

Sermon Title: Hosting His Glory, Part 2 (Scripture is from ESV)

Scripture Reading: 2Chronicles 7:1-3

Introduction

Good afternoon church. Today I'm going to continue on with a message that I gave the last time called, "Hosting His Glory." There were some glitches in the recording of that message so we weren't able to put it up on podcast. If you weren't here for it and would like a copy of the message, e-mail me at beckerjm@gmail.com. B-e-c-k-e-r-j-m@gmail.com.

To recap the message, I went into the definition of the word "glory" and the meaning behind it. If you remember, the word glory in the Hebrew language is, "kabhode," which means "weight" or "heaviness." The word glory often refers to the physical manifestation of God, or in other words when God reveals Himself in the physical realm.

I shared two important areas for us to have right before God in order for us to be good hosts of His presence. The first is that we do not have a critical or judgmental spirit towards the moves of the Holy Spirit or towards the ministers who God uses. You will find that in nearly every church where a critical and judgmental spirit is conveyed by the leaders towards other ministries or certain moves of God, the church soon dries up and there is little evidence of God's love and power at work there. The other important area I shared about is that if we truly desire God's glory then we must have a heart for others. Jesus came not to be served but to serve, and His life was marked by God's glory. It is as we align our hearts with the heart of God that we should expect the same for our lives. Amen?

As I prayed about what to share this Sunday God continued to press on my heart the need for us to be ready to host His presence. Last week during Sunday Swim, our prayer meeting before service, there were a number of visions and words shared. Different people saw horsemen or angels already here and more being sent. Other people saw a whirlwind and a hurricane of God's presence consuming this area. Some of us saw walls and different things blocking people and we prayed through all this. What was neat was after the prayer meeting a friend who moves in the prophetic came to the bar just before service and prayed for Pastor Marcus in the back room. Many of her words in her prayer confirmed the words that had been given during Sunday Swim. God is cool like that. And if you were here for Pastor Marcus' message last week he was led to speak out many of the prophetic words that have been given to our church and after the message we had a blessed time of ministry, seeing God's presence touch different people around the room. God is good! Please take these messages to heart because God is truly preparing us for something beyond our imagination.

For an example of something beyond God's peoples' imagination happening in Scripture, please open your Bibles to 2Chronicles 7:1-3. In this part of Scripture King Solomon has finished building the temple in Jerusalem and has set up the ark of the covenant inside. In the previous chapters were great feasting, sacrifices, singing, and prayers offered up in dedication of the temple. We jump in right after King Solomon finishes his prayer of dedication...

2Chronicles 7:1-3: As soon as Solomon finished his prayer, fire came down from heaven and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices, and the glory of the Lord filled the temple. And the priests could not enter the house of the Lord, because the glory of the Lord filled the Lord's house. When all the people of Israel saw the fire come down and the glory of the Lord on the temple, they bowed down with their faces to the ground on the pavement and worshiped and gave thanks to the Lord, saying, "For He is good, for His steadfast love endures forever."

What triggered this explosion of God's glory? What enabled King Solomon and the people of Israel to host God's presence in such a powerful way? Once again, there are many areas that are important to cover in learning how to be a good host of the presence of God, but I'm going to choose to cover three that are found in these first few chapters of 2Chronicles.

Faithful Obedience

If you look at the chapters in 2Chronicles before this passage you will see how much preparation and work was put into the building of the temple. 1Kings 6:38 tells us that it took seven years of work before the temple was finally complete. That is a long amount of time. And if you look closely in the chapters before 2Chronicles 7 you will see that King Solomon always went for the best in skilled workers and precious supplies. Right away we can see that if we want to be good hosts of God's glory we must learn to wait and to obey God faithfully. This is the first point for today. **To be good hosts of God's glory we must learn to wait and to show faithful obedience to God.**

There are examples of people in the Bible who were hit by God's glory but were unable to be good hosts of His presence and bear fruit. King Saul was hit by the glory multiple times, but pride entered his heart and he rebelled against God. His life ended in jealousy and fear, overtaken by his enemies. Samson was covered in God's glory, but he chose to pursue his physical desires and disobey God's law. He ended up blind and enslaved by his enemies. Neither King Saul nor Samson learned how to faithfully obey and wait on the Lord. They had the glory, but were ineffective.

The root of the word glory is "weight" or "heaviness." **In order for God's people to effectively carry the weight of His glory we must strengthen our spiritual muscles.** The strengthening of our spiritual muscles comes from learning to live in consistent obedience and faithfulness to God. This builds us up to be able to carry His presence and minister effectively.

An easy analogy of this would be to compare the growth of our spiritual muscles with the growth of our physical muscles. How many of you exercise regularly? How many of you have experienced soreness after exercising or working out? If you are exercising or working out correctly, the soreness should be a result of muscle stress and the muscle even being slightly torn. The muscle you had before has been spent. If you continue to exercise while sore you might do deep damage to your body. But if you wait and eat right, the muscle will heal and actually grow back stronger. This will enable to you exercise and workout a little bit more than your last time.

