



MT. ROSE REFORMED
ORTHODOX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

The Master Builder

Reverend Scott Johnson | October 18, 2026 | Exodus 35:30 - 36:7

Old Testament Reading

The Old Testament reading is Exodus chapter 35, verse 30, to Exodus 36, verse 7. And this is the inerrant and infallible and inspired word of God.

Then Moses said to the people of Israel, "See, the Lord has called by name Bezalel the son of Uri, son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah, and he has filled him with the Spirit of God, with skill, with intelligence, with knowledge, and with all craftsmanship, to devise artistic designs, to work in gold and silver and bronze, in cutting stones for setting, and in carving wood, for work in every skilled craft. And he has inspired him to teach, both him and Oholiab the son of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan. He has filled them with skill to do every sort of work done by an engraver or by a designer or by an embroiderer in blue and purple and scarlet yarns and fine twined linen, or by a weaver, by any sort of workman or skilled designer.

"Bezalel and Oholiab and every craftsman in whom the Lord has put skill and intelligence to know how to do any work in the construction of the sanctuary shall work in accordance with all that the Lord has commanded."

And Moses called Bezalel and Oholiab and every craftsman in whose mind the Lord had put skill, everyone whose heart stirred him up to come to do the work. And they received from Moses all the contribution that the people of Israel had brought for doing the work on the sanctuary. They still kept bringing him freewill offerings every morning, so that all the craftsmen who were doing every sort of task on the sanctuary came each from the task that he was doing, and said to Moses, "The people bring much more than enough for doing the work that the Lord commanded us to do."

So Moses gave command, and the word was proclaimed throughout the camp, "Let no man or woman do anything more for the contribution for the sanctuary."

So the people were restrained from bringing, for the material they had was sufficient to do all the work and more.

New Testament Reading

Keep your place there in Exodus. That's our sermon text, and let's turn to 1 Corinthians 12 for the New Testament reading: 1 Corinthians 12, verses 4 through 11. 1 Corinthians 12:4–11:

"Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who empowers them all in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. For to one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the ability to distinguish between spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. All these are empowered by one and the same Spirit, who apportions to each one individually as he wills."

The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God will stand forever.

Introduction: God's Grace in Exodus

The passage that we looked at last week in Exodus was about, if you remember, the shining face of Moses. And so Moses, after he was in the presence of the Lord, his face would radiate something of the divine glory of God. And although that divine, holy light radiated, it inspired fear in the hearts of the Israelites. Nevertheless, at this point in Exodus, God's basic disposition towards His people is not one of judgment or condemnation, but God's basic disposition towards His people here is one of grace.

As we've been going through the book of Exodus, we have learned the story of Israel's disobedience, but of God's mercy. The people broke the covenant. They broke the covenant that God made with them when they made and worshiped the golden calf. However, out of His

amazing grace and mercy, the Lord took them back. He forgave them. He restored them to Himself, and He graciously renewed His covenant with His people.

And part of that renewal of God's covenant with His people, of bringing them back to Himself, was the renewal of the promise that God had made to His people that He would dwell in their midst. This is really one reason why the Lord brought His people out of Egypt in the first place: that He would be their God and dwell in their midst. And of course, the means by which the Lord would dwell in the midst of His people was the tabernacle that the Lord instructed Moses and the Israelites to make for Him.

An Example of Faithful Obedience

And this morning, we are picking up in Exodus at the very beginning of the work of building the tabernacle. We've already gone through all of the instructions on how the tabernacle was to be built and all of its various components and the garments of the priests and so on. But now we're just about to the place where the tabernacle is about to be built.

And just before our passage, Moses called for the people to contribute all of the various materials that would be needed for constructing the tabernacle. And there would be all kinds of stuff that would go into the making of this tent: gold and silver and bronze, and blue and purple and scarlet yarns, fine twined linen, and so on. And the people responded to this call of Moses to give, to contribute to the building of the tabernacle, very, very faithfully.

