

## VISION TO VICTORY-GOD PROVIDES

I Chronicles 29

The old African American preacher was encouraging the congregation to give. “Friends, this church is crawlin’ and I know God wants this church to walk!!! God wants this little ol’ church to git up and walk! We gottsss ta git up and walk!!!

The congregation responded, “yes, Rev, letsss walk, letsss walk!!!”

Rev goes on, “You know friends, now, I’ve been thinkin’...I’ve been thinkin’ God wants this church to do more than walk...God wants this church to runnn!!!”

The congregation, “Ya Rev. we want to run! We want this church to ruuunnnn”

Rev again, “Now, I bin thinkin’ about this! I bin prayin’ about this! I think God wants this church to flyyyy! Friends this little ol’ church really ought to flyyyy! Do you want this church to fly?”

Yes Rev, we want this church to fly!!! Oh, let 'er fly!!!

Rev again, well if we’re gonna fly...we got to dig, dig deep, dig deeeeeeep in dem pockets and give it up... We’ve got to dig deep and give 'er up. What do you say friends? Do you want this church to flyyyy?

You could hear a pin drop on carpet. Finally a voice from the congregation whispered, “Let ‘er walk rev, let ‘er walk!”

You know, I’ve been here over a year and a half. I think I know what you would say. You would say, “let ‘er fly, Rev., let ‘er fly. No one has to really tell me that. I can see it. You are generous people. It would take me a couple of hours to remind you about all the care groups and study groups, mission and worship opportunities we have here.

You provide those experiences because you are generous, generous with you time, your talents, and your dollars.

You've sacrificed your time, your talent, and your dollars to make ministry happen. We're here because of that.

We're also here to encourage you to help fulfill a vision. We want to move from Vision to Victory to complete our financial campaign and that will make even more ministry happen.

I want to tell some of stories this morning that I pray they will inspire us to continue to give, to continue to give generously, and to continue to give sacrificially.

The first is about King David.

He is a pivotal person not only in the history of Israel but in our human history as well. He is a man of passion.

The Hebrew word, "david" suggests someone who seethes and simmers with passion. We know David had an ambiguous life.

It demonstrated both a bright shining faith and bitter sinful failure.

When David was moved by the Spirit he was courageous, when moved by self, he was careless.

But whether at the pinnacle of success or in the pit of sin,

he always recognized the significance of the moment, the window of opportunity.

Today we are looking into a window of opportunity.

**I. Our first point, as we move from VISION TO VICTORY, we'll find SACRIFICIAL GIVING is the PROVISION FOR THE VISION**

David is speaking and says,

I Chronicles 29.1, ***"My son Solomon, whom God has chosen is young and inexperienced. The task is great because this palatial structure is not for man but for the Lord God"***

David isn't going to build the temple, his son Solomon is.

David's giving to the building project wasn't for his own legacy.

He was giving for God. He was sacrificing for God.

The Vision to Victory campaign is about giving to God.

Let keep that foremost in our minds-that as we are building this addition at First United Methodist Church for God, we are sacrificing for him.

We are not sacrificing for any one person or group of people,

or even just building the building for building's sake.  
Our sacrifice is for God.

When this is all this is said and done  
and we hear the voices of children in the classrooms,  
**or** when we hear the steps of the elderly as they walk the halls,  
**or** as we hear the “ping” as people get in and out of the elevators,  
or as we laugh and cry together in support groups,  
**or** as we pray and praise God in the new Living Center,  
**or** as we study and eat together,  
**or** as we grow to be faithful disciples of Jesus Christ  
who want to serve him willingly well,  
may we know in our hearts that it is because...we gave first to God.

I know we sometimes struggle and are uncomfortable when we talk about building  
or about such a great amount of money. But think about it this way...  
A father was telling his friend that before their son was born  
they spent money on mom's prenatal visits to the doctor.  
They spent money a crib, dresser, and for a nursery.  
When he was born they spent money on the hospital room, doctors, nurses,  
medications, and etc  
As he grew they spent money on food, clothing, toys, and diapers.  
As he grew older they spent money for schooling, a car, bigger toys, and then  
college.  
What do you want to add to that list?  
Then in college the son was killed in a car accident.  
The father sadly said to his friend, “he doesn't cost us anything now.  
He only cost us money when he was alive. He only cost money because he was  
alive.

This church is alive and because it is alive, it will cost money.

So along with the vision we need provision. We must not only **pray** for the vision,  
but **pay** for the vision. **VISION + PROVISION = VICTORY**

We see in verse two how God provided through David. David gave regular and planned gifts, “*With all my resources I have provided for the temple of my God-gold for the gold, silver for the silver, bronze for the bronze, iron for iron, and wood for wood, as well as...*” (a whole bunch of other stuff)

David also gave devotionally, personally, and additionally. Catch this, verse three, ***“Besides, in my devotion to the temple of my God (in devotion), I now give my personal treasures of gold and silver for my God (personal), over and above everything I have provided for his temple.”*** (that’s in addition)

By present standards the gold and silver could be as much as \$17,280,000,000. What we need to understand is that this wasn’t just his palace expense account. David gave over and above that, he gave out of his **personal wealth**.

David gave regularly, devotionally, personally, and additionally.

Let’s go back to where he says personal treasures.

There is a Hebrew word here for treasure, se-gul-lah.

The segullah was a treasure box with precious metals, stones, and rare objects.

It functioned as personal security in times of political depression or disaster.

Do you remember when Saddam Hussein was captured in the spider hole?

Do you remember what he had with him? Something like \$750,000.

