

Worship: Designed to Include Everyone

Kenwood Baptist Church

Pastor David Palmer

October 7, 2018

TEXT: 1 Chronicles 22:1-19



It's a beautiful sight to look out and see a whole group of people standing with their heads bowed, looking at their Bibles and following the text as it is being read. It really is. It really looks beautiful, because we turn to God's Word to know who He is and to know what He requires of us. This morning, we continue in our fall series on worship. Worship is our highest calling; it is our greatest joy. Worship is the community gathering where we come together. We sing of God's character, we remember His great saving actions, we who are prone to forget. It is a place where we find forgiveness and the power of repentance. Worship is the center of our life together, and in Scripture, we see it is designed to include everyone. Last Sunday, we looked at David's discovery of the grace of God, the staggering grace of God that is equivalent to our need for forgiveness. The Lord showed David, after the great sin of counting the people, this place of the threshing floor where he was to build an altar, the place of forgiveness discovered and found. Our passage this morning may seem at first glance not to have a lot to do with all of us, but let me tell you that it actually has a tremendous amount to do with us, because this text teaches us that God's house, the place of worship, the gathering together, cannot happen without full participation. It doesn't exist without full participation; it doesn't function without full participation; and we see a profound display of how God's plan for worship is not a solo endeavor. Worship is a verb; it is not a noun, and worship cannot happen alone. In this text, we will see how this great endeavor, this immense undertaking, is actually accomplished. So, keep

your Bible open to 1 Chronicles 22. My prayer this morning is that we would move together through this passage to see that, in God's great economy, all of us have a role to play.

David begins with the announcement in 1 Chronicles 22:1:

“Here shall be the house of the LORD God and here the altar of burnt offering for Israel.”

It will be in this location. It is an immense undertaking, a plan that will require everyone in order to be successful. When David sees this place, that here will be the gathering, that here will be the church, that here will be the location of the structure for the entire people to gather into God's presence, David begins to make preparations for the accomplishment of this act. He begins in 1 Chronicles 22:2, by gathering, the ESV says, *the resident aliens*, which sounds a little bit like a disparaging term. These are the foreigners who are living in the land, but these are skilled workers. So, David's first task is to gather together skilled labor for such an undertaking. Secondly, in 1 Chronicles 22:3, David gathers great quantities of raw materials: iron for nails in the doors of the gates; bronze in quantities that cannot even be weighed. David next turns to his son. David seeks to confer and communicate leadership for this great task, to build the sanctuary. We might say, to grow the church. David says in 1 Chronicles 22:5:

“Solomon my son is young and inexperienced, and the house that is to be built for the LORD must be exceedingly magnificent, of fame and glory throughout all lands. I will therefore make preparation for it.”

A part of that preparation is to instruct his son carefully, and so, in 1 Chronicles 22:7, David speaks to Solomon in private, with a challenge of summons to him. It's important for us to remember how old Solomon is at this point. Solomon is 18 years old. Our son Jonathan just celebrated his 17th birthday, so you can think of our son. Solomon was just a little bit older than our son. He is 18 years old. What do you tell an 18-year-old who is going to be in charge of the nation and responsible for leading God's people to build a house in honor of God's name, a house that will be exceedingly beautiful? It will be a structure that will draw the attention of the nations by its beauty, but, most importantly, by the presence of the living God. David speaks to Solomon in 1 Chronicles 22:7 and tells him:

“My son, I had it in my heart to build a house to the name of the LORD my God.”

But, he continues in 1 Chronicles 22:8:

“But 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.’”

Aren't you glad that God's great purposes are not confined to a single generation? Aren't you glad that God has significant kingdom work parceled out across the generations? The Lord told David in 1 Chronicles 22:9:

“Behold, a son shall be born to you who shall be a man of rest. I will give him rest from all his surrounding enemies. For his name shall be Solomon, and I will give peace and quiet to Israel in his days.”

