

Faith Walk! - Sermon Discussion

Date : 25 Jun 2023

Sermon Title : What's in your heart?

Speaker : Rev Reuben Ng

Text : 2 Chronicles 1

INTRODUCTION

The context for this scripture reading is set in the time when king David had just died and his son Solomon has to step into his shoes as the new anointed king of Israel. The first thing king Solomon did was to gather and assemble the entire people of Israel, the judges, leaders of the households, commanders of the thousands and hundreds and spoke to them. After speaking to them, king Solomon and the assembly went on to worship God.

Solomon worshipped God in a time of difficulty and uncertainty

- In this time of great uncertainty for king Solomon, when he experienced the burden, pressure and stress of being a new inexperienced king, he chose to worship God.
- King Solomon worshipped God with a thousand burnt offerings to God. His worship was deliberate and intentional.
- By so doing, even though he was going through an uncertain and difficult time, he was setting himself up for an encounter with the living God.

Most Christians find it very easy to worship God when we are enjoying wonderful times or going through joyous occasions when we experience tangibly the goodness and grace of God. In such moments, we find it easy to sing praises to God and worship Him. However, in times when we face difficulties, when we find ourselves immersed in trouble or are facing all the pressures of life pressing down upon us, we do not feel that we want to worship God. We are tempted to turn our backs on the one whom we are called to worship.

In times of difficulty, we should choose to worship God more, to see Him face to face and to use every ounce of strength remaining to raise up a song of praise to Him, because when we do that, we set ourselves up for a wonderful encounter with God.

- God appeared to Solomon that night:
In the night God appeared to Solomon, and said to him, "Ask what I shall give you?"
(2 Chronicles 1:7)

For we walk by faith, not by sight. 2 Corinthians 5:7

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Solomon's posture of worship

And Solomon said to God, "You have shown great and steadfast love to David my father, and have made me king in his place. (2 Chronicles 1:8)

Solomon's response to God's "blank check" offer to ask God for anything he wanted, was to:

- declare God's greatness and steadfastness. He focused on the character and personality of God, acknowledged everything about Him and gave Him glory.
- attribute his position as king to the will of God - the only reason he is king is because of God's great, steadfast and faithful love to David, his father.

Solomon's posture of humility

O LORD God, let your word to David my father be now fulfilled, for you have made me king over a people as numerous as the dust of the earth. (2 Chronicles 1:9)

- Solomon knows that it was God who has made him king, and it was impossible for him to fulfill God's will on his own. He needs God's enablement and empowerment.

This verse teaches us that as long as God has called us to do something, and it is God's will and God's call for us, we need God's enablement and empowerment. We must never fall into the deception that if God has called us to do something which we think is a small thing, we do not really need Him because we can do it on our own. We need God every hour and every day to fulfill His will in our lives.

Solomon's posture of selflessness

Give me now wisdom and knowledge to go out and come in before this people, for who can govern this people of yours, which is so great?" (2 Chronicles 1:10)

- Solomon asked for wisdom and knowledge. He adopted a posture of selflessness instead of self-centeredness. He asked for wisdom and knowledge not because he wanted to be the wisest or most knowledgeable man on earth. Neither was it because he guessed that God would value wisdom and knowledge above anything else. He asked for wisdom and knowledge so that he will be able to lead the great people of God.
- Solomon was not giving any answer according to the desires of his own heart. He was giving an answer according to God's desire because he knew that it was God's will to make him king over the people and that means God wants him to be a good and effective king for His people. Solomon was asking for what will allow him to fulfill the desire of God's heart. Solomon's heart was beating in tandem with God's heart to fulfill the desire of God's heart.

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God's response to Solomon

God answered Solomon, "Because this was in your heart, and you have not asked for possessions, wealth, honour, or the life of those who hate you, and have not even asked for long life but have asked for wisdom and knowledge for yourself that you may govern my people over whom I have made you king, (2 Chronicles 1:11)

Wisdom and knowledge are granted to you. I will also give you riches, possessions, and honour, such as none of the kings had who were before you, and none after you shall have the like." (2 Chronicles 1:12)

- God saw in Solomon's heart his selflessness and his desire to fulfill God's desire. He granted what Solomon asked for and on top of that, gave him exceedingly and abundantly beyond, more than he could think or imagine.

So Solomon came from the high place at Gibeon, from before the tent of meeting, to Jerusalem. And he reigned over Israel. (2 Chronicles 1:13)

- Solomon's reign is often viewed as the Golden Era in the history of Israel. It was during his time that Israel became known worldwide. They grew in culture, strength, respect and wealth because Solomon really wanted to fulfil the desires of God's heart.

God is still looking for people and followers who also have hearts that are beating in tandem and in sync with God's heart.

For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to give strong support to those whose heart is blameless toward him... (2 Chronicles 16:9)

- God is not looking for people who never sin, who never transgress, who never fail or fall before God. Solomon and David obviously failed and were imperfect but were still greatly and powerfully used by God because their hearts were blameless – their hearts were fully devoted and committed to fulfilling God's desires.

CONCLUSION

If we focus on fulfilling the desires of God's heart, if we allow God to use us, we can be assured that God will not allow us to be shortchanged. He will not allow us to be left behind nor to lose out. Solomon did not ask for his self-centered desires but something else to fulfill God's desire and God granted him much more beyond what he asked for.,," *But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you." (Matthew 6:33)*

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A. Review Sermon Application

Purpose: Reflect on how you have been embodying God's truth.

- 1a. How successful have you been in fulfilling what you/your group had committed to do for the last FaithWalk?
- 1b. What were some challenges you faced and what would you like to celebrate?

2. Appoint someone to read 2 Chronicles 1:1-13 slowly.

Reflect on your current life as a child of God. What will you ask from God if you were to encounter Him like Solomon?

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B. Relate Sermon Content

Purpose: Relate with the Truth and Resolve for Transformation.

3. What does it mean to worship God?
 - a. What is one thing you have learnt from Solomon's posture of worship?
 - b. What is one change you need to make to have a posture of worship in all situations?

- 4a. How has Solomon's posture of humility impacted you?
- 4b. What can you do to also have this posture of humility?

5. Do you consider yourself selfless like Solomon?
 - a. What hinders you from being selfless like Solomon? What is one thing you need to do to overcome this hindrance?
 - b. How can your group members encourage or help you to achieve 4a. in the following week(s) until your next meeting?

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C. Testimonies, Prayers and Action

Purpose: Give glory to God, seek Him and embody His Word.

6. Share your personal testimony on how through God's empowerment, you overcame a hindrance to be able to live your life for what is on God's heart instead of in yours?

OR

Give thanks to God for what He has called you to and how He has shown you strong support to fulfill His desires in your life.

7. As a group, seek the Holy Spirit's leading in your daily life as an individual, group and church, so we will not seek what is in our own hearts but to fulfill the desires of God's heart for us.

Optional items:

Suggested worship songs:

1. This Is Amazing Grace – Phill Wickham
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zPQKj2Zptr0>
2. Heart Of A Servant – City Harvest Church
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x9gUcmquPtc>
3. I Give You My Heart – Hillsong <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MsOO3DcmcmA>

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