Verse 29—which is a verse we did not read, but just before our passage in chapter 35—sums up the people's contribution this way: "All the men and women, the people of Israel, whose heart moved them to bring anything for the work that the Lord had commanded by Moses to be done, brought it as a freewill offering to the Lord."

And so here is a time in which the Israelites responded to God's command with great faithfulness, with great obedience. And it's very refreshing for us to read this in Exodus, because most of what we have seen from the people of Israel in the book of Exodus has not been a model of faithfulness or obedience.

Just to name a few examples: you remember how the Israelites grumbled and complained in the wilderness because of a lack of food and water? Despite the fact that the Lord provided for them miraculously, nevertheless, they grumbled, they complained, they moaned. They were guilty of

unbelief. They did not trust the promise of God that He would deliver them from the Egyptians when they were on the brink of the Red Sea. But of course, He brought them through. He fulfilled His promises to them.

Worst of all, the Israelites—when Moses was up on the mountain receiving from God the two tablets of the Ten Commandments, that covenant that God made with His people—the people were down below at the foot of the mountain, reveling in their idolatry, worshiping a golden calf, engaged in all kinds of debauchery.

And so the Israelites haven't given us much of a positive example for us to follow as we've been going through the book of Exodus. Mostly, they've given us a bad example. And often the lesson that we've learned as we look at the Israelites in Exodus is: don't be like these Israelites. Don't be unbelieving, don't be idolatrous, don't be unfaithful, like the Israelites were in the wilderness.

Serving and Giving for the Church

But in our passage this morning, the Israelites do give us a good example to follow. To the command of the Lord given through Moses, the people give themselves, they devote themselves with tremendous zeal, with a willing heart, both to give for the building of the tabernacle and also to contribute to the work, to do the work of building the tabernacle.

And so for us as Christians today, this is an example for us of how we are to serve, how we are to give for the building up of the body of Christ. We have to remember that though God has delivered us from sin and death, He has saved us in order that we might have that glorious hope of being brought into heaven one day, that is not the only reason that God has saved us. But part of the reason that the Lord has saved us is so that we would be His servants, that we would devote ourselves to the great work that He has called us to. And we could sum up that work in this world in terms of building the church, of advancing the kingdom of God.

And in this passage, there are two ways that the Israelites give us a positive example worthy of imitation: First of all, God's people used the gifts and abilities that God had given them to build the tabernacle. That'll be our first point. Secondly, God's people gave generously of their resources to provide for the building of the tabernacle.

So they served and they gave. And we'll consider both of those things this morning.

Christ Is the Ultimate Builder

But first, before we do, I want to be sure about one thing that we are all very clear on, and that is: it is Jesus Christ who builds His church. So this message is about how we are to serve and to give to build the church. But let's remember, let's set this as a foundation at the beginning: it is Christ, it is the divine Lord Jesus who builds His church. And so no matter what we say about our service in the kingdom of God, no matter how important that is, nevertheless, it is Jesus at the end of the day who builds His church.

Matthew 16:18 says—and I tell you, these are the words of Jesus—"I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Jesus says, "I will build my church." And Jesus speaks as the one who is the sovereign Lord of heaven and earth. He is the incarnate Son of God. He is God in the flesh. And He reigns over heaven and earth as the one who has absolute divine authority over all things. He reigns over all things, and He rules in order to call His people to Himself, to redeem His people from sin and death, to bring them to Himself, and to establish His reign over His people on earth. Jesus rules in order to establish His church, His kingdom, and He is building His church day by day in this world.

People Are God's Method

However, having said that, at the same time, we also must say that the sovereign Lord Jesus Christ works through the instrumentality, He works through the means, of people. Jesus uses people in order to accomplish His divine work.

Let me read to you a quote from a book that is on prayer, but is very applicable to what we are considering here this morning. This is from *Power Through Prayer* by E.M. Bounds. He says, "We are ever working to provide and stimulate growth and efficiency for the gospel. This trend of the day has a tendency to lose sight of the man, or else he is lost in the workings of the plan or organization. God's plan is to make much of the man, far more of him than of anything else. Men are God's method."