Any dedicated weight lifter will warn that is foolish to try and lift a ton of weight your first time working out. You must first build up your muscles. This takes time and discipline. It's the same for a marathon runner. Anyone who wants to run a marathon for the first time should know that they need to first build up their leg muscles and their lungs before going the distance and running a full marathon. Imagine what would happen to us if we were all to go outside right now and run 42 kilometers. My lungs would likely explode. We would need to practice first. Some of us might be capable of running the whole distance, others half, and others perhaps only 1 kilometer for our first practice. Others perhaps just the distance to the Taco Bell.

Faithful Obedience. Does this mean that we are disqualified because we are a new church? No. Many of us have been serving faithfully at New Philadelphia for years. And we have served faithfully at other churches and ministries before coming out here. God has been building us up. This church wouldn't exist without the faithful prayers and obedience of the leadership. I also must emphasize that faithful obedience doesn't merit just a short visit from God, but faithful obedience

enables us to host His glory all our lives. Miracles abounded in the lives of Peter and Paul in the book of Acts. 2Corinthians 3:18 states that we are being transformed with ever increasing glory.

God may be bringing certain areas in your life to light right now... certain areas that He wants you to surrender over to Him or to become more faithful in. James 4:8 states, "Draw near to God, and He will draw near to you." As we make the effort to seek the Lord more daily and grow more consistent in our obedience towards Him, we can trust and know that He is building us up to become powerful lights and witnesses in this hurting world. Amen?

If there is something heavy on your heart that you know you need help in order to surrender or obey, please see me or one of the other leaders after the service today for prayer, encouragement, and accountability.

Abundant Giving

The second area I want to cover today is "giving." Turn with me to 2Chronicles 5:6; this is before Solomon's prayer and the glory of the Lord consuming the place.

2Chronicles 5:6 – And King Solomon and all the congregation of Israel, who had assembled before him, were before the ark, sacrificing so many sheep and oxen that they could not be counted or numbered.

One of the core values of New Philadelphia Church that I know the Lord delights in is, "Extravagant Worship." Extravagant worship includes giving faith filled offerings to the Lord.

If you had attended New Philadelphia Hillside before coming to this church plant you would know that our church gives and gives and gives. We once took an offering for victims of persecution in India and Pastor Christian pledged the church would match the offering dollar for dollar. Our church of about 110 at the time gave over \$10,000 in offering. And that was not just a one-time special offering, rather we have special offerings nearly every month. The amounts are always staggering, especially considering none of us are exactly rich. A few weeks ago we took an offering for the babies of a couple former Filipina prostitutes who had been rescued from the sex trafficking and are now living in a Christian shelter. The offering was taken without prior notice to you all, and despite our congregation being smaller and having a lot of visitors, we collected over \$2,100. Praise God! This enabled certain members in our church to purchase necessities like diapers, medicine, clothes, and other things for the babies. The money has also helped enable one of the mothers and her baby to return to their home in the Philippines. Praise God!

God delights in offerings. He truly delights in offerings. Noah made a sacrifice before God right after the flood and God blessed him and his descendants. **If you look at any moment in the Bible where there was great revival and outpouring, there was always a mark of abundant and extravagant giving.** Malachi 3:8-10 is critical for the church to take to heart...

Malachi 3:8-10 – Will man rob God? Yet you are robbing me. But you say, 'How have we robbed you?' In your tithes and contributions. You are cursed with a curse, for you are robbing me, the whole nation of you. Bring the full tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. And thereby put me to the test, says the Lord of hosts, if I will not **open the windows of heaven for you** and pour down for you a blessing until there is no more need.

Wow! This is the only time in the Bible that God tells us to test Him. And He tells us to test Him in our giving. And He promises us an open heaven with abundant blessings if we give! Clearly, if we want to be good hosts of God's glory, we must be obedient in our giving to God.

I want to briefly explain the difference between tithes and contributions, or “tithes and offerings.” Tithes are expected by God. It is a percentage of our income that we give back to God. Offerings are anything beyond the tithe. So if you tithe 10%, anything you give beyond that is considered an offering.

Abraham tithed, or gave, 10% of his earnings to the priest. In the Law God expected the same to be given to the Levites, who were the priests of God’s people. As a missionary living off of full time support, I became a little confused when I first arrived here in Korea. I felt odd giving some of the support I received to the church. So instead I tithed to my children’s home, which I felt needed it more. And that year I received little beyond my needs in terms of financial support. Soon God began to convict me that His instruction to give to the Levites means that I need to be giving my 10% tithe to the church where I am attending and getting fed. I need to support the ministers and ministry where I am, just as the Israelites supported their local Levites. God made it clear that the tithe is expected, and that anything beyond that is a freewill offering that can be given to whatever or whomever is on my heart. So I began giving my tithe to the church while still giving an offering to the children’s home. And it was after this that I suddenly received an increase in the support I was receiving from the States. God is faithful!

