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David: Father & Steward

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Series: David
1 Chronicles 28-29

**BIG IDEA – YOU ARE TO PASS ON WISDOM, WEALTH, & WORSHIP
TO THE NEXT GENERATION**

Good morning, Two Cities Church. How is everybody? What a great video. That's the Cox family. There are a lot of families like them in our church. What I mean by that is when we moved here six years ago, we had 30 people. They moved with us from Raleigh-Durham. Imagine you moving from Raleigh-Durham. Some of you did. You're here now.

We had about 30 people move with us. We had 70 people who were in Winston who said, "We want to be a part of this thing that's going to become Two Cities Church. We're going to be a part of the launch team." Let me just tell you this. All 100 of those people had the same posture of heart the Cox family had, which was, "We're going to be all in with our time. We're going to be all in with our talent. We're going to be all in with our treasure."

When you think about it, how do churches like this happen? Well, there are always divine reasons for that. There are human reasons. One of the human reasons is we just had a core, committed, key group of people who said, "That's the posture of our hearts." What I hope you heard in that video is what motivates the Cox family to be generous. It's the gospel.

Here's the way we'd say it here: *grace turns you into a giver*. When you realize who God really is, the God of the Bible, you realize he's a giver and a forgiver. He's a giver. What did he give us? Well, how about all of creation? Isn't that an interesting thought? God created the entire world, and it was him and his Son Jesus and the Holy Spirit.

I don't know exactly how it happened. We don't get every detail. But at one point, they decided, "We want to share this with everybody." It's like, "Wow! That's unbelievably generous." Then when you understand... What do we sing about? What do we celebrate? What are we most excited about? It's the cross of Christ. And what is that? That's God being generous toward us. He gave his first. He gave his best. He gave his only.

So, here's what we see with God. When you love, you give. You can give without loving. People do that. Every once in a while, people give because... Who knows why people give? People give because of duty. People give out of guilt. People give to soothe their conscience. Here's the truth: you can give without loving, but it's impossible to love without giving.

What happens every time some guy falls in love with some girl? He becomes a giver. All of a sudden, he's like, "I'd like to buy dinner." If he really loves her, he's like, "I'd like to buy you a very expensive ring, and I'd love to share with you all that God has given me." That's what happens. What happens with every parent with their kid? As soon as the kid is born, you just become a giver.

Do you know they say the average kid is going to cost you a million dollars by the time they graduate? Some of you are like, "Wow!" Yeah. Why do you do that? Why do you sacrifice so much? It's like, "Well, I just love my kids, so I'm a giver." What we're going to see today, if you'll type to or turn to 1 Chronicles 28 and 29... We have a lot to cover. We're going to try to go quickly, kind of fly over it.

We get the last picture of David. Here's what's interesting. The last picture of David is David as a giver, David as a generous person. I'm going to meet you in 1 Chronicles 28 in just a few minutes, but let me tell you the background and catch us all up, because this is going to be the last sermon in this series. I've told you this before. I never think in terms of sermons or Sundays but entire series.

What we've seen are the milestones and the moments and the mountaintops and the seasons and the stages of David. When we first meet David, he's a young boy. He's 13, 14, 15, or 16 years old. We talked about how David is different from our culture. David avoids the temptations of youth. And what are the temptations of youth? Well, it's to give your youth and your strength to evil instead of good. It's to let your life be about cheap, instantaneous pleasure.

This is basically what every college student at Wake Forest University is doing. They're getting drunk and breaking commandments. Some people never escape that. You meet some guy, and he's 30 years old, and he's still living for cheap pleasure.

Now he's just playing video games in his mom's basement covered in Cheeto dust, but it's the same thing. We want to avoid that.

Then, as you get older, you have other opportunities. You enter midlife, and midlife has its own temptations. We saw, actually, David didn't do well in midlife. That's when he sleeps with Bathsheba. That's when he kills Uriah. That's when he forgets about God for a year or 18 months. Now we're at the end of David's life. Here's why this is important for us.

He's somewhere in his 70s. Some of us in here are already in our 70s or 80s, but a lot of us aren't there yet, but this is why this is an important message. This is an end-of-life message. This is how to end well. If you want to write the big idea for this message, it's...*How do you live a great life and leave a great legacy?* Not just have a good time, but how do you have a good life? David is going to be a picture of that.

This is important for everyone, whether you're 14 or 40 or somewhere in between. Here's why this is important for all of us: because we live in a culture that teaches you, and people act like, you're never going to get past 40 years old. People make decisions about their health. They make decisions about their relationships. They make decisions about their money. They make decisions about their schedule, and they act like they're never going to get past 40.

You don't want to have kids. You don't want to have kids? Kids are half your life. You'll realize that when you turn 40. People just don't think this way. So, I want us to learn from David, because we're all going to be there one day, and we would like to end well. Let me tell you the temptations at the end of life. These are the temptations as you get older. Like we said, every season and stage has temptations.

The temptation at the end of your life is, first, to *coast*. Have you ever met those people? They don't say this out loud, or maybe they do. "I already spent my time. I raised my kids. I worked my career. I served. I did it. It's time for me just to..." What? From a Christian perspective, just chill out for the next 20 years before you meet Jesus face-to-face? Listen. It's okay to retire from your job, but you can't retire from life. You can't retire from the Great Commission.

So, some people coast. Other people become unbelievably *critical*. Have you ever met *those* people? They're just bitter. They're usually bitter because of how they lived their life. This is the old guy telling the kids to get off his grass. He's just bitter. He's resentful. Usually, what happens is his life is full of regret. There are a lot of reasons to have your life be full of regret at the end.

Basically (you should know this too), most people... When they do studies of, "What do you regret?" people always regret what they failed to do more than what they did. That would be good to know. "I should have dated her. I should have bought that house. I should have taken that job. I should have gotten that education. I should have taken that risk. I should have gone to that place."

So, there are some people who are critical, there are some people who coast, and then there are other people who just *consume*. It looks different when you get in your 60s and 70s. It looks more like having a very extensive bucket list that's all about you. Well, fine. Have a bucket list. Fair enough.

But maybe put some good things on the bucket list, like, "I'd like to see my grandkids get baptized. I'd like to have a deep relationship with my grandkids. I'd like to impart something to the next generation. I'd like to go on multiple mission trips." That would be great.

With David, he's at the very end of his life. Part of what we're reminded of today is that life is short. I don't know if you've ever heard of the app WeCroak. Have you heard of this app? It's a Buddhist app. I'm not saying I recommend it, but it's an interesting app that became popular. You just download it, and all it does is randomly, throughout the day, remind you you're going to die.