Solomon in Hebrew is *Shelomo*. The Lord says: *“I will give him peace,”* which is also a play on his name: *“His name will be Shelomo, and I will give him shalom. He will be a man where there is rest in the land, and this time of rest will allow for the construction of the sanctuary. There is only one sanctuary in Israel: one God, one sanctuary. This son, the Lord told David, will build a house. He will inherit the kingship, and so now, if you have an 18-year-old son with the task of this magnitude, what will you tell him?”*

Jonathan and I just celebrated our birthdays, and I was thinking back to earlier years when I was swinging him in the playset in the back of the church. He was a very young guy, maybe five or six, and as I was swinging him, he turned to me and said, “Dad, tell me some stuff.” Okay. I said, “What kind of stuff?” and he said, “You know, adult stuff.” I thought: “Wow, okay!” and all the sudden, it just rushed through my mind, “What if this was the last time that I would ever speak with my son? What would I tell him?” So I began to pour out my heart as he was swinging. He wasn't going anywhere. He was catching about half what I said, so repeated myself often. I told him, “Jonathan, stay close to God. Read His Word. Build your life in obedience to Him. As you grow, you will discover there are great dangers in the world.” I told him a few of those dangers, and at one point he turned to me and said, “You know, Dad, that's why I'm going to stay home.”

You know, God is at work in this moment, and so David senses this opportunity to instruct his son, and what does he tell him? He tells his son what he really needs to be successful, and we all need to hear this. It's woven into us that we want to succeed, we want to do well, but we don't really know how. We often tell our children: “If you really want to be successful, what you really need is marketable skills,” and that's our top message. “What you really need is a great score on these standardized tests.” “What you really need is a résumé of experiences so that you are attractive to the world.” Let's look at what David tells his son.

The first thing he needs to be successful is the presence of God in his life. That's what we need more than anything. He says in 1 Chronicles 22:11:

“Now, my son, the LORD be with you, so that you may succeed in building the house of the LORD your God, as He has spoken concerning you.”

This is the first great imperative. We need ***the presence of the Lord***. God's presence is determinative of our success. Secondly, he prays for his son in 1 Chronicles 22:12:

“Only, may the LORD grant you discretion and understanding, that when He gives you charge

over Israel you may keep the law of the LORD your God.”

We need insight and discretion. We need ***understanding that comes from God***. Our children need these things more than anything, and need them too. We need God's presence in our lives. We need insight that comes from Him. We need understanding that comes from the Lord, and insight, discretion, and understanding that come from God to lead us to a heart that is disposed to obey God. That's what we need to be successful. David continues and tells his son in 1 Chronicles 22:13:

“Then you will prosper if you are careful to observe the statutes and the rules that the LORD commanded Moses for Israel. Be strong and courageous. Fear not; do not be dismayed.”

Why do you need to be strong and courageous? Because there will be circumstances in your life that will require courage. There will be great obstacles that come up.

Sometimes modern or postmodern parents used to be nicknamed *helicopter parents* because we hover over, ready to swoop down and rescue from danger, anticipating anything that might actually shape our children's character and try to remove it so it's all a smooth path. Lately, I've noticed a semantic shift away from helicopter parents to another not very complementary image. Parents now are being called *snowplow parents*, which means they place their children in front of the snowplow, and they just push them around town into all kinds of different activities. The children are rolling around and tumbling on the streets, picking up dirt and salt and debris. They're being pushed. Friends, brothers, sisters, what our children need, what we need, is God's presence. We need insight and understanding, and they come from God. We need God's presence to lead us to a heart of obedience. We need strength and courage, because there is difficulty and adversity. David tells Solomon as well, *“Fear not, do not be dismayed.”* There will be times in your life when the challenge will be so great that you will be crushed by it. Sociologists now are testing for resilience as one of the most important qualities for people to be successful, because there will be difficult times. You'll be overwhelmed, but the real issue is: Will you get up again? The Scriptures say that a righteous man falls seven times, but keeps getting up. David tells his son in 1 Chronicles 22:14:

“With great pains I have provided for the house of the LORD 100,000 talents of gold, a million talents of silver, and bronze and iron beyond weighing, for there is so much of it; timber and stone, too, I have provided. To these you must add.”