If money has been a struggle for you or you’ve been cheated or lost money, I want to encourage you to be faithful in tithing. God makes it clear if we withhold from Him that we are cursed. After all, everything good we receive is from Him anyway. **For us to withhold is to deny His goodness in our lives.** I also want to make it clear that I am a lay pastor at this church. I am not on staff, so I do not receive a salary from the church. So don’t think I’m preaching on giving in order to get anything. => This is for your personal benefit and for the blessing of the church. **Giving is an expression of faith.** God has given to us and He will continue to give to us. Whether we have much or we have little, we know that God will never let the righteous go hungry (Proverbs 10:3). We will continue to give Him the worship He deserves. Amen?

Physical Posture

The last area I want to cover today for hosting God’s glory is **the importance of our physical posture before the Lord in worship.** It is surprising how powerful and important our physical posture before God is. Turn with me to 2Chronicles 6:12-14...

2Chronicles 6:12-14 – Then Solomon stood before the altar of the Lord in the presence of all the assembly of Israel and spread out his hands. Solomon had made a bronze platform five cubits long, five cubits wide, and three cubits high, and had set it in the court, and he stood on it. Then he knelt on his knees in the presence of all the assembly of Israel, and spread out his hands toward heaven.

When King Solomon went into prayer just before the glory of God fell, he chose to kneel down before the people and raise his hands to God. Why? The kneeling is clearly an act of humility before God and before the people. The raising of his hands was likely an act of reverence, a demonstration of an urgent plea, and sign of his surrender before God. **But I want to say that more than any of those symbols, his physical posture before God represented his faith in God and his faith in prayer.**

When we do altar calls here at New Philadelphia or on the mission field and people line up to receive prayer, I can usually tell who is going to be touched the most by the Holy Spirit simply by looking at the postures of the people in line. People who have their hands lifted in worship sometimes don’t even need a physical touch. In faith they are raising their hands and worshipping God. Their hearts are already open and set upon God. Others come up with their arms crossed or

with a look of apathy on their face. Sometimes they can even look like they are challenging me or another minister like, “Let’s see what you got.” It’s as if they don’t think anything is really going to happen. Usually for such people there is little physical manifestation. I still believe in faith that God is working through my prayers, but I can tell that unless they open their heart, only so much of God’s glory will get through.

Many of the psalms in the Bible emphasize different postures of worship before God. If you look at any of the great men of God in the Bible their posture before God is always noted. Even Jesus’ posture was noted before He would pray or do a miracle. Often Jesus would look up to heaven in prayer, demonstrating it was always God who was behind the miracles and answers to prayer.

Rather than continuing to teach on this point, I want to show it to you. In just a moment I’m going to have Pastor Marcus put up a video of Rodney Howard Browne ministering at a conference in Minnesota. Rodney Howard Browne is from South Africa and has been ministering for decades now. In the 80’s laughter began to break out during his revivals. You will see that Rodney is actually a bit intimidating looking and not the most funny pastor. He looks almost like a godfather type character. So the fact that joy tends to mark his services is all the more a sign that it isn’t people getting worked up but it is God’s Spirit touching people. **Psalm 16:11 states, “In your presence there is fullness of joy.”** If God’s presence is in our church, we should expect His joy to be working through us.

As Rodney ministers you will notice his posture before God. He continually says, “Hallelujah, hallelujah,” and “Praise the Lord Jesus. Praise the Lord Jesus.” Why? He says these, particularly at the beginning of the ministry time, to get peoples’ eyes on God and to give the credit clearly to God. As you watch him minister you will notice faith rise in the room and joy begin to break out. The ministry is very slow at first, but as peoples’ hearts open and faith rises you will see the glory also increases and ministry becomes easier for him.

One last note, as we covered during the Holy Spirit seminar before service today one of the characters of the Holy Spirit is wind or breath. So don’t be surprised as you see people touched not just by the laying on of hands in this video...

Video (Rodney Howard Browne – Minnesota Monday)

Where Is the Fruit?

If you were to continue to watch the videos you would see more and more of an increase of God’s Spirit to the point where everyone in the room is giving intense worship to the Lord. Many people who have been touched by the power of God like in that video have shared of being healed of depression, fear, unforgiveness, and even of physical diseases and addictions. God’s power is real. And we have already been seeing His power at work here in King Bar.

I am excited for what is to come. And so I challenge you church to be good and able hosts for God’s glory. To not judge or be critical of the works of the Spirit, to grow in a heart to serve others, to grow in faithfulness and obedience, to give abundantly, and to physically posture yourself open and ready to receive all that God has for us. Amen!