuary for the Lord, not in a building, but in us! How much do we desire to have a sanctuary in our lives in our hearts for the Lord? How much are we willing to give to him? What price will we be willing to pay to know the Lord in the way that we should?

1 Corinthians 6:19a

Don't you realize that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, who lives in you and was given to you by God?

I know that my greatest desire is to build a sanctuary in my life for God. A sanctuary is a sacred place; a consecrated spot; a holy place in me where God dwells.

It's a place in God, where we can live the abundant life.

It's a place in God where we are not easily swayed by the world, the flesh, and the devil and its temptations.

It's a place in God where (as Paul writes in Ephesians 4:14-15a)

We will no longer be immature like children. We won't be tossed and blown about by every wind of new teaching. We will not be influenced when people try to trick us with lies so clever they sound like the truth. Instead, we will speak the truth in love, growing in every way more and more like Christ.

It's a place of safety from the raging storms of life where I have complete rest because I know that my God is with me.

It's a place where I can live in the power that comes from the Holy Spirit to say no to sin and the things of this world that weigh me down, slows me down, or trips me up.

Do you believe that there is such a place that we can reach in God in this life?

I want it, do you? It sounds like a place of sanctuary to me. It sounds like a place in God that I can reach through God's grace where there is safety and rest.

We sing the little chorus that goes like this:

Lord prepare me to be a sanctuary

Pure and Holy; tried and true
With thanksgiving, I'll be a living
Sanctuary for you

Those are beautiful words, but that's all they are unless we have a true desire to build a sanctuary in our heart and soul as unto the Lord.

It is amazing what people will commit themselves to.

Meryl Streep once made a movie called *Ironweed*. In it she played a ragged derelict who dies in a cheap hotel room, and for more than half an hour before the scene she was gray with cold because she had been hugging a huge bag of ice cubes in an agonizing effort to experience how it feels to be a corpse. Now the camera begins to turn. Jack Nicholson, her derelict lover, sobs and screams and shakes her body. But through take after take--and between takes too--Meryl just lies there like an iced mackerel. Frightened, a member of the crew whispers to the director, Hector Babenco, "What's going on? She's not breathing!" Babenco gives a start. In Meryl's body there is absolutely no sign of life! He hesitates, then lets the scene proceed. Yet even after the shot is made and the set struck, Meryl continues to lie there, gray and still. Only after 10 minutes have passed does she slowly, slowly emerge from the coma-like state into which she has deliberately sunk. Babenco is amazed. "Now that," he mutters in amazement, "is acting! That is an actress!"

Or I would say, "now that is commitment." Meryl Streep is so dedicated to her acting that she wanted that death scene to look as real as possible. And she almost died trying to accomplish that. Many other actors may not have been willing to do what she did. Now, if she can put all that work into acting, what about our commitment to build a sanctuary for Christ?

Building that sanctuary requires a lot of work, a lot of dedication and a consecration that many are not willing to give. It doesn't happen just because we want it to, or because we profess it. There is a price to be paid in order to have that kind of relationship with Jesus.

If we are going to build a sanctuary in our lives, or if we are to be a sanctuary for the Lord like we sing about, there has to be a time of preparation and a time of hard work. Satan is not going to just roll over and let you build your life into a sanctuary without a fight. The world isn't going to stop affecting you and pulling you in a different direction, away from the Lord. You have to build in spite of all the devil will do and in spite of the drawing power of the things of this world. God will give you the grace, but you have to do the work. God will do his part, but you have to do your part as well.

But the one important factor that we must remember is this. Remember what David said to his son Solomon in [1 Chronicles 22:11,18a](#)

"Now, my son, may the LORD be with you and give you success as you follow his

directions in building the Temple of the LORD your God..."The LORD your God is with you,"

David promised that the Lord was with those who would build the temple. The Lord is with you too. The Lord is with all who will put their heart into building a sanctuary for Him in their heart and life. He is there to give direction. He is there to empower you. The sweet presence of the Holy Spirit is there to help you.

HOW CAN WE FAIL UNLESS WE DON'T TRY? HOW CAN WE FAIL IF WE DON'T QUIT? God is with us and it is his desire to see us build our lives into a sanctuary for Him to dwell in.

Look again at our text for today: 1 Chronicles 22:19
Now seek the LORD your God with all your heart and soul. Build the sanctuary of the LORD God...

We must set our heart upon the things of God and not the things of this world. Everything around us will cease to exist one day. All of the things that we give ourselves wholeheartedly to today, all these things sports, the business, the wealth, the popularity, the social gatherings; every bit of it, will one day be lost in eternity. All this must pass away and all things will be made new or some of them may still exist in eternity yet unstained by the power of sin.