So, you're putting the kids to bed or you're fighting with your wife. It's like, "You're going to die." It's like, "Oh. Okay. Maybe I should figure this out." So, life is short. You're going to die. The question is...*How do you avoid the temptations of old age?* I learned this from somebody else. You might look at me and go, "Well, how would you know how to avoid the temptations of old age?" Fair enough. I'll be 38 next month.

I learned this from an older godly man. He's a guy who's using his wealth and his property and his influence even into his 80s to help multiple generations of people. I got him alone one time and said some version of, "I'd like to be you. You're 80, and you're just vibrant, and you love your family, and you're not bitter." I said, "How do I become you?"

His answer was amazing. I'm going to tell it to you in a second, but the most amazing thing is he didn't even need to think about it. I guess if you already think about things, you don't have to think about it anymore. He knew the answer. He goes, "Kyle, the way to last long, the way to finish well is that your dreams always have to be bigger than your memories."

Now, we're not against having memories. I'm trying to put a tension and airbag around all this. We're not against memories, but the older people get, what do they

talk about? The good old days when their kids were in the home, when they fought the war, when they started their business. Fair enough, and those are all good things. Pass those on to your kids and grandkids. We need stories of the past, but we need to have a dream for the future.

So, we're going to see in these last two chapters, David is going to do four things. I'm going to give them to you right now, and then we're going to unpack them. He's going to do four things to live a good life and leave a good legacy. The first thing is he's going to have a God dream. A *God dream* is a dream of something you want to do for God. We'll look at that. Secondly, he's going to be a spiritual father to others. Powerful.

Thirdly, he's going to give people a clear plan of what to do when he's gone. Fourthly, he's going to have a generous heart. That's the whole message. How do you live a good life? How do you leave a good legacy? Well, you have to have a God dream, you have to be a spiritual father or mother and *look* for spiritual fathers and mothers, you have to have a clear plan, and you have to have a generous heart. Let's look at this.

01 DAVID GATHERS PEOPLE AND SHARES HIS HEART

If you look at chapter 28, verse 1, here's what it says: "*David assembled at Jerusalem all the officials...*" By the way, you'll see he's pulling the leaders together. "*...all the officials of Israel, the officials of the tribes, the officers of the divisions that served the king, the commanders of thousands, the commanders of hundreds, the stewards of all the property and livestock of the king and his sons, together with the palace officials, the mighty men and all the seasoned warriors.*"

David can't gather everybody, so, what do you do when you can't gather everybody? You gather the leaders. He's doing what every good leader knows how to do. I lead in concentric circles. If there's something important that needs to get out, I make sure the people who need to know most know first. Kind of a classic example would be... Say you get pregnant. Who should you tell first? Well, hopefully your husband.

Then after you tell him, you might say, "Who are we going to tell? Let's wait until 6 weeks or 12 weeks and we'll tell our parents, and then we'll tell our friends at 20 weeks, and we'll put it on Facebook at 30 weeks." Fair enough. What you're trying to figure out is, "This is important information. Everybody doesn't need to know at once. We want people to find out in the right order."

What David realizes is as the leaders of a nation go, or the leaders of a church go, or the leaders of a business go, so the entire business goes. So, he gets all of the leaders. Now, part of it's practical too. There were not microphones back then. He's not going to be able to get thousands and thousands and thousands of people to hear him, so he gets a couple hundred people who are leaders, and he explains some things to them.

Look at what he does. Look at verse 2. **"Then King David rose to his feet..."** If you read 2 Samuel, you also realize he had a lot of health issues. This probably wasn't easy for him to do. This is his final speech, both to his son and to the people. **"Then King David rose to his feet and said: 'Hear me, my brothers and my people. I had it in my heart...'"** What is your heart? It's the seat and center and sum of who you are.

He said, **"I had it in my heart to build a house of rest for the ark..."** David is known for doing two significant spiritual things in his lifetime. The first was bringing the ark back to the center of Israel and putting worship at the center of the people of God. The second was to prepare for the temple to be built.

Here's what he says. **"I had it in my heart to build a house of rest for the ark of the covenant of the LORD and for the footstool of our God, and I made preparations for building."** David says something. "I had this in my heart." Let me ask you a question that might be a little strange: What has God put in your heart?

I don't know that most people know what's in their heart. Most of us... You're really good at talking on the phone when you're driving. You're really good at listening to podcasts. You're really good at watching TV shows. You're really good at being on your devices. You're really good at talking to other people. Most of us are not very good at knowing our own hearts.

Now, how do you know your own heart? Well, it's not easy. Probably the main way is through personal prayer with God. You're praying about your marriage, and you're like, "Oh, *that's* what's in my heart about my marriage." You're praying about your kids. You're praying about your health. You're praying about your career, and then you find out what's in your heart.

I love what David says in verse 2. He's 70, and he says, "I had it in my heart to do something great for God." No matter what age you are, let me ask you *that*: Do you want to do something great for God? I hate to say that I think the average answer for the average... I'm talking Christian, real, genuine Christian.

The average Christian, so maybe you... You don't really want to do something great for God. Here's what you would like. You would like to be liked, and you'd like to be

comfortable. Sorry. Those are the exact opposite realities in life if you want to be meaningfully used by God. You're not going to be comfortable, and everybody is not going to like it.

I love what David said. "I had something great on my heart." What's great on your heart? Do you want to build some business that's going to honor God and serve others? Do you want to have a great family legacy and raise your kids to love the Lord? What are the great things you would want to do for God?

So, he says, "I had this thing on my heart I wanted to do for God." Look at what he says in verse 3. ***"But God said to me, 'You may not build a house for my name, for you are a man of war and have shed blood.'"*** This is interesting. Sometimes you want to do something great for God and it doesn't happen, at least in your lifetime. You'll meet people like that.

Sometimes you meet someone, and they're in their 40s or 50s, and they say something like, "It was in my heart to get married. I wanted to do that. I wanted to share my life with someone, and for some reason, it hasn't happened." Or you meet couples... I just met a couple after last service.

They're like, "We've had it in our hearts to have kids, and for some reason, we're not able to have kids, and even adoption is not working out right now. We don't know what's going on in our lives. We have a good desire, but for some reason, it's not happening right now."

