

David Begins Preparations for the Temple (1 Chronicles 22)

Building a House for God's Name: Studies in 1 & 2 Chronicles

I. INTRODUCTION

⁴They shall build up the ancient ruins; they shall raise up the former devastations; they shall repair the ruined cities, the devastations of many generations (Isa 61.4)

²Thus says the Lord of hosts: These people say the time has not yet come to rebuild the house of the Lord" ...⁷Thus says the Lord of hosts: Consider your ways. ⁸Go up to the hills and bring wood and build the house, that I may take pleasure in it and that I may be glorified, says the Lord. (Hag 1.2, 7-8)

- A. As the Lord has been at work in our church over the last season, he has been calling us into a focused season of ***building the house***. This is not only because of the particular story that the Lord has written for this spiritual family (a season to rebuild after a season of difficulty), but is also a call in light of where we find ourselves in the broader cultural and spiritual moment in our world.
- B. One of the specific ways that we are seeking to understand, strengthen, and establish what God has put before us in this season is by preaching through the books of Chronicles. These books were written to the exiles who had returned from the Babylonian captivity who were charged with repairing the house of the Lord that had been destroyed (see 1 Chr 9.1-2).
- C. The books are designed to inspire a people looking at the "ruins" to take up their place and work in partnership with God's purposes.
- D. We are currently walking through one of the most seismic and dramatic transitional periods in human history. At every level of our society (both in the West and globally) we are experiencing cultural, societal, political, economic, and relational unrest and uncertainty.
- E. At the same time, the church is undergoing one of the fastest and most comprehensive transitions seen in history as people are leaving the church *en masse*. Over the next decade, the church will likely only see an increase to the difficulties that we face, and the unique pressures that we are walking into.
- F. However, we see in the Scriptures a pattern to seek and pursue the face of God as the means through which we might experience renewal.
- G. God is inviting us to pursue a "new wineskin" together as a spiritual family. All over the earth he is stirring the hearts of his people to seek him, to pursue rightly ordered worship at the heart of our lives together.

⁷He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches... (Rev 2.7)

- H. God promised that he would again raise up David's tabernacle. In the New Testament, James understands that the Lord is fulfilling this promise through the expansion of the church (Acts 15.12-17). This demonstrates that the people of God are the dwelling place (tabernacle) of God that are to seek him through worship and prayer in order that his kingdom might be expanded in the world.

¹¹In that day I will raise up the booth of David that is fallen and repair its breaches, and raise up its ruins and rebuild it as in the days of old (Amos 9.11)

- I. This is a call for us to order our lives (both individually and corporately) around seeking the first things of the kingdom first. In seasons of hopelessness, the pattern for the people of God is to order our pursuits around putting worship and prayer at the center of our life together as the people of God. Corporately, this will include commitments in our instruction, our resources, our programming, etc.

- J. There is an invitation to press into the Lord (regardless of the cost) with a *spirit of repentance* (turning away from the world to the Lord) and a *spirit of pursuit* (seeking the Lord while he may be found). The promise of the Scripture is that God delights in mercy and steadfast love.

II. DAVID PREPARES SOLOMON TO BUILD THE TEMPLE

- A. The primary theme of 1 Chronicles 22 is David's preparation (materials, labor, and instructions) for Solomon to build the Temple as his successor to the throne of Israel.
- B. In 1 Chronicles 17, we saw that David desired to build a house for the Lord. However, as David recounts in this chapter, God would not permit David to build the temple because there was too much blood on his hands.

⁷David said to Solomon, "My son, I had it in my heart to build a house to the name of the Lord my God. ⁸But the word of the Lord came to me, saying, 'You have shed much blood and have waged great wars. You shall not build a house to my name, because you have shed so much blood before me on the earth.'" (1 Chr 22.7-8)

- C. Rather than draw back from his desire to see a house built for God's name, David reoriented his energy to making preparations to ready Solomon for the task.
1. David prepared the *labor* for the building of the temple (22.2, 15, 17-19). David secured, oriented, and administered the necessary manpower for the building of the temple. In the work that God calls his people to, our skills and gifts are essential and important parts. Although he works through anointing people to accomplish his task, he often does this in accordance with the skills, talents, and competencies that he has given us and we have cultivated.
 2. David prepared the *resources* for the building of the temple (22.3-4, 14). This was a costly endeavor that required resources and materials. David took less for himself (and likely took less for other elements of the kingdom's administration) in order to allocate financial resources toward the building of the house.
 3. David prepared Solomon's *heart* for the building of the temple (22.5, 7-13). David understood that Solomon was young and inexperienced (22.5) and therefore needed instruction in how to lead the people in the building of God's house. David also understood that the ultimate goal of the temple was not the building, but the worship that it represented. As the king, Solomon was to lead the people in obedience to the Lord's commandments through faith.

