

## Show Me What You've Got

Reality TV is filled with contestants demonstrating the talent and skills they possess to be the next great chef, famous model, #1 dance team, Trump's next successful apprentice, or Simon's next American Idol. In today's Templates of Truth, we find reason to demonstrate what you've got for the work of the church and God's kingdom.

Moses told the people of Israel – *and every skilled person in whom the Lord has put skill and understanding to know how to perform all the work connected to the service of the sanctuary, shall perform (it) in accordance with all that the Lord has commanded* (Exodus 36:1). It is noteworthy that the mode of operation God established for the very first tabernacle remains that which the New Testament church still functions by today. God still needs His people to carry out His work through His church for the cause of His kingdom on earth. In the final five chapters of Exodus, at least six principles emerge concerning our contribution to the work of the church.

First, all the resources necessary for accomplishing God's will, plan and purpose are already possessed by every believer. The phrase, *who had in his possession*, is found twice in chapter 35. God never calls us to do any task that He has not already provided us with every resource we will ever need to accomplish it. Every resource may not be readily visible, but if we trust Him, He will graciously provide it at just the right time in the process.

Second, it is the Holy Spirit who empowers the believer with all he needs for the work he performs – *He has filled him with the Spirit of God, in wisdom, in understanding and in knowledge and in all craftsmanship...He also has put in his heart to teach...He has filled them with skill to perform ever work* (Exodus 35:31-35). Not only does God give us all the resources necessary to do His work, He also gives us all the abilities we need to use those resources efficiently and effectively.

Third, working for God in and through the church is a job carried out with passion and joy. The expression, *whose heart stirred him*, or some derivative of it, is used seven times throughout chapters 35-36. It is obvious that God wants workers who are passionate about their service. Not only that, Paul reminds us that *God loves a cheerful giver* (II Corinthians 9:7), which means we serve Him with enthusiasm and rejoicing. God wants you to enjoy serving Him in ministry. Recreational sports and hobbies may be enjoyable, but there is no truer joy experienced in life apart from serving God.

Fourth, effective work for God is work that is accountable – *And Moses examined all the work and behold, they had done it just as the Lord had commanded* (Exodus 39:43). Our standard for ministry is the Word of God. Within the church, God has placed pastors, staff ministers, deacons and other church leaders whose role it is to guide the church; to oversee and evaluate in order to assure we are consistently meeting the measure of Scripture. These are representative of Aaron

and the priests God told Moses to anoint and consecrate for special service in the Tabernacle.

Fifth, our gifts and calling are perpetual (Exodus 40:15). We might complete a specific assignment in ministry, but our service to God is never finished. We don't "retire" from kingdom work. Paul taught – *the gifts and calling of God are irrevocable* (Romans 11:29). If we fail or fall away, we haven't forfeited our gifts and calling. Confession, repentance, discipline, and restorative measures will certainly be in order. Once those are accomplished, ministry work may of necessity change or function differently, but we never lose our salvation, nor our command from God to serve Him with our gifts, talents, skills and abilities.

Finally, when we all contribute our share and do our part, accomplishment is in abundance – *for the material they had was sufficient and more than enough for all the work, to perform it* (Exodus 36:7). The earthly church of our Lord Jesus Christ has yet to know what she can ultimately accomplish with every single one of her members contributing a passionate & enthusiastic portion of their time, talents and resources to the work of God's kingdom. Unfortunately, all of the work is done by 20% of the people in most average churches. To impact the world for Christ in a greater way, that equation must change!

How about you? Do you aspire to serve God with the same kind of passion and priority a singer wants to be voted the next American Idol? God is sitting in the judge's seat, He knows all your talents, abilities & potential, and He is begging, "Show Me what you've got!"

That's today's Templates of Truth. This is your Bible teacher, Rick Smith, reminding you to attend church this Sunday for Bible study and worship, pray for one another, and always strive to abide in Christ. Until next time, have a blessed and glorious day in the Lord Jesus.

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