

**Message: Dedicate to the Lord**  
**Sermon Series: Better Together**  
**By Senior Pastor Tom Harrison**  
**2 Chronicles 5**  
**October 15, 2019**

To dedicate something means to contribute or consecrate. It means to make a commitment, a gift or a pledge. In the Bible, sometimes people dedicated themselves to the Lord. At other times, they dedicated material objects for the purposes of God. Certain people and objects were set apart for special use. The Bible mentions an altar, silver and gold, the Temple, and a wall in Jerusalem as being dedicated to God. On two occasions when God's people dedicated themselves and their gifts to God, the glory of the Lord appeared in spectacular fashion. The psalmists wanted this glory to last forever. Isaiah and Ezekiel yearned for God's glory. The glory of God is what brought the shepherds in Bethlehem to their knees: *"And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them."* (Luke 2:9)

God initiates. We respond. God is glorified. God's glory fills us with joy. Those who experience the glory of the Lord are truly and completely dedicated to Him. We are so grateful for His favor that we want to return His gifts. We want to offer more than token gifts to the Lord – we want to give significantly.

APPLICATION: Sacrificial giving forces us to choose our priorities. When we love God, we want to give our very best, not our leftovers (Malachi 3). The widow who had next to nothing gave what little she had. Jesus saw it and commended her for it. There are no second stringers in the church. Everyone needs to contribute for the good of their own hearts. Everyone needs to contribute for the common good. Surpassing what is done for individuals and for the community is how our giving glorifies the Lord. Although they vary, we all have gifts to share. As is said, "Not equal gifts, but equal sacrifice." What will you dedicate to the Lord over the next three years for "Better Together"?

We're looking at 2 transitions in our study in Chronicles:

- 1.) David to Solomon *Then D said to S his son, "Be strong/courageous & do it. Do not be afraid & do not be dismayed, for the Lord God, even my God, is with you. He will not leave you or forsake you, until all the work for the service of the house of the Lord is finished.* 1 Chr 28:20
- 2.) Tent of Meeting to the Temple. The Tent of Meeting ("Tabernacle") was for a nomadic people who lived in tents. The tent could be broken down, picked up and moved from one camp to another. No more. Times/situations change. Peoples' needs change. David was forbidden to build the Temple because he had blood on

his hands. He laid out the plans for what the Temple should look like. He told Solomon, who is probably about 21 years old, his vision for the Temple.

Asbury has had a great history. Our history is marked by transitions – moving from one thing to another. Let’s walk down a bit of that with you now.

For those unfamiliar with what is happening, today is huge in the life of Asbury. Oct 13 = the culmination of months of work to accomplish a strategically important goal. We are in a capital funds campaign called Better Together trying to raise \$12 million. We announced last Sunday we have secured pledges in excess of \$9m. (**\$9,2**) THANK YOU!

We intend to build a student ministry center on our site and not located across the parking lot. They need their own specially dedicated place. This frees up their current space at Venue 68 to have a facility where we can meet some of the needs of those in our community. That vision becomes a reality with our “Development Center.” We have Restore Hope Ministry + Asbury Theological Seminary as partners now (yesterday 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday met as well). We will also be able to open our doors to 2 more strategic partners, “Good Samaritan” (provides underserved medical care) + “Building All Children” (helps families with issues with their children). We will build some type of feature where we can have a place to drop off folks closer to the door of our northeast entrance that will give them covered parking. Finally, as we build, we want to strengthen our endowment.

For the first time in my life, I can relate to David handing off the baton. I’ve always felt to be the young upstart. On 10/31 the government gets involved in my birthday in a new way (65 – Medicare). When I came in 1993, Bill Mason had led Asbury to become a prevailing congregation. When I retire in a few years, I want to hand off a prevailing congregation with the best facilities, finances, program, staff and administration possible. We need to do to hand off to “young Solomon,” whoever that will be.