¹⁸And when [the king] sits on the throne of his kingdom, he shall write for himself in a book a copy of this law, approved by the Levitical priests. ¹⁹And it shall be with him, and he shall read in it all the days of his life, that he may learn to fear the Lord his God by keeping all the words of this law and these statutes, and doing them (Deut 17.18-19)

- D. ***The Lord be with you:*** David understood that it would only be through the empowering presence of God that the work in front of Solomon and the people would be accomplished. The task was too great, and the people were too insufficient in themselves to walk in the ways of the Lord. However, David declared that God would be with them, and prayed that he would grant understanding and wisdom along the way (22.12).
- E. ***Set your mind and heart to seek:*** One of the primary themes of Chronicles is the call to ***seek the Lord*** (cf. 1 Chr 16.11). We saw that when Saul did not seek the Lord it led him into treachery (1 Chr 10.13-14) and when David did not seek to obey according to the full commandment of God it led to judgment (1 Chr 13.7-9; 21.1-17). Now, Solomon and the people are called to set their hearts to seek after the Lord and his ways in the pursuit of building his house.
- F. ***Arise and work:*** Knowing and desiring to fulfill the commandment of the Lord (or the work that he has put before us) is not sufficient in itself. There is a call to ***arise*** ("get into action") and ***work*** (do the labor required).

III. PRINCIPLES FOR BUILDING THE HOUSE

A. ***Understanding the season:*** David understood that he was not permitted to build the house in the way he had desired. This did not deter him, nor did it cause him to despise the Lord or what God had given him to do. Rather, he set his gaze on preparations for a work that would outlive him.

1. In the different seasons of the world, we must understand “what time it is” in order to rightly apply our labors in the most effective way.
2. The men of Issachar functioned this way within a season of transition in the life of Israel.

³²Of Issachar, men who had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do. (1 Chr 12.32)

3. We must seek to have ears to hear what the Spirit is saying to our church as we seek to partner to build according to his plans and purposes.

B. ***The power of legacy work:*** One of the ways that God invited David to respond by not permitting him to build the temple was to invite him into a work that would outlive him.

1. Jesus compared the work of the kingdom to the slow work of planting seeds and fermentation.

³¹He put another parable before them, saying, “The kingdom of heaven is like a grain of mustard seed that a man took and sowed in his field. ³²It is the smallest of all seeds, but when it has grown it is larger than all the garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches.” ³³He told them another parable. “The kingdom of heaven is like leaven that a woman took and hid in three measures of flour, till it was all leavened.” (Matt 13.31-33)

2. We must ask the Lord to fill us with patience, with faith, and with hope. The work of sowing (or repairing the ruins) in the kingdom is a “generations” project. Although there will be times of joy-filled harvest, we must not lose heart in the seasons of tear-filled sowing.

⁵Those who sow in tears shall reap with shouts of joy! ⁶He who goes out weeping, bearing the seed for sowing, shall come home with shouts of joy, bringing his sheaves with him. (Ps 126.5-6)

C. ***The paradox of work:*** This passage brings us into a remarkably rich paradox related to the gift of work. We see here that the Lord must be with us *and* we see that we must set out to do actual work.

1. ***The Lord has to work (be with us):*** We must be brought face to face with our ***poverty of spirit***. As believers, we are called to give our time, energy, and efforts toward partnering with the grace of God in establishing his kingdom in the world. The very things we are laboring to see we are unable to accomplish in our own strength. This is true ***personally*** (salvation, sanctification, etc.), in our ***families*** (the flourishing of those around us, their maturity, salvation, etc.), in our ***ministry*** (effectiveness, power), and in our ***vocations*** (God-oriented results, i.e., his kingdom and will established).

2. ***We have to work:*** Yet, Christians are not exempt from work — even hard, exhausting, laborious work. We must reject the false implication that because God has to be with us (or he has show up) that would lead to passive engagement in the things before us. God has designed us to work, and to partner with him in accomplishing his purposes.

⁴Working together with him... (2 Cor 6.1)

3. ***What work we do matters:*** The work we give ourselves to must be in line with the season and the calling that God has before us. The results of our work are tied to the type of work we do.

⁷Do not be deceived: God is not mocked, for whatever one sows, that will he also reap. (Gal 6.7)