March 27 – Exodus 36

There has probably never been anything like this event in the history of the church excluding the miracle of Pentecost. The never-ending complaint these days is concerning the insufficiency of resources to carry out the Lord’s work. I am reminded and convicted of a few lessons within the verses of this chapter. First, that the church of God is never held responsible to obtain means; secondly, that if the Lord gives work to do, He Himself will lay it upon the hearts of His people to contribute what is necessary; thirdly, that we are getting off track, and acting according to our own thoughts, if we undertake anything for which the needful provision has not already been made.

It is very beautiful to note the relation between the two things which are addressed before us. First, the keeping of the sabbath; second, the bringing of an offering unto the Lord, an offering which was the outflow of a heart "stirred up." First the resting in, delighting itself in the Lord, then the affections drawn out towards Him. It is a redeemed people, a people who behold the glory of the Lord, that are devoted to His cause. The giving of their substance is not a legal thing, a mere matter of duty, but a privilege and a joy. Here too it is the love of Christ which constrains us" (2 Cor. 5:14). We love Him because He first loved us, and we delight to give because He first gave to us. Nothing so moves the heart as the meditation on the love and grace of God as now revealed to us in the glorified Mediator, Jesus Christ.

But now let’s seek to take note of the connection between this third item and what has gone before. First we have had the sabbath, the soul resting in God; second, we have had the free will offering of the people, the heart’s affections drawn out to the Lord. Now we get active work. This puts service in its true position. Occupying as it does the third place, it shows us that acceptable service to God can only proceed from those who have passed from death unto life. Following, as it does, the other two, it suggests that the vital prerequisites for service are, delighting ourselves in the Lord and the affections flowing out unto Him. Only then can we truly "abound in the work of the Lord." Anything else is either the outcome of the restless energy, of the flesh, or is merely "bricks" produced under the whip of taskmasters.

John Piper said it best, “God is most glorified in us when we are most satisfied in Him.” Notice what happens in this chapter when the people’s hearts are “captured” by the goodness and love of God. They gave so freely to the work of the Lord that in verse 5-7 it says, “The people are bringing much more than enough for the construction work which the Lord commanded us to perform…For the material they had was sufficient and more than enough for all the work, to perform it”. What a difference a real love for the Lord makes in a person’s response to a call to serve. Beloved, ask the Lord today to capture your heart and open your eyes to His amazing grace and love extended into your life. Only then will service become a joy and a delight rather than drudgery.