

Freewill Offering For The Tabernacle

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 04 June 2023

Preacher: Chad Bennett

[0 : 00] If you'll please open your Bibles to the book of Exodus chapter 25. Exodus 25 and today we're looking at verses 1 through 8.

So if you'll look there with me, it says 25. The Lord said to Moses, speak to the people of Israel that they take for me a contribution from every man whose heart moves him, you shall receive the contribution for me.

And this is a contribution that you shall receive from them. Gold, silver, and bronze. Blue and purple and scarlet yarns.

And fine twine linen. Goat's hair. Tan ram skins. Goat skins. Acacia wood. Oil for the lamps.

Spice for the anointing oil. And for the fragrant incense. On its stones. And stones for setting for the ephod. And for the breast piece. And let them make me a sanctuary that I may dwell in their midst.

[1 : 48] Let's pray to God together. Lord, we thank you that you are a gracious, merciful God. And we pray, again, even as we prayed earlier, Lord, that you would open to us your word.

Lord, that you would enable us to understand it. Lord, to worship you through it. Lord, we pray that you would be glorified in the preaching.

But Lord, also in the reception of your word. That you would make our hearts eager and ready to hear and receive the word. Lord, we pray this all in the name of our great Savior, Jesus Christ.

Amen. Amen. So last week we were looking at this concept of the presence of God.

And in particular, Moses going into the very presence of God. But also the leaders going up on the mountain. And today we're beginning to see the contribution or the free will offering that's given for the tabernacle.

[2 : 46] And there's some connection to that that I hope to point out in today's message. I started to say back. Ahead in Leviticus 26, 12, God says, And I will walk among you and will be your God and you shall be my people.

We've taught some about this, that this is the promise that God's made in his covenant. Even going back to Abraham, but repeated throughout the Old Testament, God's covenant promise is that he will be our God and we will be his people.

And that he would dwell among us. And there was a time in which God did this in the Garden of Eden. But the problem is our sin.

Our sin brought a separation there. And a separation from God that made that idea of dwelling with God an impossibility. And so the tabernacle was a place where God was to meet with his people.

And we'll spend more time talking about that in weeks ahead. But as we think about that, we know that God is omnipresent. He's everywhere at once. And God is spirit.

[3 : 53] So as we begin to look at the tabernacle, this isn't just a house where God is solely going to dwell. But there's something unique about God's presence there.

That word tabernacle is the same word that's used for the tents in which the Israelites are sleeping in. He's saying, build me a tent like yours so that I can be there and dwelling among you.

That God would be in their midst. And as we begin the preparation for that, the first thing that we have regarding the tabernacle is that God wants Moses to take an offering.

Now, one advantage of preaching expositionally is you can't accuse me of preaching on giving. Right? You've always heard, at least I've heard people say, oh, the church always preaches on giving.

Well, you know that's not true here. And yet here we are dealing with a passage that talks about an offering. And so we want to consider that for a minute. And what does that matter? How does it apply to us?

[4 : 52] What's going on in the passage? And so you'll notice that this is not a tax. What I mean by a tax is a force payment. I want to be careful here.

But when we are taxed, we don't have an option just to say, well, I don't really want to pay that tax. We have to pay it. God doesn't say, I want you to take this amount from every single person throughout Israel.

I thought about right now the big news has been this, the national debt and the debt ceiling and all this in the news. If you guys have followed that. But just imagine if our government operated on the concept of giving being voluntary.

Right? I'd like you to give to support our country. Yeah, you think our debt's bad now. Could you just imagine? God doesn't tax them here.

He asked them to give a free will offering. And so it was a sacrifice that he's asking them to give. They were to give not only of their possessions, but also of their labor.

[6 : 02] You can see in this passage that they are to, he's asking for them to give a contribution, but also that they would help in the building of it. Verse 8.

And let them make me a sanctuary. And so God's looking to them not only to give the stuff to make it, but also to do the labor to make sure that it actually happens.

So to give, I mean, in many ways, like we would think of the church, there's financial giving, but there's also a giving of our service physically, spiritually, and serving the body of the church.

Our membership covenant or membership materials deal with this some. Our bylaws, I guess it's where it's at.

But the responsibilities of members, and we don't talk a lot about the responsibility of members, but one of the things we talk about in that place is that we would commit to giving. And I think it's not just that.