These are staggering amounts, some of the largest amounts of money ever recorded to be assembled by a king in the ancient world. Do you remember what a talent is? It is featured prominently in one of our Lord's parables. A talent is a unit of measure of 75 pounds, so this was 100,000 seventy-five pound units of gold. It's difficult to even calculate this amount in modern terms. Some commentators estimate this is, at a minimum, one and a half billion dollars that David has gathered. If you tell your 18-year-old son or daughter: “I've put together

a little something to set aside for you, and I want you to do well. I've made preparation and I've tucked away a little bit. I've got a billion and a half dollars under the mattress, and under your sister's mattress, I've got a million talents of silver, which you can't even reckon." But notice what David says. This helps us appreciate the scale and grandeur of the structure that is to be built. I love what David adds at the end. David says to Solomon. *"To these you must add."* If the next generation is going to lead and be equipped and empowered and reminded of the necessity of God's presence, insight, understanding, obedience to the Lord, strength, courage, resolve, and resilience, they also need to be challenged that their resources, their contributions, are essential. Solomon will not succeed if he just spends the inheritance. He receives it and honors it, but he must add to it.

Lastly, David tells him in 1 Chronicles 22:15:

"You have an abundance of workmen: stonecutters, masons, carpenters, and all kinds of craftsmen without number, skilled in working gold, silver, bronze, and iron. Arise and work! The LORD be with you!"

He tells Solomon he has an abundance of workmen, the raw materials he needs, and then he tells his son to get up and just do it. Get up and accomplish what God is asking of you. This is a word for all of us. God has a work for each of us to do, and God's Word calls us to do it. As the passage continues, David doesn't just gather materials and work, and he doesn't just instruct his son, but he also knows that Solomon cannot accomplish this alone. In God's great kingdom, endeavors are never meant to be accomplished alone. In 1 Chronicles 22:17, David commands the leaders of the people to help, and so he includes the leaders. He tells them as a group in 1 Chronicles 22:19:

"Now set your mind and heart to seek the LORD your God. Arise and build the sanctuary of the LORD God, so that the ark of the covenant of the LORD and the holy vessels of God may be brought into a house built for the name of the LORD."

God is to be placed at the center of our life together.

Not only does David charge Solomon, not only does he commission or command the leaders to help, but in 1 Chronicles 23–27, David organizes the entire congregation to assist in the accomplishment of this great endeavor. We won't look at this in detail, but it is deceptive. As you start 1 Chronicles 23, you think: "Oh, what is this list of names and people? But as you read through these chapters, you realize that what's happening is that David is organizing the entire congregation for full participation. In 1 Chronicles 23, David organizes the Levites and divisions for specific responsibilities. In 1 Chronicles 24, he organizes the sons of Aaron for priestly duties at the altar, for speaking, and teaching, and officiating. In 1 Chronicles 25, he organizes a rotation of the worship team as musicians and singers. In 1 Chronicles 26, he plans the

gatekeepers who function as the iron age equivalence of ushers, greeters, and the security team. In 1 Chronicles 27, he organizes the finance team to oversee the giving and even includes those attentive to the membership, who are charged with keeping track of the genealogical records. These chapters show us that the church is built to worship God when everyone participates. At the end of 1 Chronicles, we come to chapters 28 and 29, and if you want to flip forward, we see the last public scene of David's life and reign. The last public scene is after the whole congregation is organized. David assembles the people at Jerusalem. He addresses all the people in 1 Chronicles 28:2: *"Hear me, my brothers and my people. . ."* Then, in 1 Chronicles 28:9-10, David commissions his son publicly:

"And you, Solomon my son, know the God of your father and serve Him with a whole heart and with a willing mind, for the LORD searches all hearts and understands every plan and thought. If you seek Him, He will be found by you, but if you forsake Him, He will cast you off forever. Be careful now, for the LORD has chosen you to build a house for the sanctuary; be strong and do it."

