

“Details”
Exodus 36-39
(Preached at Trinity, August 16, 2009)

I’m supplying these notes for the benefit of busy pastors who may be engaged in bi-vocational work, feeling the pressure of preparing to preach twice on the Lord’s Day while trying to balance full-time secular work as well as caring for their families. While the notes of another man are no substitute for personal study, I pray that these may aid in the process of preparing to preach.

Disclaimer: These are the actual notes I bring with me to the pulpit, which I follow loosely. They are not designed for publication. While I try to make every effort to give proper credit to my sources from the pulpit, adequate citations will sometimes be absent from my notes. If anyone feels their intellectual material has been used without adequate citation, please contact me and I’ll make immediate correction giving credit.

1. In **Chapter 24** Moses ascended Mount Sinai and received God’s commands concerning the Tabernacle.
Exodus 24:18 – “And Moses went into the midst of the cloud, and gat him up into the mount: and Moses was in the mount forty days and forty nights.”
Exodus 25:8-9 – “And let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them. ⁹ According to all that I shew thee, *after* the pattern of the tabernacle, and the pattern of all the instruments thereof, even so shall ye make *it*.”
2. For seven chapters God carefully detailed the plans for the construction of the Tabernacle, His dwelling place among His people.
Then disaster happened. While Moses was upon the mount receiving God’s instructions Israel was down at the camp worshipping an idol. God’s wrath was kindled and they were almost consumed.
3. God graciously renews His covenant with Israel and finally they set the course to begin construction on the Tabernacle. As we saw last time, this was the most unique structure that has ever been built. It is the only structure that God personally designed.
4. Moses ordered Israel to take an offering gathering the necessary supplies and they gave abundantly. In fact, they gave exceedingly above what was necessary. Moses had to command them to stop giving.
5. **Chapters 36-40** record the actual construction of the Tabernacle. These chapters are unusual in that most of the text is almost identical to the previous chapters describing the details of the Tabernacle. Why would Moses record such redundant information? Doesn’t it seem unnecessary?
6. Nothing in the Bible is without purpose. This is God’s revelation to man. He is teaching us and expounding on His redemptive purpose. Why the repetition? Is there any difference between these chapters?
Chapters 25-31 contain God’s commands concerning the Tabernacle. God gave His orders to Moses on how the Tabernacle would be built.
Chapters 36-39 describe the actual carrying out of those commands.
7. Several times God records the words: “The Lord Commanded”
Exodus 39:32 – “Thus was all the work of the tabernacle of the tent of the congregation finished: and the children of Israel did according to all that the LORD commanded Moses, so did they.”
8. They carried out God’s orders to the last detail. There were no deviations from God’s commands.
Exodus 39:42 – “According to all that the LORD commanded Moses, so the children of Israel made all the work.”

9. These chapters seem unimportant. Most commentators simply refer to their exposition of the previous chapters.
 What would seem like needless repetition is actually setting before us one of the greatest lessons we can learn.
- A. Israel labored giving attention to every detail of their work. They labored with excellence. They labored to obey every detail of God's commands.
 - B. God expects us to live with a mind towards detail.
- I. We will begin with the general – the detail of your life - how you live
- A. During this brief period Israel had a heart of excellence
 - 1. Everyone was excited about the Tabernacle – God's dwelling place
 - 2. They gave abundantly
Exodus 35:29 – “The children of Israel brought a willing offering unto the LORD, every man and woman, whose heart made them willing to bring for all manner of work, which the LORD had commanded to be made by the hand of Moses.”
Exodus 36:6-7 – “And Moses gave commandment, and they caused it to be proclaimed throughout the camp, saying, Let neither man nor woman make any more work for the offering of the sanctuary. So the people were restrained from bringing. ⁷ For the stuff they had was sufficient for all the work to make it, and too much.”
 - 3. The skilled craftsmen worked with excellence. They were building God's dwelling place!
 - 4. There was one other time when Israel had such a heart of excellence. When they returned from Babylon and began to repair the walls.
Nehemiah 4:6 – “So built we the wall; and all the wall was joined together unto the half thereof: for the people had a mind to work.”
 “Mind” - לֵב leb – “inner man, mind, will, heart
 In the KJV out of 592 times it is translated “heart” 508
 They had a heart to work! People with a heart for God work with attention to detail – they work with excellence.
 - B. As an employer for over 15 years I noticed there are two types of people with regard to how they did their work
 - 1. There were those who were careless
 - a. They often arrived late and they couldn't wait for their shift to end
 - b. They did only what was expected of them, and no more. Often they did less than expected.
 - c. Their attitude was that of self-interest. They made it clear they were only interested in collecting their pay. Some saw their job as an entitlement.
 - d. These type people get few raises or promotions
 - 2. Then, there were those who showed great interest in their work
 - a. They arrived on time and ready to work
 - b. They did their work well and without complaint. They often did more than what was expected of them.
 - c. Their pay scale increased accordingly and they were the first to be considered for promotion.