[7 : 02] It's also the service. If we understand the church to be the body of Christ, we all have to be contributing to that. We all have to be functioning in the body for the body to be healthy.

I also want to note that they're giving back what they have received from God. We know this to always be true, but it's all the more evident for the people of Israel.

Let me remind you back in Exodus chapter 12, verses 35 and 36. The people of Israel had also done as Moses told them, for they had asked the Egyptians for silver and gold jewelry and for clothing.

And the Lord had given the people favor in the sight of the Egyptians so that they let them have what they ask. Thus, they plundered the Egyptians. And so you'll notice there, we're talking about when the Israelites were slaves.

What did they possess? Really, they had just about nothing. And so God told them through Moses to ask the Egyptians for some of their stuff.

[8 : 17] And so they do. And God, it says, and the Lord gave the people favor in the sight of the Egyptians. So they let them have what they asked. Whatever the Israelites asked for, the Egyptians gave them because they had favor in their eyes.

And it ends with, thus they plundered the Egyptians. They robbed the Egyptians. Not against their will. Voluntarily, because God moved their hearts.

So they found favor. But God has blessed them with all these possessions. And now he says, I want you to give some of this to me. Well, I have lost track, but we're not too far removed from Egypt.

And again, I forget exactly what we're at now. It may be 10 weeks or something. But it hasn't been long since they've left Egypt. They've been wandering in the wilderness. Let me just tell you, they haven't gained any gold or dyed yarn.

They haven't become wealthy while they've wandered in the wilderness. All the wealth they have has come from the Egyptians because of God and what he's done in their hearts.

[9 : 26] Now, it may be less obvious, but the same is true for us, isn't it? 1 Corinthians 4.7 says, What do you have that you did not receive?

If then you received it, why do you boast as if you did not receive it? All we have has been given to us by God, by his grace, by his mercy. And so God makes us rich for the purpose of advancing the gospel.

I think if we consider in human history where we are in the United States right now, we are perhaps the richest country maybe ever to dwell on the face of the earth.

Our middle class, even our poverty level, would exceed the wealthy people in some nations. We are a blessed people. Why does God give stuff, possessions, money?

Well, God's ultimate goal in this world is the advance of the gospel to the ends of the earth. It's his dominion. It's his glory. And so if we have been blessed, and again, especially relatively speaking, we have been, if we have been blessed, one reason, the primary reason even, is for the advance of the kingdom, that God would be glorified in what he's given us.

[10 : 54] And so as we think about that, we also see in this passage that there's a heart motivation behind all of this. Look at verse 2. Speak to the people of Israel that they take for me a contribution from every man whose heart moves him.

You shall receive the contribution from me. So I said earlier it wasn't a tax that God asked them to give, but we see specifically here that it's for those whose heart moves them to give.

Maybe a New Testament concept similar to this. 2 Corinthians 9, 6-7.

Actually, chapter 9 speaks a good deal about giving. This is only two of the verses, but it says, The point is this. Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully.

Each one must give as he has decided in his heart. Not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. Now that may even be looking back to our passage here.

[12 : 03] But either way, the New Testament concept is the same. What has God called us to do? To give from the heart. Whatever one's deciding in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion.

We've had this transition somewhat, maybe since COVID or whatever, but I don't ever use Chet's anymore. And there's still that part of me, you know, when we're giving, we're doing it through the church website now, and the offering plate comes around, or the sense in your head sometimes you wonder, do people notice that we're not putting stuff in the offering plate?

Do we feel like we've got to put something in the offering plate? That's compulsion. Not because anyone's saying you have to, but because you're worried what other people think of you.

It's that fear of man that we have. Instead, what God calls us to is cheerfully give to God what we've decided in our hearts. It's to be a reflection of, or an overflow, an outflow of that which is already in our hearts.

That there's a love for God, a desire for Him, that moves us in our hearts to give. So here's an example of this from David when they were building the temple. It's a very similar circumstance here.

[13 : 25] The tabernacle prefigures, we'll say, a movable version, a mobile home of what would eventually become the temple. And so we see in 1 Chronicles 29, 5-9, David giving toward the temple.

It says, For all the work to be done by craftsmen, gold for the things of gold, and silver for the things of silver, who then will offer willingly, consecrating himself today to the Lord.

Then the leaders of fathers' houses made their freewill offerings, as did also the leaders of the tribes, the commanders of households and of hundreds, and the officers over the king's work.