He commissions Solomon that the Lord has chosen him to reign, to build the house, and to establish his kingdom. He gives public authority to the next generation.

Lots of leaders wait too late to give leadership to others. When you are on your deathbed is not the right time to mentor. Many kings in the history of the world have waited until it's too late, and there is this conflict of succession. David publicly brings his son forward and says he is going to be the king. Now, David speaks to Solomon in a scene that recalls Moses' speaking to Joshua. He says in 1 Chronicles 28:9:

"And you, Solomon my son, know the God of your father and serve Him with a whole heart and with a willing mind, for the LORD searches all hearts and understands every plan and thought."

It's a play on Solomon's own name in the original text. Just as Solomon, *Shelomo*, would be a man of *shalom*, David now tells Solomon to serve God with a heart, *shalem*, with a whole or complete heart, undivided. Be careful to do what God has required of you in your generation, to build a house for the sanctuary.

Then David does something remarkable. He gives him the plan. He gives him the blueprints. It's a plan of the sanctuary, its upper rooms and inner chambers. It's the organizational flow chart, for the division of the priests and the work of the ministry. It's a detailed description of the vessels, even of the cherubim that spread their wings over the Ark of the Covenant, and David tells Solomon where he acquired the plan. In 1 Chronicles 28:19, David says:

"All this He made clear to me in writing from the hand of the LORD, all the work to be done according to the plan."

The Lord showed David the structure. This is a divine design, and next Sunday, Pastor Scott will show us how the temple structure is heaven on earth, architecturally. It's the same language that God told Moses on Mount Sinai, that he was to build the tabernacle according to everything he saw on the mountain. He looked up, and he saw God's dwelling place. The tabernacle was to be like a portable Mount Sinai. It was to be a scale model, if you will, of heaven itself. It is no small thing when we gather together. In 1 Chronicles 18:20, David reminds Solomon to be strong and courageous and actually do the work:

“Be strong and courageous and do it. Do not be afraid and do not be dismayed, for the LORD God, even my God, is with you. He will not leave you or forsake you.”

Then, David's last public act displaying what it is like to be a king after God's own heart is to lead by example. David leads by example in 1 Chronicles 29, his last public acts in the Book of Chronicles. David speaks to the people, and he says in 1 Chronicles 29:1:

“Solomon my son, whom alone God has chosen, is young and inexperienced, and the work is great, for the palace will not be for man but for the LORD God.”

The work is great; it is a great task to build this sanctuary.

So, David leads by example with a stunning generosity. David says he has provided for the house. Through his function and capability as King, and his immense resources, David gathered together raw materials and skilled labor. But then, David says in 1 Chronicles 29:3-5a:

“In addition to all that I have provided for the holy house, I have a treasure of my own of gold and silver, and because of my devotion to the house of my God I give it to the house of my God: 3,000 talents of gold, of the gold of Ophir, and 7,000 talents of refined silver, for overlaying the walls of the house, and for all the work to be done by craftsmen, gold for the things of gold and silver for the things of silver.”

David's own personal treasure, he gives willingly. This is the biblical idiom for *free will*. Free will in the Bible doesn't mean options. It doesn't mean Raisin Bran or Grape Nuts? Free will in the Bible doesn't mean, do I buy this cologne or that one; this car or that one? Free will in the Bible is so much more exciting. Free will in the Bible is when the Holy Spirit comes upon you and you say: “Everything I have I been given by God, and He can use it however He wants!” Oh, is that freeing! I want that! “Lord, use my car.” Our guest last night, Elie Haddad and I talked about how the church is growing in the Middle East, and Ellie said, “I’m not really into tithing.” At first I thought, “Hey. Wait a minute!” Then Elie said, “You know, everything that we have we received from God, and all that should be available for God's use.” I said to him, “That would change our budgeting process!” That's freedom, friends! All that I have, I've received from the Lord, and so whatever He asks of me is rightfully His. Maybe we rightly think of tithing as a minimum, but whatever we give, David leads by example and gives generously for the work. Then he looks out, leading by example, and says in 1 Chronicles 19:5b:

“Who then will offer willingly, consecrating himself today to the LORD?”

