

Let's believe God to perform the supernatural in the lives of our people as they prepare to give!

Love and blessings as we "Build the Dream!"

Pastor Heard

COMMITMENT SUNDAY

"From His Hands Through Ours"

Text:

1 Chronicles 29:14 (NIV) - "But who am I and who are my people that we should be able to offer as generously as this? Everything comes from You and we have given You only what comes from Your hand."

- A. Everything we have comes from God—not just **to** our hands, but **through** our hands as we learn to give as He does.
1. Didn't Mike, Tony and Jeff do an incredible job today? I don't even need to preach after what they had to say. Their testimonials of God's faithfulness moved me!
 2. Notice that the title of our message is: **through** our hands, not **to** our hands!
 3. The two-day event in 1 Chronicles 29 was David's farewell address as King as he transferred leadership to Solomon.
 - a. The people had brought their gifts for the temple David had not been permitted to build. His son, Solomon, would have the responsibility, the privilege, and the task of erecting God's temple.
 - b. Now that God's choice of Solomon as king was clear, the people prepared to bring their offerings to build the temple.

4. In this chapter, David admitted that Solomon was still young and inexperienced to accomplish such a great work.
 - a. I'm amazed at how God often places huge responsibilities and promises upon youthful shoulders.
 - b. The word for 'temple' in verse 1 is *palace* or *palatial structure*, reminding us that the building was intended for God, the One who was enthroned over Israel.

B. Notice these **seven principles** employed by Israel to build the temple of God.

1. They made provision for their giving.
 - a. The key word in this chapter is "prepared" or *making provision*:
1 Chronicles 29:2-3 - "Now with all my ability I have provided for the house of my God the gold for the things of gold, and the silver for the things of silver, and the bronze for the things of bronze.... I have already provided for the holy temple."
 - b. **1 Chronicle 29:16** - "O Lord our God, all this abundance that we have provided to build You a house for Your holy name, it is from Your hand, and all is Yours."
 - c. **1 Chronicles 29:19** - "...to build the temple for which I have made provision."
 - d. With advance preparation, our gifts to God should always come first—not from what is left over.
 - e. David would have never tossed a few bills or coins in the collection plate as it passed by. "We have made plans, preparation, and provision for our gifts to God."
 - f. His generosity to the building program was based on his love for God and His dwelling. Because the temple would honor God, David did all he could to provide for that purpose.
 - g. The gifts from God's people should always be with intention and purpose.

2. Giving your money is the same as giving yourself.
 - a. **1 Chronicles 29:5** - "Who then is willing to consecrate himself this day to the Lord?"
 - b. Their gifts were tied to their hearts. It wasn't just an offering for God's house, it was an outpouring of themselves. It was a symbol of the whole-hearted worship that would soon follow in the sanctuary.
 - c. For many years, we have enjoyed a great house of worship on Wallisville Road. Most of you, like me, who came after the erection of this building are enjoying the sacrifice of others.
 - d. More than bricks and mortar, or gold and silver, our gifts represent our worship to the Lord.
3. We should give with a willing heart.
 - a. **1 Chronicles 29:6** - "Then the rulers of the fathers' household, and the princes of the tribes of Israel, and the commanders of thousands and of hundreds, with the overseers over the king's work, offered willingly...."
 - b. **1 Chronicles 29:9** - "The people rejoiced at the willing response of their leaders, for they had given freely and wholeheartedly to the Lord. David the king also rejoiced greatly."
 - c. As king, David could have levied a tax to finance the work of the temple. Instead, he decreed that the collections be based upon the willing and generous hearts of God's people.
 - d. It's one thing to give generously, but another to give willingly. Throughout history, kings have forcefully collected money from the people. But David refused to have tax collectors lurking in ambush or for the army to make door-to-door collections. No 'alphabet soup' agencies, like the IRS or FBI, forced the people to give.

- e. Their giving was unto the Lord. Not only were they prepared and generous, they were also willing. Giving was—and still is a form of worship.
 - f. **1 Chronicles 29:17** - "...with joy I have seen Your people, who are present here, make their offerings willingly to You."
4. Their giving was based on "follow-the-leader."
- a. The first gifts were from the king's personal treasure.
1 Chronicles 29:3 - "...the treasure I have of gold and silver." This was not a governmental treasure; it was the property of the king. Because David gave generously, first the leaders, and then the people were inspired to do the same. The clan, tribal leaders, political and military officers followed their leader's example of giving to the temple building fund (verse 6).
 - b. It is a proven leadership principle that generosity must have an example.
 - c. Kings were not always generous—even those who ruled God's people. Today, the world points to the greed of a few and then labels all church leaders as being motivated by money. But that isn't true. Most ministers work hard and give freely.
 - d. David's leaders gave enormously. After giving 190 tons, they donated another 185 pounds of gold, and about 375 tons of silver. In fact, the leaders gave twice as much as David!
 - e. Every staff person at CT is required to honor God with their giving. If the pastor and staff are not willing to give over and above their tithe, how could we expect that from our members? When our people give, they are simply following their leaders.
5. In reality, it **all** belongs to God.
- a. Isn't that what we have been learning in this stewardship campaign? If blessings have come from His hands to ours, all our offerings were first given to us by God.