They gave for the service of the house of God 5,000 talents, and 10,000 derrets of gold, 10,000 talents of silver, 18,000 talents of bronze, and 100,000 talents of iron.

And whoever had precious stones gave them to the treasury of the house of the Lord in the care of Jehill the Gershonite. Then the people rejoiced because they had given willingly, for with the whole heart they had offered freely to the Lord.

[14 : 49] David the king also rejoiced greatly. And so there we see an expression of that for the temple. People rejoiced because they gave willingly. Why would our hearts do that?

Well, I think they did it. Those in Israel even now that are giving toward the tabernacle and God's people today, their hearts are moved by the grace that they have received from God.

They are recipients of more, and they're only giving back a fraction of what God has given them. And I said earlier, we know that God's given us all that we possess. And I meant that in terms of the physical possessions we have.

And although that can motivate us in our heart to say God's blessed me, I want to bless others, how much more so even those of you who have been saved by the grace of God, who know what it was like to be apart from God and now have been brought into the family of God, that grace moves us in joy to give to God back, again, a portion of what He's given us.

So the Israelites, God has saved them from slavery in Egypt. They are free because of Him. What wealth they have, they have because of Him. He's revealed Himself to them in His glory in the wilderness.

[16 : 19] He's led them by that Shekinah glory. He's provided for them every need they've had in the wilderness. Again, I think it's so much more apparent for them when you get up every morning in manna falls for you to collect in the morning, you have no question but where your food comes from.

I've said before, when you're going to Walmart or Giant or Audi, wherever you're going, it doesn't quite seem the same. It's my money buying stuff from these people. Maybe we lose the connection, but it's no less true for us.

So He's provided for them. They complain about a lack of meat and God sends quail. They come across, they're thirsty, they come across a place where the water is no good and He turns it good for their sake that they may drink.

And so He has provided for them all throughout their journey through the wilderness. And we know that He's bringing them into the promised land, that land that He promised to Abraham and to Isaac and to Jacob, they're headed that way.

He's going to give them a land flowing with milk and honey that they did not have to work for, that will be ready for the harvest when they arrive. And we just have seen last week and the preceding weeks that He's bound Himself to them by covenant.

[17 : 33] He's given them the blood of the covenant. And we know ultimately that points to Jesus Christ and His atonement. That the Son is that atonement. That Jesus has given His blood of the covenant as we saw Him express at the Last Supper.

And so, while not all in Israel, there are some who know even the grace of God having worked in their hearts to save them.

And God moves them. And I think again, are we a grateful people? We who are more blessed than them.

They're living in tents in the wilderness. And they're giving away what they do have for the sake of the building of the tabernacle.

I imagine, I don't know about all you people, I know there are people in my family who wouldn't dare spend the night in a tent. Right? Like, glamping maybe, but sleeping in a tent, no way.

[18 : 39] We have one family member that when we would talk about camping, they'd always ask, well, where was the bathroom? How far did you have to go? Did you shower? Right? We have concerns that were, are so far, I mean, our level of convenience is so far beyond theirs.

And they're giving of what they have while they're wandering through the wilderness, sleeping in tents, without running water. Or toilets. Are we grateful for the ways in which God has blessed us, how He's been merciful to us?

Listen to Ephesians 1, 7-8. In Him, we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace, which He lavished upon us in all wisdom and insight.

What do you see there? Are we grateful? We have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our sins, according to the riches of His grace.

So there's somebody who's rich, richer than Elon Musk or whoever it is from wherever that keeps passing him and switching places, richer than the riches of us. He's rich in grace.

[19 : 55] And what does God choose to do with the riches of His grace? He dribbles them out for us a little bit at a time, right? He just gives us a bit, a taste of it. It says He lavishes them upon us.

It's the fire hose. We're drowning in God's grace. This is a quote from Phil Reichen. He says, Giving to God is an important sign of our commitment to Christ.

Our willingness to give back some of what we own is one of the leading indicators of our spiritual health. Generosity is one of the vital signs of real Christianity.

And a Christian who isn't giving probably isn't growing. I thought this was a helpful quote as we think about this. Again, this isn't to place you under compulsion.

God has been graciously providing for our church for decades. But I think it is important to think of what does our giving reflect of God's grace in our hearts?

[21 : 04] How does it show our generosity? I'm thankful. I think we maintain a good balance in this church where the elders don't have a clue what you're giving. I don't know. I don't care.