And when it comes to Christ building His church, it is His sovereign work, but men are His method. And what we mean by men here is people: God's redeemed people—men, women, children, all those who know the Lord Jesus Christ and serve Him. People are God's method.

And this has always been God's way. God has always used people as His instruments through which He accomplishes His purposes. We see that here in the book of Exodus with the building of the tabernacle. God did not have to give the building of the tabernacle to the Israelites. God could have commanded the angels in heaven to build a perfect tabernacle. God Himself could have created, by His mere word, a tabernacle and dropped it from the sky, from heaven, onto the ground in the midst of the Israelites. He could have done that, but that's not the way God worked.

Rather, it was God's will, according to His perfect wisdom, that His tabernacle would be built by His people. It would be built by His people as He filled them with His Spirit, as He equipped them and gifted them with the skills necessary to build it, and as He provided materials for it, also through His people.

And in the very same way, this is how Christ builds His church. It is through His servants. It is through His people, whom He fills with the Holy Spirit, whom He gives a heart and a willingness to serve and to give.

And so, from a human perspective, we can look at the church and we can see it in terms of how God's people are serving and giving, using their gifts and worshiping God and so on. But in the end, all the credit, all the praise, all the glory for the establishment of God's kingdom, for the advance of Christ's church, goes to God Himself, to Jesus Christ Himself. It is He alone who does the divine work of building His church.

The Apostle Paul says in 1 Corinthians 15:10, "But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace toward me was not in vain. On the contrary, I worked harder than any of them, though it was not I, but the grace of God that is with me." And so Paul says no one has served the Lord—and he's not boasting, he's telling the truth—no one has served the Lord like me, but it was not I, but the grace of God at work in me.

And that's the same for every believer in Jesus Christ. Whatever gifts God gives us, however we use them, in whatever way we serve, we can only say: it is not I, it is not from me, but it is the grace of God within me who wills and to work, who causes me to work, who works through me to accomplish His purposes.

And so, it is Christ who builds His church through His people.

Using Our Spirit-Given Abilities

And with that in mind, the first way that the Israelites leave us a positive example in this passage is they show us that God's people used the gifts and abilities that God had given them to build the tabernacle.

So in verses 30 through 35 in chapter 35, Moses tells the people of Israel that the Lord has called and appointed two men to lead in the building of the tabernacle: two men who were filled with the Holy Spirit, two men who were equipped by God for this work. And these two men were Bezalel and Oholiab. And in addition to that, we read how the Lord gifted and equipped different kinds of craftsmen to do all the work in building the tabernacle.

Think of all of the work that had to be done to construct this tabernacle. There was work with precious metals, there was work with jewels, there was stonework, woodwork, weaving and embroidery, and so on. And so God gave gifts to His people He filled with His Spirit, at least two of them, in order to accomplish all of this work.

And one reason why the Lord gave His Spirit particularly to Bezalel and Oholiab, and also why He filled the other craftsmen with skill to build the tabernacle, was because the tabernacle, because it was going to be the dwelling place of God on earth, it had to be a place that showed forth the beauty of the Lord. And so, on the one hand, it was built by the Israelites, it was built by humans, but on the other hand, it was built by them as they were filled with God's Spirit, gifted and equipped, in order that it would be a suitable dwelling place for God, that it would show forth the beauty of God. It itself had to be a tabernacle of beauty.

Philip Ryken, writing about this passage, says this: "We serve a beautiful God who made a beautiful world, which he saved through his beautiful Son, so that we could become his beautiful people and live forever in his beautiful presence. God is so beautiful that everything in his tabernacle had to be beautiful, which is why he poured out his Spirit on Bezalel and Oholiab."

And so this was not just an ordinary tent, but this was to be the dwelling place of the Lord among His people. This was, we could say, the great building project of the people of Israel at this time in the wilderness, this tabernacle of God.

The Church: The Greater Tabernacle

Well, what is the great building project that God has called His people today to be engaged in? What are the people of God building today?

Well, it is the church. According to the New Testament, the church is the greater tabernacle. The church is the greater temple of God. 2 Corinthians 6:16: "For we are the temple of the living God." 1 Peter 2:5: "You yourselves like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house." Ephesians 2:22: "In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit."