3. Christians should fall into this second category. In fact, Christians should be the best employees.
 - a. If a prospective employer hears that you are a Christian it should move you to the top of his list.
 - b. Unfortunately, Christians are no better than non-Christians. What a tragedy!
 - c. Our lives should be characterized by excellence because we are the servants of Christ.
Ephesians 6:5-7 – “Servants, be obedient to them that are *your* masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ; ⁶ Not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart; ⁷ With good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men.”
- C. This should be true in every aspect of our lives – we must give attention to detail, to excellence.
 1. We must do everything to the glory of God.
1 Corinthians 10:31 – “Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.”
 2. God’s glory should be our goal in everything we do
 Everything we do is a reflection of our view of God. As Christians our desire must always be to demonstrate to all men the greatness of God in our lives.
 3. Calvin – “There is no part of our life or conduct, however insignificant, which should not be related to the glory of God.”
- D. God is concerned about the details of our life – everything has a moral aspect
 - a. What we eat and drink
1 Corinthians 10:31 – “Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.”
 - b. What we speak
Matthew 12:36 – “But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment.”
 - c. Even what we think is important
Philippians 4:8 – “Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things *are* honest, whatsoever things *are* just, whatsoever things *are* pure, whatsoever things *are* lovely, whatsoever things *are* of good report; if *there be* any virtue, and if *there be* any praise, think on these things.”
 - d. Do you live every moment with attention to detail? Do you seek to glorify Christ in every detail?

- II. The second area I want to direct your attention to is with regard to Duty – We must give detail to duty – things expected of you.
- A. Israel worked with excellence because their hearts were stirred by God but also because it was their duty.
Exodus 35:4-5 – “And Moses spake unto all the congregation of the children of Israel, saying, This *is* the thing which the LORD commanded, saying, ⁵ Take ye from among you an offering unto the LORD: whosoever *is* of a willing heart, let him bring it, an offering of the LORD. . .”
1. God gave them a willing heart but He also commanded them to give.
 2. They labored with excellence because they had a heart for the work but also because of a sense of duty.
Exodus 39:43 – “And Moses did look upon all the work, and, behold, they had done it as the LORD had commanded, even so had they done it: and Moses blessed them.”
- B. Duty is often frowned upon today – as if it is unspiritual
1. Some believe that if something is done out of duty it is somehow tainted.
 2. Granted, we serve Christ out of love. We believe in evangelical obedience, not servile obedience.
 3. But, we are still servants.
Luke 17:10 – “So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do.”
 4. We long to hear the words, “Well done thou good and faithful servant.”
- C. Although we serve Christ from a motivation of love it in no way diminishes our duty to obey.
1. God demands absolute obedience to the very last detail of His commands.
 2. This is not an option
1 Peter 1:15-16 – “But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; ¹⁶ Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.”
The word for “conversation” refers to behavior, conduct, manner of life
In other words **DETAIL!** Every area of your life must be characterized by holiness.
 3. Paul spoke of discipline and training just like an athlete – detail!
- III. Finally, I must speak of Detail of Love – our relationship with Christ
- A. Israel had a “willing heart”
1. God stirred their hearts.
 2. We must remember something here. Almost all of these people were unregenerate. Although their hearts were stirred it was not a true love for God.
 3. Their true character would soon present itself. Upon seeing the perils of Canaan they would turn and rebel against God.
Numbers 14:3-4 – “And wherefore hath the LORD brought us unto this land, to fall by the sword, that our wives and our children should be a prey? were it not better for us to return into Egypt?
⁴ And they said one to another, Let us make a captain, and let us return into Egypt.”

Numbers 14:29-31 – “Your carcasses shall fall in this wilderness; and all that were numbered of you, according to your whole number, from twenty years old and upward, which have murmured against me, ³⁰ Doubtless ye shall not come into the land, *concerning* which I sware to make you dwell therein, save Caleb the son of Jephunneh, and Joshua the son of Nun. ³¹ But your little ones, which ye said should be a prey, them will I bring in, and they shall know the land which ye have despised.”

B. Under the New Covenant our hearts have been permanently transformed

1. We have fallen in love with Christ

2. God has written His Law upon our hearts

Jeremiah 31:31-33 – “Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: ³² Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day *that* I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the LORD: ³³ But this *shall be* the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people.”

3. For us our motivation for all things has become Christ

All of our plans, hopes, dreams, desires, everything is caught up in Christ.

4. We give great attention to every detail of our life because of Christ.

5. I spoke earlier of the half-hearted worker.

. Some professing Christians treat Christ this way. They give Him the leftovers of their life. No passion. No desire.

The true believer is the one who has fallen in love with Christ. He is worth the detail

Conclusion:

1. Is this true of you? Are you paying attention to detail?

2. I once had someone tell me, “Well you are just being a perfectionist.”
God is a perfectionist!! And He demands that we press towards perfection.

3. And we do so not just from legal duty. Our motivation is Christ.