I don't want it to influence me. I'm filled for the deacons that have to count up the money and send out the statements at the end of the year. But we don't know that. We're not worried about that. We are worried about your soul and this is important for your spiritual state.

What does it say about you in terms of what you give? And so giving to God is an act of holy worship. He's calling them even at this point to worship. I think about even the tabernacle.

God could have in His sovereignty in His power providentially provided for them a tabernacle without the need of them giving or building. God could have just dropped one down from heaven.

There it is. Pack it up. Move it. Be careful with it. But boom. There it is. He spoke and we heard that this morning. He spoke the entire world into existence.

[22 : 05] He could have spoken a tabernacle into existence. He could have pulled it together from wherever He wanted to. But God graciously, I believe, chooses to include His people in the work of building a place for Him to meet with them.

It requires them to sacrifice but it's an act of worship. It's a blessing for them. Again, not only in financially giving but also in their participation in the building of it.

We read there of the tabernacle I'm sorry of the temple in David's time and how God gifted craftsmen with the ability to do great works of art to adorn the temple.

As we think about giving this question comes up often. It's not one we often deal with but when the New Testament speaks about giving it doesn't specify a certain amount that you're to give because I know that's often the question.

Well, how much am I supposed to give? Write it down and I... The New Testament doesn't specify that. And what we see here is a free will offering. This would have been in addition to the sacrificial system that's going to happen.

[23 : 16] When the priests are there and the sacrifices happen then you get that rule of 10% that tithe that you've heard of that give of the first fruits of all that they have.

Plus there's the sin offering and peace offering. And so often we think of 10% and maybe that's a good baseline for us to think of as Christians but the New Testament doesn't say give 10%.

What does the New Testament say? Well, it's what we saw earlier. Give what you've decided in your heart and give cheerfully. God loves a cheerful giver.

And so whatever the amount, however we decide what that is, we ought to pray that God would create in us a desire to grow in our generosity and grow in grace. We ask God to enlarge our heart.

If we know it's the heart that motivates us to give to Him then we need God to be working in our heart to move us to that. Now, so our first point was looking at the offering, the free will offering.

[24 : 14] Secondly, I want us to consider the goal which is God in their midst. The goal of God in their midst. So that's our second point.

And particularly, I want us to look at verse 8 for that. Verse 8, the goal of God in their midst. God says, and let them make me a sanctuary that I may dwell in their midst.

Let them make me a sanctuary that I may dwell in their midst. So going back to what we talked about earlier, we've seen already that sin has separated us from God. The concept of God dwelling in our midst should be a fearful thing for a sinful people.

And I've talked a little bit about this introduction and I want to keep doing this again even next week but our longing and my belief even in terms of biblical theology, how does the Bible flow?

What do we see revealed throughout the Old Testament and into the New Testament? that it has a lot to do with dwelling with God. And so we have from the beginning Adam and Eve dwelling with God, walking with God in the cool of the evening, communing with God almost as it were person to person.

[25 : 39] but sin brings that separation. They're cast out of the garden. They can't get back in. The relationship with God is broken, hindered, so that we have at least one line who follows Satan and turns away from God altogether.

And from that moment, we as human beings, whether we know it or not, the deepest longing in our heart that we try to satisfy with everything else in life, with the stuff money buys, with friends, relationships, maybe even alcohol or droids, what we're seeking is that relationship with God again, the joy that's found in the presence of the Lord.

And so that's the covenant promise that God's made to them. And so as we get to this point, our longing has been to dwell with Him. Later in Exodus 29, this is what we read there, verses 45 and 46.

God says, I will dwell among the people of Israel and be their God, and they shall know that I am the Lord their God who brought them out of the land of Egypt, that I might dwell among them, I am the Lord their God.

And we saw before that that was the purpose that God brought them out of Egypt. We see it echoed again here, why did God bring them out of Egypt, that He might dwell in their midst.

[27 : 05] That's exciting if we really understand it. That's what they wanted. And so when we come to the tabernacle, what we have is, as it were, a symbolic representation of God's presence there with them.

It symbolizes His nearness to them. Now, this is really exciting because we've been building toward this, I think, throughout the book of Exodus. I said even from the very beginning from Genesis, but in the book of Exodus as we've been preaching, this is what we've been building toward.