And so one thing that this tabernacle in the Old Testament represents when we come to the New Testament is the church, the people of God. We are the new temple. We are the tabernacle. We are living stones in this new tabernacle. We are what Matthew Henry called "the gospel tabernacle."

And just like with the tabernacle in the Old Testament, the ultimate builder of this tabernacle, the church, is also God. It is Christ. And just as the Lord used His people back in Exodus to build His tabernacle, so God uses His people today, whom He gifts with various skills, abilities, and talents, to build His church.

Every Believer Is Gifted to Serve

Now, the Bible has quite a bit to say, especially the New Testament, about the gifts and the talents that God gives His people to serve Him. A lot of New Testament teaching about spiritual gifts is difficult to understand. If you come to the evening service, we've been going through 1 Corinthians looking at spiritual gifts. It's not all very clear exactly what is being said there. But there are a couple fundamental truths that the Bible gives to us that we should have firmly fixed in our minds when we think about this topic of spiritual gifts or how God equips us or gifts us to serve Him.

And the first truth is this: that God gives every believer gifts and abilities for service. So every believer, every Christian, receives from God some spiritual gifts and abilities or talents to serve Him.

Let's look again at our passage here in Exodus. In chapter 35, verse 31, Moses says that the Spirit of God filled Bezalel with skill, intelligence, knowledge, and craftsmanship. Then as we go on in chapter 36, verse 1, we read this about Bezalel and Oholiab: "in whom the Lord has put skill and intelligence to know how to do any work in the construction of the sanctuary." And then chapter 36, verse 2, speaks of "every craftsman in whose mind the Lord has put skill."

And so the Spirit of God not only filled Bezalel and Oholiab to serve as leaders for building the tabernacle and to teach others, but the Lord gave skills and abilities to all the rest of the craftsmen as well to do all the necessary work in constructing the different parts of the tabernacle. Now, the Lord didn't give to every single Israelite a skill and ability to be a craftsman to work on the tabernacle, but to all those whom God called to that service, He did equip them for that work. There wasn't one worker on the tabernacle who wasn't equipped by God, gifted by God, in order to engage in this work that he or she was doing. Every person who was called to work on the tabernacle received gifts for that purpose.

Now, when we come to the New Testament, because every single believer in the New Covenant, every single Christian, is called in some way to contribute to the work of building up of the body of Christ, for that reason, God gives gifts and abilities to every believer. Every Christian receives some gift, some ability, some talent to be used in building up Christ's body. As I said, not everything in the New Testament about the topic of spiritual gifts is easy to understand, but this truth is very clear. The New Testament is very clear about this: that God gives every Christian gifts for service.

So let me read again from 1 Corinthians chapter 12. This is our New Testament reading. It says: "Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who empowers them all in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good."

And so what this means is that no matter how or no matter who you are, if you belong to Jesus Christ by faith, by His grace, God has given you some gift or gifts. He's given you a manifestation of the Spirit with which you are to serve others for the common good. It doesn't matter how lowly you may think of yourself. It doesn't matter how humble you may think you are in terms of your abilities and gifts and talents and so on. As a believer in Jesus Christ, you have received some gift, some ability, some way in which you can serve the body of Christ.

Well, how do I know what my gifts are? Well, the best way to discover those gifts is by seeking opportunities, taking advantage of those opportunities that come to you in the providence of God to serve the body of Christ. And as you step forward in faith to serve, you will find that God will lead you, He will direct you to better understand, better discover what gifts He has given you for service. In other words, don't just sit around trying to figure out what your gifts are and then try to find a way to use them in the church, but open your eyes and see: how can I serve the body of Christ? What opportunities are there for me to serve now? I'll try serving in this way. I'll try serving in that way. And as you do, then the Lord will make clearer to you what your gifts are for service.

So God gives every believer gifts and ability for service. That's the first fundamental teaching from the New Testament that we want to be clear about.

Building Up the Body of Christ

Secondly, you are to use your gifts and abilities for the purpose of building up the church, the body of Christ.

