

Who's First to Step Up?
1 Chronicles 29:1-13
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Where do you go to meet God? I remember one time- about 20 years ago- when I was backpacking in a wilderness area in the mountains in southwestern Colorado. My friends were elsewhere, and I found myself in a meadow bursting with wildflowers and surrounded by dark green evergreens. That moment was one of several holy and sacred moments on my life, and I felt like Moses must have felt at Mt. Sinai- that I should take my shoes off because I was on holy ground.

There are other places, for me and for most of us. For King David, he felt that way in the presence of the Ark of the Covenant; when it was brought into Jerusalem, David danced with ecstatic abandon... it was a time of incredible worship. One of David's passions was to build a magnificent temple to honor God- but that task was denied him; instead, it was left to his son, Solomon. David knew that it was time to pass the baton; it had come to him from Moses to Joshua, through several judges to Samuel, through Saul, and now through him to Solomon.

We can sense the divine call echoing through the years, and now being passed along from one generation to the next; almost all of 1 Chronicles 28 is King David explaining to Solomon the importance of what's being done- even to the point of David giving Solomon inspired blueprints for what's to be built. In 1 Chronicles 29, David turns to the assembled people of God. I'll be reading out of The Message, which is a

contemporary rendering of the ancient Hebrew; follow along as I read beginning at verse one: (show 1 Chronicles 29:1-5)

While Alan reads:
comment on verse 1... “a place for people to meet each other... a place for God to meet us...”
verse 3.... “...my personal fortune...”
verse 5... “join in the giving (consecrate himself today to the Lord)

David is going all in, and devoting all his wealth to the place where people can gather so that God can meet them much as God had met David so many times before. Almost as God had given Moses the Ten Commandments, so God has given David a calling that he is now passing along to the people. Peterson translates verse 5 as “who among you is ready and willing to join in the giving?” Our pew Bibles puts it like this: “Now, who is willing to consecrate himself today to the LORD?” (close scripture slide)

Friends, it is like that with our Adventure of Faith. This place has been built for us to gather together, and for God to meet us here. As a sanctuary for God’s people, it calls forth from us sacrificial giving in recognition of what God has sacrificed for us; gratitude for all that God has entrusted to us; devotion to what we know to be the good and right way to live. People have met God here; life-events take place here- weddings, and funerals and baptisms; tears and laughter and prayer happen here... we’re on holy ground, and in a holy place. When we pledge our resources to support it, we’re making a statement of faith tangible.

I’m no King David, and can’t give tons of gold and silver to support Crestview- but I do tithe my income every year. Every three years, my wife Connie and I dig a little deeper to support the building fund. Given the economic times, we’re going to dip into our retirement funds- \$10,000 worth- in extra giving to support this place. I know that

some of you can do much more than that... and others not so much... but there is something very special about giving sacrificially to supporting God's house. Let me read on to the response of the Hebrew people. (show 1 Chronicles 29:6-9)

While Alan reads

Comment on Verse 6... "ready and willing..."

Verse 9... "people full of a sense of celebration (people rejoiced at the willing response of their leaders- NIV)"

Verse 9... "King David was exuberant..."

There are some things I'd like to note in these couple of verses: First- that folks were willing. Giving is always first a spiritual matter- not an economic matter. Giving emerges from a heart that knows that God has blessed us, and that it is never as much a matter of how much to give out of what we have... but rather how much to keep. You've been blessed, and as a congregation, we have been blessed enough to not only take care of God's house- we've got enough to share with others around us.

Secondly, the leaders stepped up first. I've spoken with some of the leaders in this church, and I can tell you that many of them are willing to step up. Some of them are the wealthy among us, a lot are not; the principle in giving isn't equal giving- its equal sacrifice. But- these are the early adopters... these are people who've caught the vision of this place as a light on a hill to our community; these are the people who are excited that we're becoming more outreach-oriented- more missional; these are the people who are going to show up next Saturday, and bring their friends with them... and my sense is that while they may be giving sacrificially, they are giving "willingly" in consecration to the Lord. These are the people who are beginning to sense the stirrings of the Holy Spirit, and are considering what's going on around them, and how they can help make a difference.

My question to you- are you among them? Who's going to be first to step up? Are you willing imitate Christ, and flesh out the love of God in tangible ways... through your giving, through your caring, through your involvement? Whenever I sense that- and I've been sensing a lot of that sort of consecration around here lately- I find myself identifying with King David; scripture tells us that he was *exuberant!* (close scripture slide)

David didn't turn around to praise the people for their giving; listen to David's prayer: (show 1 Covenant 29:10-13)

David was well-known for his musical skills, and I suspect that this prayer may have been a song of praise. "*Praise be to you, O LORD, God of our father Israel, from everlasting to everlasting....*" David knew that what had just unfolded was this generation's declaration of faith, and that it was connected with generations gone by. "... *for everything in heaven and earth is yours; ... wealth and honor come from you...*" All that we have, all that we give, all that is emerges from the goodness of God. Can't you see David, looking out over all that had been given, and praising God: "...*here we are, O God, our God, giving thanks to you, praising your splendid Name.*" (close scripture slide)

(Adventure of Faith logo slide) Next week, we'll be having but one worship service- at 10:00. Midway through the service, our children and our youth will bring their portion of what they've raised through our Celebration efforts the previous day to join the other money raised the previous day to help feed people and help families in need; our young people will be the first to step up... after all, they are the next generation who we want to make ready for the way others have passed the baton to us. A bit later,

members of Crestview will be asked to bring their 3-year Adventure of Faith pledges forward, and place them on the communion table- all to the glory of God. Then, like the Hebrew people of old, we're going to sing a song of praise to God- from whom all blessings flow.

I've asked Rodney and JT Tarter- our new 11:00 worship service leader- to lead us in learning that song for next week. Next week, we want to sing *exuberantly* in praise to God- so please give yourself over the learning this tune today.

We are so very grateful for this Crestview place- where we can gather together, and where we can come to meet a living God who comes to meet us... let's sing to his glory... Rodney, JT...