If you've paid any attention to our slides on the title or to your bulletin, you may have seen that there's a artistic representation of what the tabernacle could have looked like based on the description given to us that we're going to be looking at in the coming weeks.

And if we were to take a further back picture, I think you get a little bit of this in the bulletin or in that initial slide, the title slide. If we were to step further back, we would see the structure of the camp is structured in three tribes on all four sides of the tabernacle.

And so, the people of God encompass the tabernacle with the tabernacle directly in the center. That's intentional. That's meant to represent something that God is right there in the middle of His people.

[28 : 33] He's in their presence. He's in their midst. Christ. And so, even as we're going to see in this passage what was given, and I didn't spend a lot of time talking about all the items that are given here, but the items that are given even look back, I think, to the garden.

And so, if I were to state this another way, what we have God doing is recreating the garden. Recreating a place where God can dwell among His people and then be in communion and joy of fellowship with Him.

That's what God's doing. And so, they have the tabernacle and it's pretty good. Greater than anything that's been experienced so far. And they move around and they know that wherever they go, God's still in their presence.

presence. But then when we get to David, we have a permanent temple. Greater glory there. Greater beauty. Grandeur. And God dwells there and they know that in the midst of the whole nation of Israel, in Jerusalem, is a temple where God's presence is.

He's right there in the middle of our country. We can go to Him. Amen. I feel like I'm getting ahead of myself.

[29 : 56] But I think it's important that we see this big view. And so, as good as the temple is, God's people still neglect God. They don't worship Him. They worship idols instead.

They're cast out and the temple's destroyed. And then Christ comes. And what does Christ do? He tabernacles among us.

We have God's presence walking among us. Is that better or worse than the temple? That's greater. In fact, it's getting pretty close to the Garden of Eden again, isn't it?

God's walking among us. Emmanuel, God with us. But then, Jesus ascends to the Father.

But what does He tell us? He won't leave us alone. He will send His Spirit. And where does the Spirit go? It dwells in us. And so now we've gone from an external expression of God to an internal expression of God indwelling us.

[31 : 11] That's the point in which I'd say we are now in a better place than Adam and Eve were in the Garden. And yet, we still yearn for more of this. Which moves us eventually to the new earth and the new heavens in which God's people will dwell with Him forever.

So I hope you see there's kind of the flow, in my opinion, the flow of the Bible. We are building toward communion with God. God. That's what we're made for.

The teaching that we had on union with Christ, that's why I think it's so important. Because we're experiencing a union and a communion with God through Christ that surpasses anything known in human history.

And yet, there's more still to come. So, like I said, got ahead of myself. But I'm excited about that.

that's glorious. So if we look at this, I said it's like the garden. Genesis 2.12 said, And the gold of that land is good.

[32 : 15] Dillium and on its stone are there. Well, if we look even at what they're asked to give, they're told to give gold. And in particular, verse 7, on its stones and stones were setting for the ephod and for the breastplate.

There's some symbolism there of the garden of Eden. In Ezekiel 28.13 it says, You were in Eden, the garden of God. Every precious stone was your covering.

Sardius, topaz, and diamond, beryl, onnitzt, and jasper, sapphire, emerald, and carbuncle, and crafted in gold were your settings and your engravings.

On the day that you were created, they were prepared. And so, these same stones are going to be used for the ephod. And what God's asking now to be given for the tabernacle are the same things that God laid up in the garden of Eden.

And while I'm dealing with things I don't deal with a lot, on the day that you were created, they were prepared. There's a lot of discussion about the age of the earth.

[33 : 25] How old is the earth? I fully believe that God made the earth to appear older than it was. God created it fully. In other words, He made rock that we know this kind of rock may be made from magma and pressure from years.

What about diamonds and the pressure needed on carbon to make a diamond? what says God gave them diamonds and all these precious stones on the day that they were created and prepared.

So just a side note there. And then in the tabernacle is the lampstand. We're going to look at the description of the lampstand but it really resembles a tree and how it's described.

And it sheds light upon the people and I think probably a reflection of the tree of life. And like the garden of Eden it was a place for man to meet with God.

But I've said this already it looks forward to heaven. The word here is there to build a sanctuary. Now sanctuary you can hear that word think of sanctify or saintness this is a place that's holy it's set apart for God a place set apart for holy use this was not to be used in ordinary ways.