- b. As David said in verse 14, it **all** belongs to God: "But who am I and who are my people that we should be able to offer as generously as this?"
- c. While observing the abundance of their offerings, David said, "How can we give like this? Because all things come from You, God, and from Your hand we have given to You."
- d. John Maxwell tells the story of a father asking his son, "Is there anything you want to do, just you and me,....right now?"
"Yes," the boy said with a big smile. "I want some French fries from McDonald's."

His father thought to himself, "If that's what he wants, that's what he'll get." Even before they reached McDonald's, the boy was anticipating the taste of those salty fries. As the order was being placed, the boy's heart really began to pound when his dad added, "Make it a super-size fry."

While the dad paid for the fries and a drink, the boy could hardly wait to begin eating those golden, hot fries. The father's heart was so happy for the boy's enthusiasm about something so simple, he reached for a couple of the fries himself. But to his disappointment, the boy quickly covered the fries with his hands as if building a fort, and said, "No, these are mine!"

His dad couldn't believe what was happening. Without taking a single thing, he sat there in stunned silence, reflecting on his son's selfish attitude. How ungrateful for him to refuse the provider of the fries only a couple of them. All he wanted was to share the boy's blessing that **he** had provided. Looking down at his son, the dad said, "Don't you realize I'm the one who bought these for you? Who owns your French fries?"

- e. Now, let's reverse the characters. God doesn't need our French fries. He could so easily bury us in whatever may delight our

hearts. But what He **does** want is for us to be a giver—as He is. All He asks is a small part of what He has given us!

f. In **1 Chronicles 29:10-17**, the people acknowledged that God is the source of every blessing: in verse 11, “everything;” in verse 14, “Everything comes from You;” verse 16, “All that belongs to You.” David understood that all they were giving had first come from God's hands; they were simply returning to the original Giver what had been handed to them.

g. Are you and I being stingy with the Giver of all that we have—and forgetting that everything belongs to God?

h. Did you hear about the scientist who was convinced that mankind no longer needed God? “Today,” he said, “we can clone animals, transplant hearts and do all kinds of things that were once considered to be miraculous.”

God listened patiently and then said, “All right. To see whether or not you still need Me, why don't we have a man-making contest?” “Okay, great!” the scientist exclaimed.

“Now, we're going to do this just as I did in the old days with Adam,” God said.

“That's fine,” replied the scientist as he bent over to scoop up a handful of dirt.

“Whoa,” God said, shaking His head. “Not so fast there, pal. You go get your own dirt.”

i. The point is this: you can do nothing without using what God has created. Whether it's the dirt beneath your feet, the strength of your arms, or the wisdom of your mind, **everything** is a gift from the God who created you in His own image.

6. Our gifts must be entrusted to faithful administrators.

- a. **1 Chronicles 29:8** - "Whoever possessed precious stones gave them to the treasury of the house of the Lord, in care of Jehiel the Gershonite."
 - b. Jehiel, an important Levite of the clan of Gershon (23:8), was a member of the family linked to the temple treasuries (26:21). The significance of this reference to the temple treasury should not be overlooked. The gift of administrative oversight, especially financial management, is an important service to the on-going work of God.
 - c. I am shocked at the mismanagement of funds, from the national level down, where only a small portion given to a certain cause was properly used. So often, it is lining the pockets of someone else.
 - d. I'm also stunned at governmental spending of money appropriated by Congress that is squandered and wasted, never reaching its proper destination.
 - e. David refused to allow this to happen to temple gifts. It was placed in the hands of Jehiel, a trustworthy keeper of the treasury. Now, compare that with stories we've heard of well known, high profile ministries. No wonder the church's integrity in our day is under question!
 - f. Just remember that I do not handle any of the finances at C.T. Every financial gift is carefully guarded by a team of godly leaders. You can be sure your gifts will not be used to purchase a ski lodge in Aspen or a beach home in Maui.
7. They gave joyfully.
- a. **1 Chronicles 29:9 (NIV)** - "The people rejoiced at the willing response of their leaders, for they had given freely and wholeheartedly to the Lord. David the king also rejoiced greatly."
 - b. Abundant giving prompted a joyful spirit among the king and his people. With pure hearts, they gave generously and with great joy!

- c. On the Earl of Devon's grave in Tiverton is written this epitaph:
"What we gave, we have; what we spent, we had; what we kept,
we lost."
- d. Give to God joyfully; give to Him willingly—the greatest Giver of all.