

What a Great Opportunity!

1 Kings 5-8

January 30-31, 2010

Introduction

- To set the service for my message and challenge this morning, I would like you to watch this video and consider the impact of Northside Baptist Church.
- Video
- There's a word I used in the video – opportunity.
- “What a Great Opportunity” is set before us.
- It reminds me of some of the great opportunity stories we read of in Scripture: the call of Abraham (the opportunity to become a great nation), the Exodus (the opportunity to be free), Entry into the Promised Land (the opportunity to enjoy God's blessings), the building of the Temple (the opportunity to honor God)
- Open your bibles to 1 Kings 5
- I believe we are on the threshold of a great opportunity for God in and through Northside Baptist Church
- What a Great Opportunity...

Challenge

- **...To Honor the Past**
 - 1 Kings 5:1-3
 - 1 *When Hiram king of Tyre heard that Solomon had been anointed king to succeed his father David, he sent his envoys to Solomon, because he had always been on friendly terms with David.*
 - 2 *Solomon sent back this message to Hiram:*
 - 3 *"You know that because of the wars waged against my father David from all sides, he could not build a temple for the Name of the LORD his God until the LORD put his enemies under his feet.*
 - ✓ David needed to wage those wars and from them there is now benefit to Solomon
 - We could not be where we are today without the work and sacrifice that others made in the past

- Recognize longtime members – sacrifice of 20, 30 or 40 years
- As great as the past has been and as much as we should honor it, we need to recognize that not everything has been finished = debt and renovations remain
- How many (longtime members) dreamed that we would pay off our debt some day? How many have given up?
- This emphasis is to see that dream dreamed again and this time completed
- We have a great opportunity through this Stewardship Emphasis to Honor the Past
- **...To Serve the Present**
 - 1 Kings 5:4-5
 - 4 *But now the LORD my God has given me rest on every side, and there is no adversary or disaster.*
 - 5 *I intend, therefore, to build a temple for the Name of the LORD my God, as the LORD told my father David, when he said, 'Your son whom I will put on the throne in your place will build the temple for my Name.'*
 - ✓ There was a work for Solomon to accomplish in the present (building, as it were, on the past)
 - What a great opportunity we have to serve the present by eliminating our debt
 - Our debt constrains our ministry = in order to pay our debt within our “plate” offerings we have cut ministry budgets over 20% (staff salaries 5%) and still must rely on special gifts to balance our operations and steward His blessings
 - Without our debt, tight times wouldn’t be nearly as dramatic
 - What a great opportunity we have to serve the present by renovating our facility – ROOF
 - What a great opportunity we have to make our ABF Ministry more effective by renovating our ABF rooms
 - What a great opportunity we have to minister to our children with a renovated playground
 - What a great opportunity we have to minister to our guests with a renovated South Entryway with Welcome Centers
 - What a great opportunity we have to minister to our own congregation with a renovated East Entryway
 - Other renovations to come
 - We can and will renovate after debt is eliminated and with money in hand (no return to debt)

- Why now? To Serve the Present
 - African Proverb: The best time to plant a tree is twenty years ago. The second best time is now!
 - Prayer is the key = Solomon, “*I intend...as the Lord told*”
 - We have a great opportunity through this Stewardship Emphasis to Serve the Present
- **...To Reach the Future**
 - 1 Kings 8:57-61
 - ✓ Solomon recognized that the building of the Temple not only served the present but it would reach the future
 - 57 *May the LORD our God be with us as he was with our fathers; may he never leave us nor forsake us.*
 - “*May the Lord our God be with us...*” (57) = We make these renovations now to increase our worship and reach new worshippers in the future
 - 58 *May he turn our hearts to him, to walk in all his ways and to keep the commands, decrees and regulations he gave our fathers.*
 - “*May he turn our hearts to him...*” (58) = We eliminate our debt now to increase our discipleship and reach new disciples in the future
 - 59 *And may these words of mine, which I have prayed before the LORD, be near to the LORD our God day and night, that he may uphold the cause of his servant and the cause of his people Israel according to each day's need,*
 - “*...that he may uphold the cause of his servant...*” (59) = We eliminate our debt now to increase our ministry and reach more children, youth and adults in the future
 - 60 *so that all the peoples of the earth may know that the LORD is God and that there is no other.*
 - “*...so that all the peoples of the earth may know that the Lord is God...*” (60) = We make these renovations now to increase our outreach and reach our community and our world in the future
 - 61 *But your hearts must be fully committed to the LORD our God, to live by his decrees and obey his commands, as at this time.*
 - We have a great opportunity through this Stewardship Emphasis to Reach the Future

Response

- **Be informed (brochure)**
 - Packet for every family – in the Foyer (if you are concerned with the cost, pick it up so we don't have to mail it)
 - Group Fellowships (opportunity for Q & A)

- **Be in prayer (prayer booklet)**
 - Prayer and Praise Service @ 6:00 pm
 - Church-wide Prayer Challenge = February 7-21
 - Family Conference

- **Be open**
 - Attend the next 3 weekends of services
 - If you have already said, “No” then make sure that is what God is saying
 - If you have already said “No” without being informed and without prayer then you are saying:
 - ✓ “I don't want God to work through me.”
 - ✓ “I don't believe God is working through Northside.”
 - ✓ “I don't believe that God wants to work through Northside.”
 - I'm asking you to say one of the following today:
 - ✓ “I don't know what God wants me to do but I will find out and do it.”
 - ✓ “I know what God has asked me to do and I am or will do it.”

- **Be obedient (commitment card & FF envelope)**
 - After being informed and in prayer and open to what God wants, do what God leads you to do.
 - Commitment Weekend = February 20-21

 - I'm not asking you to give.
 - I'm asking each of us to find out what God wants to do through each of us.

 - This is not about what we can do.
 - It's about what He can do and what He wants to do through each of us!

 - This is not about our blessings or strength.
 - It's about His blessings and His strength.