Now here's the thing. What do you do when the desires of your heart are not being met the way you want them to be met? Maybe it's something you want to do for God, and it doesn't happen. Look at what he says in verse 4. ***"Yet the LORD God of Israel chose me from all my father's house to be king over Israel forever. For he chose Judah as leader, and in the house of Judah my father's house, and among my father's sons he took pleasure in me to make me king over all Israel."***

So, here's what you do when you realize, "Man! I'm not going to get to do what I wanted to do with my life." Usually you realize that the older you get. "There are certain desires I wanted to have happen that aren't happening. There are dreams I wanted to have happen that didn't end up happening."

First of all, you have a perspective of "Actually, I'm part of something bigger than myself." This is what David is saying. Basically, he begins to be thankful for the things God has allowed to happen in his life. He says, "Well, God did choose me to be king." See, what happens in your life... When things are going badly, you forget the good things God has done in your life. This is part of the human condition.

Part of the human condition is, for some reason (I don't know why this is), we are more sensitive to negative emotion than we are to positive emotion of the same amount. Let me give you an example. Say you have Verizon or say you have AT&T, and say they messed up on your bill, and they gave you \$50 back.

"Sorry about that. Now you have \$50 you didn't know you were going to have." You're pretty happy about that. If you lose \$50 to Verizon on something you shouldn't be paying, you will be on the phone for three hours with somebody in India. "I want to talk to your superior!" You are so frustrated by a loss way more than you are by a win.

What he says is, "I want to be unbelievably grateful. I'm part of a bigger story." We say this here all the time: We're not the main characters in the story. We're supporting characters. The story God is writing includes me, but the story is not ultimately *about* me, and I play my part. Here's what's helpful. He moves from just thinking about himself to thinking about his son. Look at what he does in verse 5.

"And of all my sons (for the LORD has given me many sons) he has chosen Solomon my son to sit on the throne of the kingdom of the LORD over Israel. He said to me, 'It is Solomon your son who shall build my house and my courts, for I have chosen him to be my son, and I will be his father. I will establish his kingdom forever if he continues strong in keeping my commandments and my rules, as he is today.'"

Maybe here's a way to think about it. As a church family, this will apply to all of us in different ways, because we're all in different stages. Sometimes you're David, and sometimes you're Solomon. What do I mean by that? Well, sometimes you're David, and what does David mean? It's like, "I want to do something; I'm not getting to do it."

One of the things you do when you're David is... If there's something in your life you want to do that you're not getting to do, you would want to help other people have that opportunity. Like, I have a friend, and he's a pastor of a church somewhere else, and it's a successful church. I was talking to him, and he said one of the passions in his heart...

I said, "How is the church going?" He goes, "It's going well, but really what I want to be is a missionary." But his wife is sick. His wife has all of these allergy things, and they can't figure out what's going on, and the missions agency won't send them because his wife is sick. So here he is. He's like, "I can't be a missionary." So what does he want to do? He wants to help be a church that sends a lot of missionaries. He's like, "I can't do this. I want to help other people be successful in this area."

So, sometimes you're David. You don't get to do something. Sometimes... And this is the humbling thing. This is some of your stories, and you just need to be thankful and

realize this. Sometimes you get to be Solomon. You get to do what your parents have been praying *they* would get to do, and they never got to do it.

What's the story of human history? Let me tell you the story of human history in, like, 30 seconds. Everybody before you sacrificed unbelievably so you could enjoy what you're enjoying right now. Most of human history... Almost every Christian suffered and sacrificed enormously so we could finally worship publicly and openly. Everybody was just giving their whole lives so that one day a generation could do what we're doing.

On a really personal note, we kind of feel this as a church. I say this in all humility. We feel like Solomon. By the way, there are no Solomons without Davids. There were Davids in our city for years praying, "Lord, would there be a movement of God?" We're not saying we're the only movement. We're not saying we're the main movement. We're not saying things started with us.

I'm simply saying the amount of baptisms we're seeing, the amount of churches we're helping to plant, the amount of missionary partnerships, the amount of conversions we're seeing, the building of a building in downtown... We are getting to do something unbelievably unique. So, what he does is he begins to think about Solomon. Look at what he says in verse 8. He challenges his son.

"Now therefore in the sight of all Israel, the assembly of the LORD, and in the hearing of our God, observe and seek out all the commandments of the LORD your God, that you may possess this good land and leave it for an inheritance to your children after you forever."

Here's the language of legacy. Do you see that? You want to live a good life and leave a good legacy. Now, what is a legacy? A *legacy* is the enduring impact you leave on those you leave behind. Now, a legacy is one of two things. A legacy is something you leave *for* people or something you leave *in* people.

How do most Americans think of legacy? They mostly think of legacy as what I leave for people, and that's really helpful. If you've ever met some guy who gets to inherit his dad's or grandfather's business... He's way ahead of everybody else. Somebody else did all the hard work. "We figured out all of the systems and structures, and everything is done. We have all of these employees. You have our last name, so you get to take this over." It's like, "Whoa!"

Or somebody leaves you a massive inheritance or somebody says, "We have a piece of property." There are a lot of things. We don't want to underplay the power of leaving something *for* people, but I think it's more powerful and more lasting to leave

something *in* people. What are those? Well, it could be vices (it could be negative). It could be values and virtues. Hopefully it's faith.

How do you pass along your faith? That's what you want to do. "I want to pass along a vision and view of God in worship." Here's how you pass along faith. Your faith has to be passionate, and it has to be practical. That's the only faith that gets passed along. Mom and Dad are passing along this faith to our kids, and it's because we're passionate about it.

When you see Dad or Mom reading the Bible, we're not just reading the Bible; we're seeking God. I don't want to pass on to my kids or to somebody a boring belief system. "Here are all of the beliefs Christians have. Here. Make sure you agree with these before you go to college." No. I want to pass on a life with God. I want to pass on a vision of knowing Christ and making him known.

But then it has to be a really practical faith. The only faith that's going to work and really be passed on is a faith like, "Oh, it actually affects Mom and Dad's money. It makes our marriage richer. It makes our relationships deeper. It gives us meaning and purpose in life." So, all David is going to do is pass this faith on to Solomon. Look at what he does in verse 9.

"And you, Solomon my son..." This is a personal word he speaks to Solomon. **"...know the God of your father..."** Not know *about* him...*know* him. **"...and serve him..."** Notice that knowing God always comes before serving God. Religion says, "Serve God and you might know him." The gospel says, "Know God; you'll be overwhelmed by his grace, and you'll serve him in response."