[34 : 50] And even as I say that I want you to understand that they're creating a special place for God's worship that was unique. Do we have that today? I know we call this the sanctuary and I'm okay calling that if you can make some distinction with me.

I remember one time someone saying to me something about not being happy that there were kids up in the front running around and playing in God's house or in the sanctuary.

Well I'll defer to Charles Spurgeon in just a second to say some about that but let me say that we understand in the New Testament that we worship God in spirit and truth.

Wherever God's people gather for worship even in private family worship God meets us there. and so there's a sense in which anywhere can be holy and nowhere is distinctly holy the way the tabernacle or temple was but this is what Spurgeon says.

Can you bring that up? Spurgeon wrote he says I passed a church the other day and I saw on one of its doors the words the house of God.

[36 : 02] I thought is it? On the next door I saw the words the gate of heaven and I said to myself it is not so any more than any other door is.

Is this tabernacle God's house? While we worship him here it is but it is not any more holy than our own house is. One place is as sacred as another for God's presence has consecrated it all.

The most high does not live in houses made by human hands. Acts 7:48. Every part of my garden as I meditate on God in it is as holy as the aisles of the most venerable cathedral.

Your bedroom as you kneel in prayer before you lie down to sleep is as sacred as the temple of Solomon. Every spot where there is a devout worshiper is the abode of deity.

It is no more and no less so in one place than in any other. I thought what a great reminder for us here. So we are looking at something that is distinct in redemptive history.

[37 : 07] God is making a place where his presence is going to dwell uniquely. That doesn't limit God. God is still omnipresent but when they gather for worship they are gathering in one location. God has not so limited us in the new covenant.

One reason for that is because the gospel is spreading to the ends of the earth and gathering together weekly in one location would be feasible. Not only for the distance to travel but also for the number of people that God is bringing into his kingdom.

It isn't one nation. He is bringing in people from every tribe tongue and language. But there is also the fact that we have the Holy Spirit indwelling us that I spoke of earlier. And so God meets us he gathers with us wherever we worship in a way that is equal to if not greater than what they experience here.

But as we look at the tabernacle I want you to understand it through those lights of the old covenant and know that God is saying this is where my presence is going to be uniquely though not exclusively.

This is where you are going to gather to behold my presence. Now I thought in application how do these two things tie together?

- [38 : 24] Because I will admit to you they almost seem like two completely different subjects here. We have the free will offering and we have the presence of God. God's promise to dwell in their midst.

Are these things connected? And what I decided is the connection. I think what ties the whole message together and the whole passage together is this.

That what we desire determines how we use our money and our time and everything else in our life. what we desire determines our priorities.

As we think about that we realize every other use of our money will not last. I mean there are necessary expenses. Husbands and fathers you should provide housing for your family.

They need some covering and food and water clothing. there are needs that we are responsible to take care of those needs but also understand that how we use our money for God and for his kingdom has eternal impact.

- [39 : 36] Listen to Luke 12, 33-34. Jesus said, Sell your possessions and give to the needy. Provide yourself with money bags that do not grow old.

With a treasure in the heavens that does not fail. where no thief approaches and no moth destroys. For where your treasure is there will your heart be also.

So if we were to take what Jesus is saying here and kind of interpret it in light of what we've seen already. Sell your possessions, give to the needy, provide for yourself money bags that don't grow old, they're not going to wear out or run empty.

With a treasure in the heavens that does not fail where no thief approaches. nor moth destroys. For where your treasure is there your heart will be also. And think back to our passage. Everyone's to give.

From every man whose heart moves him you shall receive the contribution for me. So for me that's the connection.

- [40 : 43] It's the heart desire. If we were to say this in reverse we could probably follow the money trail. Maybe if some of you use Quicken or other bookkeeping software.

You track in your budget. Where we spend our money is some reflection of where our priorities are, where our heart is. And here God's saying, or Jesus is saying, to give.

For where your treasure is there, your heart will be also. And in exchange we store up a treasure in the heavens that will not fail, that will not be stolen, that will not rust or be eaten by moths.

So as we think about that, understand as well that God desires to dwell with us. That's what we see in this passage. God calls them to give from the heart if their heart is one that says, I want God to dwell with me.

God desires to dwell with me. I want him to dwell with me. I want to give to see that happen. And so God desires to dwell with us and he calls us to join him. Just a few passages where we see this.

