

God's Generosity, Our Generosity
1 Chronicles 29:1-20

Introduction: This past Sunday was an opportunity to celebrate what God has done to date through our *Making Room* effort. The focus of the time was not on celebrating what we have been able to do. We weren't celebrating our pledges (nearly one million dollars pledged to date) or our plans for expanding our facilities or our commitment to reaching people for Christ. Rather, it was an opportunity to celebrate what God is doing here at Faith. Today we are looking at 1 Chronicles 29, which records how the people gave generously to fund the building of the temple and how David prayed in response to their generosity. David's prayer captures very poignantly what we should be expressing to God in light of the generosity that we have been able to express through the *Making Room* effort. His prayer gives us a grid for how we should think and pray.

Read 1 Chronicles 29:1-9

1. How is the generosity of the people of Israel seen in this passage? What words or phrases characterize the nature of their generosity?

Steve said:

In the first few verses of chapter 29 David details how generously he had given from his own treasury: gold, silver, bronze, iron, wood, and precious stones. Then he asked the people to give. He actually asked them to "consecrate themselves to the Lord" (v. 5) by their giving. He didn't merely want their gold and silver; he wanted their giving to be a personal expression of devotion to God.

2. How can giving be an expression of "devotion to God"?
3. Has the *Making Room* campaign affected your personal devotion to God? If so, how?
4. Verse 9 says that the people rejoiced because they had made their offering to the Lord with a "whole heart." What does it mean to give to the Lord with a whole heart?
5. Verse 9 also says that the people "made their offering to the LORD" as opposed to saying that they gave to the temple. What is the difference between thinking of our giving as being to the Lord as opposed to giving to a building project?

Read 1 Chronicles 29:10-20

6. How would you describe David's prayer? What things does he focus on in the prayer?

Steve said:

Verse 12 acknowledges that any "riches and honor" that David and the people possessed had come from God. There is no such thing as a "self-made person." God alone makes people great and gives them strength. If God had not blessed them with gold and silver and precious stones, they wouldn't have a thing. Paul made a similar point in 1 Corinthians 4:7 when he asked, "What do you have that you did not receive?" This is a foundational conviction for each of us: "God, all riches and honor come from You." As an exercise, think about your material riches, your financial assets, your wealth. Think about your career/job (if you have one), any authority or status you might have, any influence you have in the lives of others. Every single good thing you have was given to you by God. Paul said, "I am what I am by the grace of God." Even though he worked HARD as an apostle, everything he was and everything he had was a gift from God.

7. How firm in your life is this conviction - "God, all riches and honor come from You"?
8. If you really believe the truth that every single good thing you have was given to you by God, how would that affect the way you live and think about generosity?

Steve said:

David knew that it's very natural to begin a project with a very God-centered focus but to drift into selfishness or pride. The human heart is "prone to wander" as we sometimes sing. And so David prayed that the "heart of the people" would be inclined to God and that Solomon would have "a perfect heart to keep [God's] commandments" [vv.17-19]. We need to keep praying these things for ourselves as well. There's a healthy fear of becoming prideful or self-satisfied with nicer and larger facilities. But fear shouldn't dominate our thoughts of the future. We should be full of faith. We should pray as David did: "God, continue to give us willing hearts." Since this *Making Room* effort isn't an end in itself, we should assume that God wants to answer that prayer and keep our hearts sensitive to the things He cares about the most.

9. As you think about all that we've talked about in this *Making Room* campaign, what would you like to pray about together as a group?