So consider Bezalel. He was filled with the Spirit of God. He must have been an amazing craftsman, an amazing artist with everything that he was gifted to do. However, you'll notice that he did not use his gifts just to make beautiful pieces of art to please himself, to decorate his home, to show off to his friends, to open an art gallery. Bezalel was specifically filled with the Holy Spirit so that he could use his gifts to serve and bless the entire nation of Israel as he used them to build the tabernacle. And as for the other craftsmen to whom God gave gifts and skills and abilities, they too were called by God not to serve or please themselves with their gifts, but to serve their fellow Israelites.

And what was true for Bezalel, for the other craftsmen then, is true for you and me today. God gives us gifts specifically for the purpose of serving others, of building up the body of Christ.

Again, 1 Corinthians 12:7 says, "To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good." 1 Peter 4:10: "As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace."

And so, with those verses in mind, that we are all gifted, we are all called to serve the body of Christ, that raises the question for each one of us: well, how can I serve? How can I serve the church? How can I serve the body of Christ with what God has given me?

Well, there are all kinds of ways that you can serve the church, and I won't go into the many, many different ways that you could serve even locally here in this congregation, but here are just some of the ways that you can serve: You could host a prayer meeting. You could teach a Sunday school class. We are always looking for Sunday school teachers. You could invite a family over for a meal, or you could take a meal to a family who has had a crisis or who is very busy, who has not had time to cook. You could reach out to someone in the church who needs encouragement, who needs a friendly voice, perhaps to pray with them. You could befriend a brother or sister in Christ in the church. You could volunteer looking outside the church; you could volunteer at a local Christian ministry. You could just simply regularly pray for others.

And there are many, many, many other ways that you can engage in this calling to serve the body of Christ, to use what God has given you to bless others, to build up others in the church.

And so God has given you gifts for service, and you are to use those gifts for building up the body of Christ. And the question is, for you, for me: how will you serve? Not *should* you serve, but *how* will you serve? How can I contribute to the life of the church? How can I be a blessing to others in the way that I give of my time in serving others? And pray about that, and the Lord will guide you in answering that question.

So the first way that the Israelites left us with an example to follow is that they used the gifts and the abilities that God gave them to do what God called them to do: to build the tabernacle.

Joyful and Generous Giving

The second way that the Israelites left us with a positive example in this passage is that they gave generously of their resources to provide for the building of the tabernacle.

We didn't read earlier in chapter 35, but if we did, we would have read how Moses put out the call to all the Israelites to contribute materials for building the tabernacle. And it could be perhaps that Moses thought at that time—this is my speculation, this is not from the Word of God directly—but perhaps Moses was thinking at the time, "Well, I know these people, and I'll probably have to keep reminding them over and over that we need more contributions for the

tabernacle. We need more bronze. We need more fabric. We need more tanned goat skins and all that stuff. I guess I'll have to organize a bake sale at some point, probably organize a car wash. I don't know how I'm going to get all these people to give what we need for the tabernacle."

And if Moses had entertained any thoughts like that, then he would have been delighted to have been proven so wrong later. Because the Israelites, as it turns out, they gave and they gave and they gave, and they kept giving, and they kept giving every morning to the point at which the craftsmen finally had to go to Moses and say, in verse 5, "The people bring much more than enough for doing the work that the Lord has commanded us to do." So Moses had to go to the people and he had to say, "No more contributions for the tabernacle. We've got more than we need."

How many times have you heard a pastor say, "People, please, no more giving to the church. We don't know what to do with all this money"?

But the really beautiful thing about all of this is not how abundantly that the people gave—which was a marvelous thing that they gave so generously—but the really wonderful thing about all this is how they gave. They gave from the heart. They gave willingly, joyfully, not under compulsion, not reluctantly.

And chapter 35 describes their giving in different ways: In verse 5, it describes how they are to give with a generous heart. Verse 21: "everyone whose heart stirred him and whose spirit moved him brought the Lord's contribution to be used for the tent of meeting." Verse 22: "all who were of a willing heart brought brooches and earrings and signet rings and armlets." Verse 29: they gave as their heart moved them.