"...know the God of your father and serve him with a whole heart and with a willing mind, for the LORD searches all hearts and understands every plan and thought. If you seek him, he will be found by you, but if you forsake him, he will cast you off forever. Be careful now, for the LORD has chosen you to build a house for the sanctuary; be strong and do it."

I love this, because he moves from "I have a God dream; I have a vision of something I want to see happen in my life and through my life," and now he talks to his son, and he ends up being to his son a spiritual father. Now, being a father is unbelievably important in *this* society. I've told you this before. We live in a fatherless nation.

From the best we can tell (and it's probably worse than this), 43 percent of kids go to bed tonight with no dad in the house, no father figure in the house, no stepdad in the house. I saw this in a really sad way recently, in an interesting way, when I heard

about a YouTube channel. Maybe you've seen this or have followed this YouTube channel.

There's a YouTube channel called *Dad, How Do I?* It was started by a guy... He was a good dad. He had a couple of kids, but I guess, from what I could tell, *he* didn't have a dad. He knew what it was like to grow up without a dad, and he saw himself being a good dad, but saw so many kids who didn't have a dad, so he started this channel "Dad, How Do I?" It now has four million subscribers.

I went on and looked at what the most popular videos are. The number one most popular video is "Dad, how do I shave?" I just thought, "How sad." I remember watching my dad shave and being interested. That's what every 5- or 6-year-old asks their dad. "Dad, can I have a razor?" "No, not yet. Come back when you're 16."

Or the second most watched video was "Dad, how do I tie my tie?" That's sad, because I watched that. I was fascinated with that as a kid. I wanted to learn how to do that. You have no one in the house? You have to watch a YouTube video because you have no one to invest in you?

What is a dad? A dad is like a good tailwind. A dad helps you go farther faster. When I flew to India the first time, it was 15 hours there and 13 hours back. It was the same destination going back and forth. What was the difference? Well, a tailwind. What is a dad? You can think of a dad *this way*. A dad is like a backstop. If you meet a guy and he's insecure... This isn't every time, but most times.

I meet a guy. He's insecure about how he looks. He's insecure about his job. He's not driven in life. He's afraid to date a woman. Nine out of ten times, he doesn't have a dad. I get it. It makes you gracious toward that person, because what a dad says is "Go out there. I'm behind you. Start your business. I'll help you. Take some risks. Don't be foolish, but I'll help you."

What we see with David... If you look at verse 9, this is a good mixture of what a dad should do. ***"And you, Solomon my son, know the God of your father and serve him with a whole heart and with a willing mind, for the LORD searches all hearts and understands every plan and thought."*** So, he encourages him.

"If you seek him, he will be found by you, but if you forsake him, he will cast you off forever." He warns him and challenges him. ***"Be careful now, for the LORD has chosen you to build a house for the sanctuary; be strong and do it."*** I think in that little passage right there, you see kind of a microcosm or a summary of what a spiritual dad or a dad should do for the next generation. At one level, maybe a mom does it too, but think about it *this way*.

The spirit of a mom is more *this* spirit: "You're always accepted at home. Come back home. Stay as long as you would like. If you messed up, I accept you. I'm always going to love you, and I'm always going to forgive you." That's good. That's the spirit of a mom. The spirit of a dad is "Get out of here as soon as possible. I love you. Go do something with your life, please." You need that. But the spirit of a dad needs to be (we see it in David) both encouragement and challenge.

Encouragement is really important, because so many men get so little encouragement in their lives, especially if they didn't have a dad. What does society tell the average man today? The average guy shows up on a college campus, and it's like, "You're a white, middle-class, heterosexual man. You're the problem in the world." The guy is like, "I'm 18. Maybe I'm the problem. I don't know."

Guys need encouragement. Basically, guys need something like you catch them doing the right thing, and you say, "Did you know you're good at that? Did you know that when you talk, people listen? Did you know you're uniquely good at math and are able to calculate things really quickly? Do you know you're good at sales? Do you know you have a kind heart?" You just encourage that.

Men are looking for that. Most men have none of that in their life, and if you give them just a little bit of it, they're like, "Wow! Okay, I'll do more of that. Thanks a lot. No one ever told me I was good at that." So, you need to encourage them, but you also need to challenge. Challenge is hard, because you have to get that right balance when you're discipling someone, when you're investing in the next generation, when you're being a dad.

If you just overly encourage, that's not helpful. Just over and over. It becomes flattery. It's not really even true. If you overly challenge, you feel like you're in the military. No one wants to live in *that* household. So, what do you do if your son comes home with a B- on his math test? It probably depends on your son. Right?

I don't know. Maybe he's not very good at math, and he tried really, really hard, and you go, "Great job, man. You're not going to be an engineer, but great job. We're going to put you down this other path, but I'm really proud of you, because I know how hard math is, and I know how hard you worked." Or maybe it's challenge. It's like, "Come on, man. You're way better than this."

That's unbelievably life-giving, actually. If you love the person and say that... "You're really better than this. I know how smart you are, and I know you've not been working hard. I need you to work harder, because I need you to be the best you can be so you can honor God and help people." It's like, "Wow! Okay. That's what I need to hear."

So, this is what David does. He encourages his son, and he challenges his son. He warns him. He tells him to know and love God. He tells him to work hard. He tells him to be strong and courageous, but then look at what he does in verse 11. ***"Then David gave Solomon his son the plan..."*** Isn't this awesome?

Basically, "Hey, son, here's what I'm going to do. I'm going to encourage you, and then I'm going to give you a plan." In fact, go down to verse 19. In verses 11-20, he reads the plan in great detail. In verse 19, it says this: ***"All this he made clear to me in writing from the hand of the LORD..."*** This plan is from God's Word. ***"...all the work to be done according to the plan."***

Okay. If we're going to invest in the next generation, if we're going to be a multigenerational church, if we're going to live a good life and leave a good legacy, we have to have God dreams, things we want to see happen; we need to be spiritual fathers or we need to *find* spiritual fathers; and then we have to have a clear plan.

Do you see that he gives him a plan? That's what you need in life. That's what you need in all of life. In every area of your life, every person starts out as a novice. How would you know to walk with God? You're not going to know. How are you going to know to study your Bible? Well, someone is going to have to teach you. You're not going to know how to study your Bible.

How are you going to know how to pray and intercede for people and seek the Lord in prayer? Well, you're not going to know naturally. How are you going to know how to do an interview for a job? You probably won't. How will you know to put a good résumé together? You probably don't know how. How would you know how to court a woman? You won't.

