

03.21.10 / 2 Chronicles 2:5-11 and 6:14-40**Passage Insight**

At the heart of these passages is this: God is greater than we can imagine, and His greatness demands a response that is greater than we can bring. So God Himself must step in and assist in the response to His own greatness, and in so doing, He creates a way for us to commune with, to know, and to glorify Him. Let's take a look at this and the part we play.

From the outset of the passage in 2 Chronicles, Solomon makes clear the reason for the work that is about to be done. It is for one thing and one thing alone: the greatness of God. While the idea of building a house for the limitless God who will not be restrained is ludicrous, the fact that God would request and allow such an attempt tells us something very important about God: He desires to be with us. This desire is not due to OUR greatness, but rather is an indicator of HIS. The fullest expression of love is that which will sacrifice itself, even for those who are against it, and God is this love. Despite the fact that His chosen people had rebelled countless times, God still pursued them, even inviting them to participate in drawing others to Him.

We would do well to reflect on Solomon's comment in verse 6, "Who am I to build a house for him . . ." Solomon clearly recognizes how preposterous it is that God would not only allow, but also invite and command him to be involved in building a house for Him. The humility of heart that Solomon exhibits here is essential for us as well as we step into sharing in God's work. God says in Scripture that He opposes the proud and gives grace to the humble. Consider the outcome if Solomon had had a proud heart in this situation – taking credit for the work, trying hard to do the work himself, seeing a shortage of resources (since everything he had was provided not by him, but by God), and worse . . . the very opposition of God. As we step into the privilege of doing the Lord's work, consider the following:

- It is the Lord's work
- It is done by the Lord's command
- It is done with the Lord's provision
- It is done by the Lord's strength
- It is done to show the Lord's glory
- Everything is done to honor the glorious God who is already complete and whole and is simply allowing us to participate

It would be easy in the face of these truths to feel hopeless, meaningless, and discouraged about our simple unworthiness to do such a great work on our own. Understand, however, that it is not God's intent for us to be trapped in these feelings as we recognize God's glory and our own inadequacy. Quite the opposite, actually. It is the Lord's desire that as the awareness of our own sin and inadequacy grows, we would see that much more clearly the greatness of Him instead. After all, as Christians, we are saved by God's grace (undeserved merit) and are being changed into His likeness, which means that as we grow in our faith in Christ, an increased awareness of our own sin should all the more drive us to the cross to worship Him. It should also drive us to seek how we may be allowed to participate in His work, and at the end of the day, when all the work is done, serve as a reminder that we may take none of the credit but will be allowed to share in His joy and glory all the same. Marvelous and radical, indeed.

As God instructs Solomon to build a place where the glory of God can reside, we see that God desires to live among us, to be known by us, and to have a place where others can see His glory and be drawn to Him all the more. Consider

this in your own life. As a follower of Jesus, you have received the very presence of God inside of you – God Himself, in the form of His Holy Spirit, now lives and breathes in you. Again, this is evidence that God desires to live among us (even inside of us), to be known by us, and to create a place (you) where others can see His glory and be drawn to Him as a result.

Because of these things – God’s greatness, everything belonging to Him and returning to Him, our inadequacy that reminds us of His sufficiency, and His presence with us today in the form of His Holy Spirit – a response is demanded of us in this day and age. Our goal and task is that we as His followers would be full of His glory, just like the temple that Solomon was instructed to build, and that the entire earth would be filled with the knowledge of God’s glory. Jesus has seen fit to build His bride, the church, for this purpose, and as the church, we are now called to this reality. What should drive our every move is that God would be glorified (not that He lacks glory – but that others’ awareness of that glory increases) in every tribe, tongue, people, and nation. All that we do should be to this end. This goal calls us to specific action, led by a repentant heart, stepping forward with confidence that although we are unworthy to do this work and incapable on our own, with the Spirit of the Lord living inside us, with His command, with His provision, with His strength, we are well-equipped to respond. The measure of success will be a resounding yes to this question: is our every action effective in facilitating the glorification of God?

Application Questions (feel free to use the ones that best meet the needs of your group)

“Who am I to build a house for him...”

- 1) What are your greatest strengths?
- 2) How do you think God will most likely allow you to be used in building His kingdom?
- 3) If these strengths were suddenly gone, how would your worship of God change?
- 4) What does this reveal about you?
- 5) What would this reveal about the one who actually gave you your strengths?
- 6) Where else do you take ownership of your strengths?
- 7) How might your strengths be used differently if you came to the realization that they don’t belong to you?
- 8) What needs to change in order to have this recognition?

Living Among Us

- 1) God wants to be with you constantly – what does this say about you?
- 2) God wants to be with everyone constantly – what does this say about everyone else on the planet before, during, and after us?
- 3) God wants to be with us constantly even though you have rejected Him and will continue to do so – what does this say to you about God?

Filling the Earth with God’s Glory

- 1) If you have been saved, God lives inside of you. What responsibilities does this bring?
 - 2) How are you handling this responsibility?
 - 3) If people who follow Jesus Christ are temples of God, and if temples of God are designed to house, reflect, and demonstrate His glory, what are the effects of handling this responsibility well?
 - 4) Of handling it poorly?
 - 5) In your life, whom do you affect the most?
 - 6) These people are part of your mission field. Where are you doing a good job of showing them God’s glory?
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- 7) How are their lives changed when you are used by God to show them His glory?
- 8) Where are you handling this responsibility poorly?
- 9) Jesus wants to fix this, and He's given you a Community Group to help. Who in your Community Group would be the best person to explore this with you?
- 10) When will you meet with him/her?

Sources

- wwwFOUNDERS.org
 - Tim Keller
 - Docent
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