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WORSHIPING A BIG GOD IN A SMALL CHURCH

I. We Worship Our Big God When We Serve His Purchased Possession

No matter the size, small church or large church they are all ones for whom the Savior shed his blood for.

“If the church was worth his blood, is it not worth our labour? The privilege of serving it is established by the preciousness of the price paid for its purchase” John Stott

The preciousness of the price paid for its purchase... for our purchase as well

Do you live amazed at the price that was paid for you to become his purchased possession? This should motivate our labor

Romans 12:1 “I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to...”

In view of the price paid... in view of mercy shown... no matter the size of church we should serve the Savior’s purchased possession with all that is within us.

“Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive an inheritance as your reward. You are serving the Lord Christ.” Colossians 3:23, 24

A. Your story

B. My story

II. We Worship Our Big God When We Pursue Excellence Even Though We’re Small

A. Excellence defined – Stewardship

“Excellence is the process – note that word process – of becoming better than I once was. I’m not to become better than someone else or even like someone else. Excelling is simply – and radically the process of improving over yesterday...” Harold Best

“God loves and honors people who are working at the edge of their stewardship, win or lose, gifted or normal.”

“Excellence is directly linked to sojourn, and sojourn is not going in circles, nor is it haphazard wandering. It is purposeful doing, even though the doing might be so new and so risky that it might appear for a while that we are moving in the dark.”

Unpacking some of these statements:

“The process of becoming better” - we all want best NOW! We hate the process

“I’m not to become better than someone else or even like someone else” – the temptation to compare

“Excelling is... ..improving over yesterday” being faithful with what God has placed in my hands

“...working at the edge of their stewardship, win or lose, gifted or normal” I fit best in the ‘normal’ category

“Purposeful doing” in view of the purchased price

B. Laying foundations – Doing the hard work

A good foundation guarantees long-term stability. What you build will stand the test of time and circumstance if you are building excellently

“Excellence is for everybody. It is commanded and we must pursue it. It is a process, not an event. And, in the final analysis, there are no earthly measurements for it.”

III. We Worship Our Big God When We’re Faithfully Stewarding What He’s Given

1 Peter 4:10 As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace: 11 whoever speaks, as one who speaks oracles of God; whoever serves, as one who serves by the strength that God supplies—in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ. To him belong glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

A. Steward spiritual growth (Me then the team)

1. Your team will never be more spiritual than their leader
2. Spiritual disciplines
 - a. Do you love God's word?
 - b. Is there time set aside daily for reading, meditating and memorizing?
 - c. Do you see the importance of sound doctrine in your own life and in the lives of your team?
 - d. Do you love the gospel?
 - e. Does your team?
3. Teach/read books regularly on the character of God, doctrine of sin, doctrines of grace, humility
 - a. Knowledge of the Holy (A W Tozer)
 - b. Attributes of God (A W Pink)
 - c. Humility (C J Mahaney)
 - d. Living the Cross-Centered Life (C J Mahaney)
 - e. The Enemy Within (Chris Lungard)

B. Steward musical growth (Me then the team)

1. Practice, practice, practice
2. Take a music course at a local college
3. Lessons
4. Have jam sessions with your band
5. Listen to CDs together, training videos, conferences

C. Steward relational growth

1. Create a culture that we are a family
2. Going through books together
3. Scheduled times of fun throughout the year
4. Surprise breakfasts on Sunday morning before rehearsal
5. Practice biblical fellowship (confession of sin, growing in humility)

D. Steward technological growth

1. Discover what tools are available (sound system elements, recording devices, click tracks, chart services)
2. If not your area of expertise, have someone help you
3. Not a big fan of music tracks. Limits flexibility and says that the issue is musical polish, not sincere servants worshipping God together.

- E. Steward administrative growth (with limited time)
 - 1. Communication
 - 2. Planning
 - 3. Rehearsals (specific examples)

IV. Temptations

- A. Emphasizing gifting with no concern for character
- B. Emphasizing character with no concern for gifting
- C. Complaining and comparison
 - 1. Cultivate gratefulness
 - a. Weekly email with the set list expressing your gratefulness to God for your team
 - b. Send a card of encouragement to someone specifically
 - c. Express thankfulness for the way they serve faithfully and excellently
 - d. A rehearsal should never begin without thanking them again and again for the gifts they are to you personally and to the church
 - e. Take a rehearsal night to share evidences of grace among you as a team
 - 2. View each member of your team as a gift from God
- D. Adding people to the team too quickly
 - 1. Better to not have someone join where there are perceived problem
 - 2. It's far more difficult to remove them

V. Creative Ideas

- A. Implementing various styles of music in your Sunday meeting (experimenting in rehearsal times)
- B. Using different musical instrument, different vocalists (changing things up from week to week. Who says it always has to be a 5 piece band?)
- C. Scripture read in between songs, prayers, great quotes can have a profound affect when done at the right time

VI. Faithfulness Rewarded

1 Corinthians 15:58 “Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain”

Galatians 6:9 “And let us not grow weary in doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up”

- A. It should be our goal to say like the apostle Paul, “I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on that day, and not only to me but also to all who have loved his appearing.” 2 Timothy 4:7,8
- B. There is coming a day where we will stand before our Savior. What a day that will be. My prayer is that we can all say along with the apostle Paul, “I fought the good fight of faith”, no matter the size of church