And so the people were not just giving abundantly, but they were giving with a joyful heart, a willing heart. They gave generously. We can presume they gave sacrificially.

2 Corinthians 9:7 is practically a description of how the Israelites gave here. That verse says, "For each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver." We have here a picture of cheerful givers and the way in which they contributed to the building of the tabernacle.

And as Christians, this is how we are to give our offerings to the Lord and to the church: with a willing heart, gladly, generously. And perhaps the Israelites had a vision in their mind and their

heart of what this tabernacle would look like. They wanted to give to the building of this tabernacle. They wanted to see the finished product and all of its beauty, to know that the Lord Himself would dwell there.

And as Christians, that too should be part of our giving. We ought to have a vision of the body of Christ, the redeemed people of God, being built up in love, of God calling His elect to Himself through the church. And this ought to fuel our desire as well to give to the church, to the work of the kingdom.

The Standard for Christian Giving

You know, I believe it's very significant that in 2 Corinthians, when the Apostle Paul is writing to the Corinthians about giving, you'll notice when you read those chapters in the middle of that book, you'll notice that the Apostle Paul never tells the Corinthians, "Give 10%, give a tithe, tithe your income to the church." He never says that. He could have. After all, the tithe was biblical. This was the percentage that the Lord required of His people to give, the people of Israel, under the Old Covenant.

But Paul lays down a different kind of standard. He lays down a standard that's not a number, not a percentage—a standard for giving for the people of God, and it is giving with joy, giving with gratitude, giving sacrificially, generously. That is the standard for our giving.

Now, to be sure, giving 10% of your income is a good rule of thumb for most Christians most of the time. However, I believe that if every Christian aimed at this greater standard that we have given to us in the New Testament—that we are to give joyfully, willingly, gladly, sacrificially—I believe that on the whole, the giving would be much more than 10% of our collective income. I think it would go way beyond that. It would certainly go way beyond what is the standard percentage of giving for evangelical Christians, which, from what I understand, conservative evangelical Christians give about 3 or 4% of their income. They're not even up to half of the tithe.

But be that as it may, this is the way we are to give: from the heart, as the Israelites did here. And we are to serve with our gifts gladly, from the heart, generously, as the Israelites did here.

And so we have here in Exodus a positive example for us in our giving and in our serving.

Looking to Jesus: Our Ultimate Motivation

But now the question is this. The question I want to ask you is this: how do we get there? How do you get to this place? How do you get to the place where you are giving in such a way that can be described as willing and joyful, that you are serving in such a way that is sacrificial and cheerful?

Well, of course, it all comes down to the grace of God. In this passage, it says that the Lord stirred their hearts to serve and to give. And so it's not as though the Israelites dug deep within themselves and they wheeled up from within their hearts this desire to give. No, the Lord stirred up their hearts. It was God who gave them this desire. So it's all of the grace of God.

But here's what you can do: First, don't look to your heart, but first look to Jesus. Look to Christ, and consider how Christ has served you for your salvation. Because before God called us to Himself, before He brought us to Him and into His kingdom in order to be His servants, God gave us His Son Jesus to be our servant, to serve us.

Jesus says in Mark 10:45, "For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many." When Jesus died the death that He died upon that cursed cross, He died as a ransom to deliver us from the judgment that was ours because of our sin. He gave His life as a ransom for many.

And just one implication of this amazing truth—that the Son of God came into the world to serve us, to serve us sinners by dying for us—one implication of that is this: there is no form of service in the church that is too mundane, too menial, too common, if it is service that builds up the body of Christ. There is no service that is below you and me. There is no way that we can serve the church that is below our dignity. If Christ Himself, the Son of God, could serve us by the suffering that He suffered, the reproach that He endured, the indignities that He was dealt with, then there is no form of service for you as a believer in Jesus Christ that is too lowly for you to engage in.