How would you know how to get married and stay married? You definitely don't know that. How would you know how to raise kids? How would you know how to buy a house or build wealth? The answer is you're not going to know any of that. That's why you need a plan.

The best thing we can do for the next generation is give them some type of plan from God's Word. I tell people this all the time. If you don't know what to do, here's what you should do: do what every other person has always done. Find some other great people and see how they live their lives. Read Scripture and make a plan.

Here's the thing. A plan is how you know you're serious about something in your life. Let me give you an example. A friend of mine, not in this church... He's in a different church, actually in a different city. He's fairly overweight. I'm going to see him in

October. He told me, "I want to lose 30 pounds." It probably would be a five- or six-month window to do this, so it's realistic.

He goes, "I want to lose 30 pounds by the time I see you in October." I said, "Great." I said, "What's your plan?" I could tell he didn't have a plan. He said, "My plan is to watch what I eat." I thought, "Look at it before you put it in your mouth? What do you mean 'watch what you eat'? That's not a plan. That's a plan to fail."

A plan is "I'm stepping on the scale every morning at 7:00 a.m. to see if I'm making any progress." A plan is "I'm telling 10 people who are close to me so that when I'm eating with them, they're going to be watching and I feel the healthy peer pressure I need to feel to do this." A plan is, "I'm making a list of food I'm not eating for the next four months."

A plan is "I'm putting together some workout routine, no matter how pathetic it is, because I haven't worked out in a long time, but it's going to be something I'm going to do." Now we have a plan. Right? The plan for your health can't be "I'm going to buy sweatpants with an elastic waistband and see how things work out." You're either making plans or you're making excuses.

What is your plan for your finances? Most people's plan for their finances is like, "Let's just spend what we have and hope we keep making more money." That's not a plan. Most people's plan for disciplining their kids is "Let's just bring them to church when we're in town." That's not a plan. You need a plan for your marriage. You need a plan for your career. A plan is "How do I make it from point A to point B?"

What I love with David is he gives Solomon a plan, and he prays for him. We believe in both here: planning and praying. What is planning? The book of Proverbs. What is praying? The book of Psalms. They're right next to each other. We need them both. Think of them as two oars, and you're paddling your canoe. What do you do if you just have one oar, if you just have prayer or you just have planning?

Have you ever paddled with one oar on one side of the boat? You're like, "I'm exerting a lot of energy. I'm going nowhere, and I feel like I'm going in circles." You *are* going in circles. That's how people feel if they only pray about things. That tends to be more common in the charismatic, Pentecostal circles. "Let go and let God," and prayer is an excuse for me not to do anything.

Probably around us it's more planning. Do you ever meet people and it's like, "You've wrecked your life six times. Yeah, you had plans. They just weren't submitted to Scripture. They weren't wise. They weren't thoughtful. They weren't in community. They weren't prayed over."

So, he gives him a plan, and he gives him prayer, but then I want you to see what he does in verse 21. ***"And behold the divisions of the priests and the Levites for all the service of the house of God; and with you in all the work will be every willing man who has skill for any kind of service; also the officers and all the people will be wholly at your command."*** I love this.

How do you live a good life? How do you pass on a good legacy? Okay. You need to give your kids and the people you're discipling and others... It would be helpful if you gave them a plan. The second thing that would be helpful is if you prayed for them, of course, and the third is if you connected them to the right people. Do you see that's what he's doing? "Hey, I've got to go. I'm not going to be around much longer, but here are the people you need to know when I'm gone."

If you're not at the end of your life, it's like, "Here are the people you need to know right now." Why do we have age and stage ministries? If you don't know what that means... Why do we have a kids' ministry, a middle school ministry, a high school ministry, and a college ministry? You don't have to be part of our age and stage ministries, but I would encourage you to get your family connected.

What do you want? It's like, "I would like other families like us that I could be friends with that would hold us accountable. I'd love my daughter... By the time she's in seventh grade, I wish that she would have some other godly friends who could be examples." Well, the age and stage ministries are our ways to say, "We want to connect you to the right people."

That's the amazing thing about the local church. The amazing thing about the local church is, like, "Do you want to go into law? There are three or four lawyers you could probably meet in this church who would help you. Here's what it's like to be a Christian in law. Here are the unique temptations in law." Some medical student shows up here all the time. They're new.

It's like, "Let me connect you to a third-year medical student. Let me connect you to a resident. Let me connect you to a fellow. Let me connect you to an attending. You're married in medical school? Great. Let me connect you to this other couple that was a little older and married in medical school. You're going to need to know them, because you don't know what you don't know."

So, we're going to give you a plan, we're going to pray, and we're going to connect you to people. Then David ends with this: "And I'm going to be unbelievably generous to help you. I'm going to be willing to sacrifice." Literally, chapter 29 is just David telling Solomon, and everybody else, his financial commitment to see this temple be made, his financial commitment to help his son. I want you to see this.

02 DAVID LEADS IN GENEROSITY

Chapter 29, verse 1, says this: *"And David the king said to all the assembly, 'Solomon my son, whom alone God has chosen...'"* So, David understood that *he* was chosen, and then he understood that his son was chosen. *"...whom alone God has chosen, is young and inexperienced..."* If I was Solomon, I would be like, "Dad, do you have to tell them that?"

"...and the work is great, for the palace will not be for man but for the LORD God. So I have provided for the house of my God, so far as I was able, the gold for the things of gold, the silver for the things of silver..." He goes through all of the things he's providing. Here's the interesting thing. At the end of chapter 29, David is going to ask everybody else to give, but he's going to first lead in giving. You can't *point* the way; you have to *lead* the way.

David understood something that I think we all understand, but maybe we need the words for and language for. There's a difference between what's called *positional authority* and *moral authority*. *Positional authority* is "Do this because of the position I'm in." This is what a bad boss does. A bad boss appeals to his title. "I'm the boss. I'm the manager of *this*." Well, fine. Pull that card occasionally, but nobody wants to follow somebody who has to pull the position card all the time.

Or even in the home, this can sometimes happen. "I'm Dad, so just do this." Say that sometimes, but you don't want to lead with that all the time. Positional authority is just "Do this because I'm in charge." That's not what David is appealing to, although he's the king. He could just say, "Guys, we're going to all give to this." He appeals to moral authority. *Moral authority* is "Guys, I'm not asking you to do anything I'm not already doing."