In our story, David has died. His son, Solomon, is king. It has taken him 7 years to build the Temple. Now the Temple is ready to be dedicated. They brought the Tent of Meeting (Tabernacle) up from the city of David (Zion), and they also brought the Ark of the Covenant. Notice how often it says “**all.**”

**2 Chronicles 5** *Thus all the work that Solomon did for the house of the Lord was finished. And Solomon brought in the things that David his father had dedicated, and stored the silver, the gold, and all the vessels in the treasuries of the house of God.*

<sup>2</sup> Then Solomon assembled the elders of Israel and all the heads of the tribes, the leaders of the fathers' houses of the people of Israel, in Jerusalem, to bring up the ark of the covenant of the Lord out of the city of David, which is Zion. <sup>3</sup> And all the men of Israel assembled before the king at the feast that is in the seventh month. <sup>4</sup> And all the elders of Israel came, and the Levites took up the ark. <sup>5</sup> And they brought up the ark, the tent of meeting, and all the holy vessels that were in the tent; the Levitical priests brought them up. <sup>6</sup> And King Solomon and all the congregation of Israel, who had assembled before him, were before the ark, sacrificing so many sheep and oxen that they could not be counted or numbered. <sup>7</sup> Then the priests brought the ark of the covenant of the Lord to its place, in the inner sanctuary of the house, in the Most Holy Place, underneath the wings of the cherubim. <sup>8</sup> The cherubim spread out their wings over the place of the ark, so that the cherubim made a covering above the ark and its poles. <sup>9</sup> And the poles were so long that the ends of the poles were seen from the Holy Place before the inner sanctuary, but they could not be seen from outside. And they are there to this day. <sup>10</sup> There was nothing in the ark except the two tablets that Moses put there at Horeb, where the Lord made a covenant with the people of Israel, when they came out of Egypt. <sup>11</sup> And when the priests came out of the Holy Place (for **all the priests** who were present had consecrated themselves, without regard to their divisions, <sup>12</sup> and **all the Levitical singers**, Asaph, Heman, and Jeduthun, their sons and kinsmen, arrayed in fine linen, with cymbals, harps, and lyres, stood east of the altar with 120 priests who were trumpeters; <sup>13</sup> and it was the duty of the trumpeters and singers to make themselves heard in unison in praise and thanksgiving to the Lord), and when the song was raised, with trumpets and cymbals and other musical instruments, in praise to the Lord, "For he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever," the house, the house of the Lord, was filled with a cloud, <sup>14</sup> so that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud, for the glory of the Lord filled the house of God.

2 points:

1.) **Things** were consecrated in the Temple, but this story is about **PEOPLE DEDICATED** to the LORD. Everyone had a role to play, whether they were the men of Israel, the elders, the congregation, the priests or the singers – **ALL** were involved. The people. There had been a lot of hard work to get them here. Now it is paying off. The best moments in life usually occur when a person's body or mind is stretched to its limits in a voluntary effort to accomplish something difficult and worthwhile. Such experiences are not necessarily pleasant at the time they occur. People get into this and feel that this is the time in life when they have enjoyed themselves the most. They get so involved in an activity that nothing else seems to matter and they can literally lose track of time; the

experience is so enjoyable that people will do it even at great cost for the sheer sake of doing it. The dedication resulted in a great **CELEBRATION**. They praised God.

2.) In response to the praise of His people, **GOD'S GLORY** fills the Temple. The cloud that revealed God's glory had appeared to Moses on Sinai but it also appeared at the Transfiguration of Jesus. Jesus led Peter, James & John to a high mountain and while there, a bright cloud appeared. There was a voice that spoke from the cloud telling the 3 disciples, "***This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased. Listen to him.***" Matthew 17:5 The disciples saw the cloud and it revealed the glory of Jesus.

The Glory of God seems most revealed when people dedicate themselves and commit to the Lord. We do this because we believe in our mission – helping others follow Jesus Christ. Jesus is the key to life- He forgives our sin, fills us with His Spirit, brings us into relationship with others in the Body of Christ, gives us meaning/purpose in life, and gives us eternal life.

*And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his **glory**, **glory** as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.* John 1:14

**Invitation** – as we receive communion today, make it a moment of dedication. Give your hearts to Jesus Christ. Bring your Better Together and 2020 pledge cards and leave them on the altar. Our responses will be across the board. Some of us can write very significant checks. Others among us have very limited means. We want **all** to participate. We want this to be a day of celebration. We want the Glory of God to be manifest.