We must set our soul to seek the Lord our God and not to seek the wealth of this world; not to seek the fame or fortune; not to seek only pleasure and the easy lifestyle; not to seek only what we desire; but our desire must be for the things of God and for God's will above all things.

Seek God first! How often does God have to remind us before we will learn to trust what He says?

Matthew 6:31-33

"So don't worry about these things, saying, 'What will we eat? What will we drink? What will we wear?' These things dominate the thoughts of unbelievers, but your heavenly Father already knows all your needs. Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, and live righteously, and he will give you everything you need.

I think that all of us would want to be a sanctuary for the Lord. All of us would want to live in that place of rest and safety in God. But, if we are to be that sanctuary, we must do the work to prepare ourselves. Now seek the LORD your God with all your heart and soul. Build the sanctuary of the LORD God... give your life to it. Commitment is the key.

1 Chronicles 22:19 continues, Build the sanctuary of the LORD God so that you can bring the Ark of the LORD's Covenant ...

We must bring the "Ark of the LORD's Covenant" into our lives, by allowing Jesus to

apply the Blood of the New Testament covenant to our lives. Let that blood wash away wrong desires, wrong visions and every sin that stops us.

The “Ark of the Covenant” in David’s day contained three things:

Hebrews 9:4

Inside the Ark were a gold jar containing manna, Aaron's staff that sprouted leaves, and the stone tablets of the covenant.

Jar of manna from Israel’s journey in the wilderness, Aaron’s rod/staff that budded; and the tablets of stone bearing the 10 Commandments.

Let me tell you what that means to you and I. We are to bring that “Ark of the Covenant” into our sanctuary as well and here’s what it means for us:

The jar of Manna represents the provision of God for his children in their journey through this life. Our lives must also show that we believe in God as our provider. It does little good to say this if we then throw aside everything of God to get what we want at all costs. What we do speaks far louder than what we say. Learn to trust in God for all you need.

Aaron’s rod that budded represents a new life, a new person if you will, that is given life in Christ. Our lives must exhibit that resurrection power of the new life in Christ. The fruits of our lives must be the fruits of righteousness, holiness and consecration to the Lord. The whole world, and especially our children must be able to see that our lives are budded in God like Aaron’s rod.

The 10 Commandments represent the Law of God, the Word of God and the Will of God in our lives. When we live our lives as though the Word of God has no effect, and we don’t obey the commandments of the Lord, and we simply seem to care less about the Will of God for our lives, what are showing others, what are we teaching our children? They must see that we fear God and Love God enough to obey his Word.

Matthew 5:16

Let your good deeds shine out for all to see, so that everyone will praise your heavenly Father.

That’s how we bring the Ark of the Covenant into our sanctuary.

the remainder of our text says 1 Chronicles 22:19 ... and the holy vessels of God into the Temple built to honor the LORD's name."

What are those holy vessels and how do we bring them into our sanctuary so that we are truly a sanctuary to the name of the Lord?

The vessels were all of the altars, lamp stand, incense burners, utensils, and all of the

other accessories that were needed to make the temple into the place where God would be honored.

What does that mean to you and I?

It means that everything in our lives must bring glory to God in some fashion.
We must learn to stay away from all that is unholy or has the appearance of evil.
We must learn to be with God so that we can be continually washed/cleansed in Jesus.
We must learn and pray that our actions will be motivated by love, our thoughts are taken captive to obey Christ, and our words are salted with grace
We must learn to let our light shine so that everyone around us knows that we are the Children of God separate from the world, yet a witness to the world.
We must learn to prayer, and to lift up the name of Jesus, in praise.
We must learn to always sacrifice our will to the will of God
We must learn to look to the perfect Word of God, and allowing it to continually cleanse us from sin and every weight of sin that so easily stops us.

In short, everything about our lives must show praise to God, who has brought us out of darkness, into His marvelous light, and set our feet on the "Rock" to stay.

That's how we make our lives into a sanctuary. That's how we find that high place in God where there is rest, peace and safety. And that's how we teach our children to build their own sanctuary in their lives for the Lord.

As we come to the close of this message, let me ask you, "Are you gathering the things in your life that it takes to be a sanctuary for the Lord? Are you getting rid of and staying away from all the things that keep your life from being a sanctuary? Are you building a life that is sanctified or set a part for God? Are you setting the example for your children and for generations to follow, as a true sanctuary unto the Lord?"

Finally, there may be some who hear this today who don't know Jesus as your Savior. There may be some who hear today and want Jesus but you have never knelt before God at an altar and given it all to Him; you have never surrendered yourself completely to Jesus and the will of God.

Jesus is here right now waiting for you. Your life is anything and everything but a sanctuary unto God. Your whole life has been squandered in doing your own thing and giving little, if any, thought to eternity. Jesus is here for you right now. Give your life to Him and start building your sanctuary for the Lord right now.