The people you want to follow, the people you naturally admire, are people who have moral authority in an area. If you have positional authority, but you don't have moral authority... Sometimes it takes a while to see that. You're like, "That person just has the position. They don't actually have moral authority." You tend to resent them. You tend to not want to follow them. We would call that in Scripture a *hypocrite*, someone who has positional authority and not moral authority.

This is kind of a silly example, but imagine an overweight, out-of-shape personal trainer. You're meeting with him. He's like, "All right. *This* is how you need to eat, and *these* are the stretches, and do these exercises. Run *here* and lift *here*." You look at

him and go, "Do *you* do any of these? You look like you went to school and have a degree in this, but you don't look like you do this."

Or the financial planner who is telling you, "Here's what your 401(k) needs to be. Here's what you save for savings. Here's what you put away for college. Here's your Roth. Here's your 529." You're like, "Okay." Then you find out his whole finances are a mess. You're like, "Oh, you have a degree in this. You go to other people's houses, and you use your financial planning position to tell people something, but you're not doing any of this yourself." It's unbelievably frustrating.

So, David has moral authority. He says, "Guys, I'm going to be unbelievably generous." Look at what he says in verse 3. ***"Moreover, in addition to all that I have provided for the holy house, I have a treasure of my own of gold and silver, and because of my devotion to the house of my God I give it to the house of my God..."***

Basically, David tells us first why he's giving. He goes, "It's because I'm devoted to God. I'm not giving out of guilt. I'm not giving to ease my conscience. I'm not giving out of duty. I'm giving out of devotion." Devotion is like discipline and delight. It's a practice, it's a discipline, but I actually really enjoy it. It's a part of his worship. What he's saying is "I'm going to give to what my heart loves." By the way, that's true for everybody.

We don't know ourselves very well, obviously. So how would you know what you love? Well, you could try to tell yourself what you love. You might be honest with yourself. You might be willfully blind and not tell yourself the truth. The way you'll know what you love is you have to go, "Okay. Let me actually look at what I did last week with my schedule, and let me look at my bank statement and see where all my money went." That's how you'll know what you love.

I have a friend, and his kids go to a private Christian school. We were talking about it at one point, and he said, "Man, for me...my kids go to private Christian school...it's my favorite check that I write every month, because I love how it's influencing my kids. I love how their lives are being changed.

I love the teachers who are investing in them. I love the friends they're making. I love the academics and the athletics and the activities they're getting to be a part of. Though it's a big check, when I write it, I'm excited, because I genuinely see it making a difference." That's what David is saying.

Here's another way to think about it: we all give to what we love most. You know, tithing... If you're new and have never heard that word before, *tithing* is a Christian word that means a tenth. It's the whole idea of giving a tenth of what you have to the

kingdom of God. I actually believe everybody tithes. Not everybody tithes to the kingdom of God, but everybody tithes to what they love most.

I know it's dangerous to throw out numbers, but say someone makes \$50,000, and it's a woman, and she's obsessed with her appearance. It's possible for her to tithe to her appearance. That would be \$5,000 for the year. All you need to do is outfits and makeup and haircuts and lotions and potions. I don't know all that stuff. All of a sudden, you spend \$5,000...essential oils, all that kind of stuff.

Or how about *this*? What does the average Millennial spend all their money on? Bourbon collections, microbreweries, foodie things like avocado toast, travel. All of a sudden, way more. All of a sudden, you're like, "No, no, no. I actually give more than 10 percent. I give 20 percent. I spent \$10,000 of my \$50,000 income this year just going away."

What do young couples do? Well, they watch a lot of Chip and Joanna Gaines, so then they tithe to housing projects. "We're just going to give any extra money we have to making our house look better." What do guys do? Guys tithe to their country club. They give nothing to the kingdom of God, and they tithe to their country club. It's their place of worship. It's their place of community.

So, everybody tithes. The question is...*What do we tithe to? Where do we tithe?* Look at what he says here. This is interesting. In verse 4, he tells us how much he gives. Look at this. **"...3,000 talents of gold...and 7,000 talents of refined silver..."** He gives a total of 10,000 talents.

Here's an interesting thing. He actually tells people... I'm not recommending that we do this and you have to tell everybody, but he goes public with the exact amount of money he's giving to the kingdom of God. Does anybody know, outside of your spouse, what you give to the kingdom of God, and would you be embarrassed if it came out?

See, America is an interesting place. America is one of the few places... If you travel internationally, you realize this. America is one of the only places where we're so afraid to talk about our salaries and our money. When I went to India, I'd be in a taxi, or actually a rickshaw... If you don't know what a rickshaw is, it's like a very dangerous golf cart.

Anyway, no matter where I went, if somebody could speak English, one of the first questions they asked me was how much money I made. Then they would tell me how much money *they* made. We live in this weird society where... I get it. I think the reason we don't want people to know what we make... It's like, "If you knew what I

made, then I might be responsible to you to do something with that that maybe I'm not doing that I don't want to do." Fair enough. Now you might know why you don't share.

What's interesting is we live in this world where... You know, you get in an accountability group with guys. Imagine three or four guys are coming together, and one guy brings up, "Guys, let's talk a little bit about our sex lives." They share a little about that, the ups and downs of that. "All right. Let's talk a little bit about if there are any addictions in our lives. Is there pornography? Are we drinking too much?" They talk about that.

"Guys, let's talk a little bit about our finances and our giving," and everyone is like, "You're getting personal. You're getting a little personal here." Right? That's the one area. We can talk about everything else. We're not allowed to talk about that. David comes out and says, "This is what I'm giving."

He says, "I'm giving 10,000 talents." As we do the math on this, a talent is 10 years of a worker's wage. From our best calculations (this was before the 9.1 percent inflation we just went through), what we see is that David gave a gift of \$5 billion in today's money. From what I could find and what I could see, this is the largest gift ever given in church history.

Obviously, David is uniquely wealthy. This is why here we say it's not equal amount; it's equal sacrifice. David is like, "I'm going to give a gift that's going to..." It's an end-of-life gift, in some ways, but it's going to uniquely change his lifestyle and his family's lifestyle for generations, because he's going to give \$5 billion to this.

Let me say one more thing about this. David's giving is different than most giving in America, because David's giving is planned and proactive. Notice. He's like, "I know how much I have." People often don't know that. "I know how much I actually have. I know where it is. I know where I could give out of." He says, "I have this treasure. I'm going to give out of it."

Most of the American Christians are more unplanned and more passive or reactive in their giving. "Okay. They're passing the bucket, honey. I have two twenties." "Guys, we haven't given in a few months. Let's just get on there. What would be a good number to give?" Versus this is a planned and proactive way that David gives.