- [41 : 56] And I'm going to run through kind of quickly. But Matthew 18, 20. For where two or three are gathered in my name, there I am among them. Matthew 28, 20. Teaching them to observe all that I commanded you and behold, I am with you always to the end of the age.

1 Corinthians 3, 16. Do you not know that you are God's temple and that God's spirit dwells in you? God's temple, which is a more permanent version of the tabernacle.

Where does God dwell now? Well, his spirit indwells the believer. And then Hebrews 3, 6. Christ is faithful over God's house as a son. And we are his house if indeed we hold fast our confidence and our boasting and our hope.

And so there's this desire in God that he wants to dwell among his people. He's working throughout history. He sent his son to ensure that he will dwell with us.

But there needs to be also in us a desire to dwell with him. Is that what we long for? Is that our desire in our heart? Well, again, I think that's the connection to from every man whose heart moves him, you shall receive the contribution for me.

[43 : 09] They had no problem giving up to the gold and silver because they loved something more than gold and silver. God and his presence among them. Think again of that verse.

For where your treasure is there your heart will be also. Those who gave, gave because they their heart and their treasure was already set upon God and his presence.

I want to encourage you that Jesus came to die that we might dwell with him. And I've already talked about this some, but all of redemptive history, human history, has been building to the point of dwelling with God in heaven or the new earth in heavens.

us. We see Jesus even embraces poverty on our behalf. 2 Corinthians 8 9. For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you by his poverty might become rich.

So here's the example that's set for us in the person of Jesus Christ. Christ. That though he was rich, everything is his.

[44 : 37] The cattle on a thousand hills, everything is his. And he, as it were, gives that up to come to earth. But also the spiritual realities, the communion he had with God is effected in the incarnation, and especially at the cross.

Yet for your sake he became poor, so that you by his poverty might become rich. For us to attain to the riches, those treasures in heaven, the grace of God required the outpouring of the riches of Jesus Christ, that he would become poor for our sake, that we might join him in the riches of the Father.

As I said earlier, he sent his spirit into our hearts. And that ought to change how we live. We know now that we are the tabernacle or the temple of the Lord if you're a Christian. And Paul draws this conclusion in 2 Corinthians 6.16.

What agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God. As God said, I will make my dwelling among them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

Now that's the passage we've already seen in the covenants, but also in Exodus 29 that was referring to the tabernacle. God has said he was going to do that. Did he mean the tabernacle?

[45 : 58] Well, yes and no. Yes, but ultimately he meant something greater than the tabernacle. And we say, oh, the temple. No. Something greater. Yes, but no. Something greater still.

What is that? He sent his spirit to indwell us. But there's implications of that. The sanctuary was to be a holy place for God.

God. And nothing profane was to enter it. And Paul drives the same conclusion. If you then are the temple of the Lord, what place do you have touching or lusting for idols?

But nothing can clean enter. And so, I must want to say, with greater blessing comes greater responsibility. This building is not God's sanctuary today.

God's sanctuary is in the heart of believers. Many of you in this room are the sanctuary of God. And that should change how we live. But I want to end by encouraging you that one day we will dwell in God's presence for all eternity.

[47 : 03] Listen to Revelation 21, verse 3. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them and they will be his people and God himself will be with them as their God.

And that Revelation 21 speaks of that new earth being instituted or the consummation of that new earth. And it quotes that same covenant promise.

The one we see here in reference to the tabernacle, the one that was promised to Abraham, he will dwell with them and they will be his people and God himself will be with them as their God.

This is what history has been building for. One day, Christian, you will dwell in the presence of God in a new earth without the effects of sin.

But we will know the joy that we long for greater than Adam and Eve ever knew. In the meantime, we're encouraged by the fact that we are the sanctuary, we're the temple, the tabernacle.

[48 : 04] His spirit indwells us. My prayer is that even as we saw about our hearts, that our hearts would be moved. Not primarily forgiving, although I see that as something God's called us to, but that our hearts are moved to long for the presence of God, that we would dwell in his presence, ultimately in eternity.

But I pray for those of you who are here who have not trusted in Jesus Christ, that you would know what I said earlier to be true, that God has made us for the joy of his presence.

And we're looking for joy in all the stuff that doesn't satisfy us. My prayer is that you would look to God, that you would long for, that your heart would move you to desire to dwell with God in his presence.

Let's pray together. Let's pray together. Dear Heavenly Father,