I love that word *consecrate*, to dedicate yourself to God. The biblical idiom for that is to *fill your hand*, literally. You fill your hand by grabbing ahold of what God wants you to do, and if you don't take hold of what God wants you to do, then you'll fill your hand with something else. Remember, the average American touches their smart phone 5,000 times a day. That's a lot of filling the hand, isn't it? Well, David says: “Who will willingly offer?” The people, astonishingly, do it, and then the leaders come forward and make a free will offering, and it's generous. Then, in 1 Chronicles 29:9, we read:

“Then the people rejoiced because they had given willingly, for with a whole heart they had offered freely to the LORD. David the king also rejoiced greatly.”

The people offer freely, with a whole heart. They're not guilted; they are not manipulated. They are given the opportunity of real freedom, and God's house begins to be constructed.

When David sees this response, he leads the people in worship. Worship is designed to include everyone. David blesses the Lord in 1 Chronicles 29:9-18:

“Blessed are you, O LORD, the God of Israel our father, forever and ever. Yours, O LORD, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the victory and the majesty, for all that is in the heavens and in the earth is Yours. Yours is the kingdom, O LORD, and You are exalted as head above all. Both riches and honor come from You, and You rule over all. In Your hand are power and might, and in Your hand it is to make great and to give strength to all.

And now we thank You, our God, and praise your glorious name. . . O LORD our God, all this abundance that we have provided for building You a house for Your holy name comes from Your hand and is all Your own. . . O LORD, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, our fathers, keep forever such purposes and thoughts in the hearts of Your people, and direct their hearts toward You.”

These are exciting days in the kingdom of God. If you weren't able to be here last night, let me encourage you to watch the video as soon as it's available. It was such a powerful living witness of how God is working in the Middle East. In the midst of societal upheaval, political change, God is working, and He is using the church, drawing the hearts of men and women and children to Himself and using the church. The church is growing because the churches have shifted their mentality from being internally focused to externally, to actually loving their enemies, to having a missions' mindset—that they don't exist for themselves, of living out the ethics of the kingdom and pursuing what Elie called “transforming initiatives of actually living in ways that change the situation.”

First Chronicles 22 calls us in that spirit, where worship is designed to include everyone. It should be done with excellence and display the glory of God. Worship includes everyone, where

each generation has a role and responsibilities so that the work can be accomplished. Brothers and sisters, I want to challenge you to generosity in giving. Our stewardship team challenged us this September as we started our fiscal year to increase our giving. If each giving unit of Kenwood would increase their monthly giving by \$20, then, by their projection, we would meet our budget. No questions. That's really not a very large amount, but for that to succeed it would mean that each giving unit does that. We are going to do that as a family. We are actually going to do a little bit more than that, because I want to take seriously a leading by example. We are excited to do that. God is working in and through this congregation. We have 28 students safely returning from a mountain while we are gathering in worship right now. We have a team that's en route to Ecuador right now, serving Christ. I see more and more of you straining forward to take hold of this missions mindset that God is reaching people through me, that God is touching those who don't yet know Christ through me.

This place of worship doesn't exist just for us. It is a mission base. We had a brand-new believer from a closed-access country here last night. I saw another man from the Middle East who had come to trust Christ recently. He was here Wednesday for discipleship. I see us growing and reaching out, but for this to be accomplished, for the church to grow, it will require the participation of all of us. I don't want to guilt you into doing that. Guilt is a short-term motivator. I want the Holy Spirit to come upon you and upon me in such a way that we experience the great freedom of obeying God.

Amen.