And Jesus served us with no concern for His personal status or reputation. Jesus did not come into the world in order to make a name for Himself. In fact, you could say that of all the people that really mattered in His Jewish society—the Pharisees, the Sanhedrin, and all of that, the Romans above them—Jesus was either dismissed by them or hated by them. He did not come to establish His own reputation or His name.

You'll notice here that in our passage in Exodus, that there were many, many craftsmen whom God called to serve to build the tabernacle. However, only two of them are named: there is Bezalel and Oholiab. These were extraordinarily gifted men. They were those who were especially filled with the Holy Spirit. And God does raise up such extraordinarily gifted people in the history of the church. From time to time, He raises up a Martin Luther, a John Calvin, a Charles Spurgeon, and so on. But these are extraordinary Christians. Most of us do not fall into that category.

Most of us are called to serve the church in a way which is unknown, unheralded, unremarkable. We are called to serve the body of Christ with no special recognition, no fame, without the praise and the adulation of others.

But think about the building of the tabernacle. I mean, who were the men who cut the timber for the frame? Well, we don't know their names. They're not recorded for us in scripture. Who were the people who hauled those frames to the construction site? Who were the women who worked with the blue and the purple and the scarlet yarns? We don't know. There were countless, nameless men and women who were engaged in the work of this tabernacle. It wasn't just the two men who built it themselves.

And in the same way, most of us serve the church in ordinary ways. Our names will not be written in the Bible. Our names and our service will not be recorded for posterity. And yet this is how we are called to serve. You serve in the mundane tasks. Perhaps it's the mundane task of preparing a budget for the church, or concerned with something to do with the building that we rent. Or perhaps you serve in the unextraordinary work of picking up the phone and making a call to a brother or sister who needs encouragement. Maybe you serve in the humble way of washing dishes after a fellowship meal.

But this is the way that Christ calls you and me to serve. And we should be willing to do it without recognition, without thanksgiving, just knowing that we are serving Christ. We should be willing to serve the church even anonymously. If no one knew how you served, would you still be willing to serve the church?

And so we need to consider how Christ served us for our salvation.

Secondly, we need to consider, as we look to Jesus, how He gave everything for our salvation. The scriptures tell us that Jesus impoverished Himself for our sakes, that we might be made rich.

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."

What an amazing truth that this verse tells us: that the Son of God, that God the Son, God Himself, the one who is infinite in glory and splendor and majesty, set aside that outward glory, that He became one of us. He was incarnate in the womb of the Virgin Mary. He became just an ordinary-looking baby boy. He gave up the joys and the bliss of His fellowship with His Father in heaven. He even came into the world in the likeness of a sinner. He came in the likeness of sinful flesh. He experienced all the limitations of our creaturely life. Even more than most of us experience, He was born in a low condition. And of course, He suffered. He was mocked. He was mistreated. He was disgraced. He gave up everything that pertains to His rightful glory as the Son of God. He was still God; nevertheless, He set aside His divine majesty, glory, and He came in the form of a humble servant. He became poor so that you and I might become rich.

And He also gave up His very life. He did not only die the physical death—He died on the cross, as horrific as that was—but even more horrific was the agony that Jesus endured as He bore the wrath of God poured out upon Him for the sins of the world, for your sin, for my sin. He suffered the agony of having His heavenly Father turn His face away from Him as He hung upon the cross.

This is how Jesus gave Himself for you. He gave up everything for you, for your salvation.

And so remember the grace that God has given you in His Son, Jesus Christ. This is why we serve. One author said grace is the best motivation for giving. How true that is. Guilt is a motivation for giving. Guilt is a motivation for serving. I can make you all feel guilty and perhaps you will give more and serve more, but that's not the right motivation. That's not the best motivation. It's grace: what God has done for you, what you have received freely from the Lord. This is where we want our hearts to be.

And so as you look to Jesus Christ, remember how He served you. He laid down His life that you might be redeemed. Remember how He gave up everything for you: He gave up His privileges as the Son of God, He gave up the joy of heaven and glory. And then when you

remember your Savior, what He's done for you, then you will have the heart, you will have the desire to serve, to give with willingness, with joy, just as the Israelites did here in building the tabernacle.

Let's pray.