I think the best way I've ever heard of this is to think, "Is giving a priority in my life? Have I chosen a percentage, and have I made it progressive?" Let's just talk about each of those. Is it a *priority*? The Bible teaches firstfruits. Give God your first and

your best, not your last and your leftovers, but for most people, it's like, "Well, what do we have left? We'll give *that*."

Or people think *this* all the time, especially young people: "Well, when *this* happens in my life, then I'll start to give. I just have to get out of medical school. I just have to get out of debt. We just have to get the kids out of the home. We just have to pay off our mortgage. I just need to move from resident to attending doctor when my salary goes up seven times, and then I'll give."

Here's the truth, because we've seen this: nope, you don't give, because you take you with you everywhere you go. You with little money is the same you with a lot of money. So, I have to make this a priority. Now, what's interesting... I've seen a lot of weird things in 15 years of ministry. What I've seen in marriages is, oftentimes, the wife thinks the family is giving, and they're not.

The wife thinks, "This is a priority for our family. Bob takes care of the finances. Bob is sitting in there every week, and Bob knows we love the church. Bob is in." So, you find this out all of a sudden. It's like, "Dude, Bob gives zero." The poor wife thinks she's part of this, thinks their family is generous, and they don't even know. They never even talk about it. Giving has not been a priority in their family.

The second is to choose a *percentage*. Here's the interesting thing about choosing a percentage. This is why this is important. The more people make, the less they give percentage-wise. It's weird. I can't remember the exact stats, but it's something like *this*: people who make less than \$100,000 as a family income give something like 4 to 4.5 percent to nonprofits.

As soon as you make more than \$100,000 as a family, you drop to giving 2 percent. It's partly because the number you're giving keeps getting bigger, but the percentage keeps getting lower, because it's actually a lower percentage of your income.

When I was a brand-new Christian, I was always taught, "If you make a dollar, you give a dime. If you make \$10, you give a dollar. If you make \$100, you give \$10. If you make \$1,000, you give \$100. If you make \$10,000, you give \$1,000. If you make \$100,000, you give \$10,000."

Let me tell you an encouraging story. Every once in a while in our church... This doesn't happen that often, but every once in a while, we'll get this large gift from some individual or some family. It'll be a weird number...\$34,212.18. I'm like, "Okay." So then I call. "Hey, what's God doing in your heart for you to give a gift like that?" They always say the same thing. "It's just a tithe."

I'm like, "Just a tithe? What do you do for a living? I'm going to kill my guidance counselor. What *is* this?" So then I do the math. I'm like, "Okay. So, they just got a \$340,000 bonus. Wow." Then they'll say something like *this*, almost every time: "Oh, this is just something my mom and dad taught me to do when I was really young." Way to go, Mom and Dad.

When he was making whatever he made at 15 years old at Chick-fil-A, working 15 hours a week, trying to figure out how to give a dollar from \$10, this discipline of percentage giving was built in, so that when he gets a \$343,000 raise, one of the first things he thinks is "I want to give 10 percent of that to the kingdom of God."

Then, finally, *progressive*. That's the hardest one for some of us. *Progressive* just means that, over time, don't just increase your standard of living; increase your standard of giving. We're not weird. Increase your standard of living. I get it. "We wanted to get the bigger house." Fair enough. "We wanted cars with leather interior." Great. "We wanted a nicer vacation." Awesome. "We wanted a second home." Fair enough.

But if you're not careful, what happens across time is people... Some of you may be surprised or may not be surprised how much money people can make and the temptation to constantly increase the standard of living and never increase the standard of giving. When I talk to people who are very, very wealthy, they say one of the only ways to make sure things don't own you and you own things is to, over time, increase the standard of giving.

This is why the Bible talks about tithes and offerings. "Maybe I could start something else. Maybe I could help someone else. Maybe there's another ministry I could support. Maybe there's a college minister I could help." You just think through those things.

So, what happens here is David gives a percentage (a large percentage), he gives progressively, and it's a priority. Look at what he does. Verse 5. He calls others. ***"...and 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?"*** David basically says, "I don't want anyone to give out of guilt. I want you to give out of gratitude."

He says this in verse 10: ***"Therefore David blessed the LORD in the presence of all the assembly. And David said: 'Blessed are you, O LORD, the God of Israel our father, forever and ever. Yours, O LORD, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the victory and the majesty, for all that is in the heavens and in the earth is yours.'"***

Now we're getting to see David's perspective on money and property and possessions.

"Yours is the kingdom, O LORD, and you are exalted as head above all. Both riches and honor come from you, and you rule over all. In your hand are power and might, and in your hand it is to make great and to give strength to all. And now we thank you, our God, and praise your glorious name."

David has a stewardship mindset, not a selfish mindset. A *selfish mindset* is "Everything I have is mine, and it's all because of how great I am." The biblical perspective is "Oh, really? You're hardworking? Where did you get *that* desire from?"

"My parents."

"Oh, really? Well, how did you get your parents? Did you choose your parents? No."

"I went to the best schools."

"Well, how were you smart enough to get into the best schools? Did you give yourself that IQ or were you born with that IQ?"

You start realizing... What if you were unhealthy? What if you were disabled? What if you were born in the seventh century in Tibet? Would you have what you have? You start going, "I wouldn't have any of this." You start realizing, "Oh my goodness. All this is a gift from God."

So, he doesn't have the selfish mindset; he has the stewardship mindset. The *stewardship mindset* is "Everything I think I own is really from God on loan." That's the stewardship mindset. You see this when you're a parent with your kids. You kind of get this picture. Whenever you become a father, you understand God the Father better, and you understand what it's like to be his child.

All the time, my kids are not sharing things with each other. Every once in a while, I'll talk to one of my sons and say, "Hey, you need to share that toy," and they're like, "I'm not sharing my toy." I'm like, "*Your* toy? I bought you that toy."

"Yeah, yeah, but it's in my room."

"*Your* room? I let you live in this house rent free."

"Yeah, but I bought it with my money."

"Your money? I gave you that money. Or if Grandma gave it, she asked me if she could give it, and I told her 'Yes.'"

When you realize, "I'm going to die, and everything I have is going to eventually be someone else's..." That's where David is going to go next. It changes. Somebody else is going to drive your car or it's going to end up in a junkyard. When you die, somebody else is going to live in your house. That's a weird thought, but they will. Even if you built your awesome forever home, someone else is eventually going to live in it.