It was his security, it would buy him protection, those \$’s served as a segullah.

The segullah would be like the blanket to Linus in the comic strip Peanuts.

The question begs to be asked.

What are you willing to give up that is personal, precious, and protects you?

Are we willing to give up our segullahs?

Remember we’re not just giving something up, we’re giving it for the Lord.

In the 18<sup>th</sup> Century John Wesley founded the Methodist Movement. He lived into his 80’s and became a national figure in England. He adopted a sacrificial lifestyle.

He earned about 32 pounds a year when he first began preaching. He lived on 28 pounds and gave the other 2 to God. Even as his income increase, his expenses stayed the same. So when he died at 80 some years old making 120 pounds a year, he still lived on 28 pounds but gave away 92 pounds.

For the next few weeks, these few weeks of Lent, is there something we might

give up? Something we could sacrifice. Something we will deny to ourselves?  
And if not to **deny**, then to at least **delay**?

## **SACRIFICIAL GIVING IS THE PROVISION FOR VISION TO VICTORY**

### **POINT II. So as we move from VISION TO VICTORY**

#### **Sacrificial Giving inspires an INVITATION AND RESPONSE**

After David has given, in verse 5 he says,

*“Now who is willing to consecrate himself to the Lord?”*

There is the invitation. God gave David the vision and part of the provision.  
Then, David gave the people an invitation to be a part of God’s provision.

The scripture tells us that there was a wonderful response to that invitation,  
Verse 6, *“Then the leaders of families, officers of the tribes of Israel,  
the commanders of thousands, the commanders of hundreds,  
and the officials in charge of the king’s work gave willingly.”*

Verse 7 tells how much they gave and in verse 8 it says,

*“any who had precious stones gave them to the treasury of the temple of the  
Lord.”*

David’s giving inspired the giving of the leaders. That in turn was cause for  
celebration. Verse 9, *“The people rejoiced at the willing response of their leaders,  
for they have given freely and wholeheartedly to the Lord.”*

Now catch this, *“David the king also rejoiced greatly.”*

The Message says it this way, *“And the people were full of celebration-  
all that giving and all given willingly and freely. King David was exuberant.”*

Our leadership, the leadership of FUMC inspired by the sacrifice of Jesus,  
will pledge in advance this week.

I’m confident they will give devotionally, personally, additionally, and  
sacrificially.

What they give will be something to get excited about. We will rejoice in  
that...I believe the King Jesus will rejoice greatly, he will be exuberant.

Now, after David and the leaders had given, the people were invited to give.

**III. So know, as that as we move from VISION TO VICTORY,  
We'll make it, not with EQUAL GIFTS but with EQUAL SACRIFICE.**

*(V 20) "Then David said to the whole assembly, 'Praise the Lord your God.' So they all praised the Lord their God, they all bowed low and fell prostrate before the Lord and king. The next day they made sacrifices to the Lord..."*

Isn't it great how this passage outlines the inspiration of the giving?

It goes from King David, to the leaders to the people?

So too for us: King Jesus, our leadership, and us.

Talking about all this money may be intimidating to some of us.

We don't have David's bank account.

We can't just write out a check for \$17billion.

Those that can, please find Mary Scott after the worship and she'll figure out how we can process those checks, and she'll do it with a smile.

Some of us are thinking, we can't do a gigantic sum at all.

We know most of us can't do all that.

God, nor we are asking you for a great dollar amount.

We're asking you to do what the people did for the temple...to make a sacrifice.

Remember it is not **Equal Gifts but Equal Sacrifice.**

Your giving is not measured in dollars, it's measured in sacrifice.

**Don't be intimidated! Be inspired.**

You're invited to give out of a pure motive, to give in devotion to God, to give personally to God, and to give over and above your regular giving and tithe. Then, and here is the big thing, **trust God's faithfulness.**

This next story might give you something to think about.

One day in the 1880's Hattie Mae Wiatt was crying outside a church.

She was shabby and unkempt in her appearance.

Pastor Russell Cronell saw her and asked why she was crying.

She said because she couldn't go to Sunday School. "It was too crowded."

He took her by the hand and found a place for her in a classroom.

She was so happy that night, she went to bed thanking God and praying

for children who had no place to go to Sunday School.  
Two years later this child died in a rundown tenement building.  
The parents called Pastor Cronwell and asked him to do the funeral.

They found in her room a worn little red pocket purse.  
Inside the purse, they found 57 cents (think about that, 57 cents was a lot of money in those days.) and a note in her handwriting saying,  
“This is to help build the little church bigger so more children can go to Sunday School.”

Cronwell talked about her sacrifice and told her story to the church.  
He challenged the people to find the money to build a bigger building  
so more children could go to Sunday School.

Their story hit the papers and someone offered them the land.  
The church said it was too much and he sold it to them for 57cents.  
Church members began to donate.  
That 57-cent sacrifice became a spark for  
many fund raisers that build more than a little church.  
Today in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania there is not only the Temple Baptist Church  
but Temple University, a Sunday School Building, and a Good Samaritan  
Hospital  
that sit on those grounds.

Want to fly? Want to move from **VISION TO VICTORY**? We can't do it with  
**EQUAL GIVING** but God can do it with **EQUAL SACRIFICE**.

**SACRIFICIAL GIVING IS THE PROVISION FOR THE VISION**  
**SACRIFICIAL GIVING IS AN INVITATION AND A RESPONSE**  
**NOT EQUAL GIVING BUT EQUAL SACRIFICE**  
will move us from **VISION TO VICTORY**

**LETS STAND AND SING GREAT IS THY FAITHFULNESS**