When you die, your kids are going to come by, and they're going to cry, and they're going to take the 10 or 15 meaningful things out of your house, and then they're going to put everything up at a garage sale. If you're wealthy, an estate sale, but it's the same thing. This is what's going to happen to everything in your life. That's what David says. Look at verse 15.

"For we are strangers before you and sojourners, as all our fathers were. Our days on the earth are like a shadow, and there is no abiding." Then David prays over his son one more time in verses 16-19. Then in verse 20, it says this: "Then David said to all the assembly, 'Bless the LORD your God.' And all the assembly blessed the LORD..." Then in verse 22 he ends with this: "And they ate and drank before the LORD on that day with great gladness."

Here's a principle at the end: everybody is generous, so everybody can celebrate. I just want to celebrate our church, because a lot of times... We only talk about money when it comes up in the Scriptures here, but whenever you talk about money, there can be this sense of... We overemphasize the few people who are not generous, and we don't emphasize enough all of you who are unbelievably generous.

We have an unbelievably generous church, and I just want to take a moment and thank you guys. Our desire here has been for 100 percent participation, for everyone to say, "I'm all in with my time, talent, and treasure." That way, when we build a building or someone gets baptized or someone comes to Christ or the kids' ministry grows or we start a new church plant or we have a new ministry partner in someplace in the world, everyone gets to go, "Yes! I was a part of this."

I want you to know that in our church, we have over 1,000 families (I didn't say *individuals*) that give consistently to our church. It's just unbelievable the generosity of our church. That's why we're all able to celebrate together. Now, I love this story, because here's what the story is. I told you at the beginning it's a story of a dad who has a dream for his son who gives his son a plan and who is unbelievably generous in making sure it happens.

Guess what. Yes, it's the story of Solomon and David, but it points us to the greater story of God the Father and Jesus Christ. What is the story of David and Solomon? Well, it's a dad helping his son build a temple. He provides everything his son is going to need to build that temple, and that temple takes seven years for Solomon to build.

What happens with God the Father... Do you know the Bible says God the Father planned salvation and Jesus Christ accomplished salvation? God had a plan. "How am I going to save a people? How am I going to forgive sins?" Jesus Christ said, "I will accomplish this plan, not by building a temple, but by *being* the temple."

Jesus Christ in his earthly ministry said, "Something greater than the temple is here." Because what was the temple? The temple is a great thing in the Old Testament. It was a bridge between heaven and earth, and it was where you went to go meet with God. That's who Jesus Christ is. Where you go to meet with God is not a place; it is ultimately a person.

So, we love this story. When I think of a story of a father's love for his son, of course I think of David for Solomon. Of course I think of God the Father and his great love for his Son Jesus Christ. But I thought sometimes we just need a modern example of this. We just need it. We need examples from today. So, when I think of an unbelievably great father and his love for his son, I think of Dick and Rick Hoyt. I don't know if you've ever heard of Dick and Rick Hoyt.

Dick Hoyt was a military guy. When his son was born, the umbilical cord was wrapped around his son's neck, so there was brain damage and physical damage done to his son to where he was told when his son was born, "Your son is never going to talk, and your son is never going to walk. He's never going to live a normal life. He's going to be a vegetable, and you probably should just go put him somewhere." That's what he was told.

He and his wife said, "No, we're not going to do that. We're going to take our son Rick home." So they took Rick home. They tried to treat Rick like... He had dreams. You know, you don't not have dreams for your son anymore because there's something wrong with him, because he's disabled. He had all of these dreams for his son.

The first dream he had was "Maybe my son one day could talk to me." So they invented this machine where the son... He could only move his head. It would take a long time, but he could type out some words, and he could talk. So at age 9, they made this machine for his son.

What are the first words he's going to say to Dad and Mom? Is he going to say, "I love you, guys"? What's he going to say? They lived in Boston. The first words the son

ever typed on the machine were "Go Bruins." He had been watching. He had been rooting for the Boston Bruins to win the Stanley Cup. That was the first thing he said. So, that dream came true. "I want to communicate with my son."

Then Rick, the son, finds out that a kid gets paralyzed in school, and they're going to do a race for him. Through the machine, he says to his dad, "Dad, I want this kid to know that life doesn't end when you're disabled. Dad, I want to run in this race." There were multiple problems, but the biggest problem was he couldn't run, he couldn't walk, he couldn't talk.

What it basically meant was his dad was going to have to run this race. Well, his dad had only run one mile in his whole life. He said, "I'd better learn how to run." Well, they ran their first race. This picture was taken over 40 years ago. He was 12 years old. Somebody snapped this picture. That's Dick, his father, pushing Rick.

At the end of the race, Rick said to his dad, "Dad, that was the first time in my life I didn't feel handicapped." He said, "Dad, when you were pushing me and I was running, it was the first time where I felt like a normal kid, and I didn't feel like I was disabled." Guess what his dad said. "Well, then I guess we're going to run a lot more races."

So, they start running these races, and then someone gives him the idea, "Have you ever thought of running a triathlon?" This is what Dick said: "I don't know how to swim." Dick said, "I want to be a good dad, and I want my son to have dreams, so I'm going to have to learn how to swim." Over 40 years, they ran 240 triathlons together. Do you know how long a triathlon is? They ran 68 marathons together. I want to show you a picture of one of their last ones.

When I think about Dick Hoyt and his love for his son Rick Hoyt, and I think about somebody who said, "I have a dream for my son, and I want to be a father, and basically, what that means is I'm going to have to sacrifice a lot for this to happen," it reminds me of God. If you look at that picture, God is Dick Hoyt, and you and I are sitting in that seat as Rick Hoyt. One of the great things that changes your life is when you realize, "God didn't just do something *for* me; he wants to do something *with* me."

The whole Christian race... We can't do any of this ourselves, but we have a Father in heaven who wants to do something with us and wants to run the race with us. So, let's have a God dream. Let's be the spiritual mothers and fathers we need to be and find the spiritual mothers and fathers we need to find. Let's have a clear plan, and let's be generous. Let's pray.

Lord, we just thank you for examples like Rick and Dick Hoyt that really are just parables and pictures and pointers to the great sacrifice of God the Father and God the Son. We know that when we trust in you, Lord, we actually are turned into a temple. We are now the place where the presence of the Holy Spirit dwells, Lord. Lord, would you give us the heart to be a church where we want to live great lives and we want to leave great legacies? We pray this in Christ's name, amen.