

Ministering to the Lord

By Dave Frincke

You have something that God wants.

Before you reach in your back pocket and clutch your wallet tightly, be assured that God doesn't want your money...it's already His anyway. But there is something that God longs for that only you can bring to Him. Nobody can do it for you because it's unique to who you are; He can accept no substitute. God doesn't have needs, but He has desires. And He desires your personal & authentic offering of worship.

One of the people that I can't wait to meet in Heaven is Zadok. Zadok was a priest during the reign of King David & Solomon. We don't know much about him except that he made a decision that forever changed his family tree.

King David was getting close to death and he had promised Bathsheba that their son Solomon would be king after him. But another man, Adonijah, declared himself to be king and invited many priests & rulers of influence to join him. But Zadok refused to go. When so many Israelites were running after a self-proclaimed king, Zadok decided to stay right next to the true king. God not only rewarded him for this decision, but He rewarded his whole family for generations to come.

Near the end of the book of Ezekiel, the prophet was shown a vision of the new temple. In chapter 44, God gave these instructions regarding the priests:

"But the priests, who are Levites and descendants of Zadok and who faithfully carried out the duties of my sanctuary when the Israelites went astray from me, are to come near to minister before me; they are to stand before me to offer sacrifices of fat and blood, declares the Sovereign LORD. They alone are to enter my sanctuary; they alone are to come near my table to minister before me and perform my service." – Ezekiel 44:15-16

If you read all of Ezekiel 44, you'll see that God disciplined the rest of the Levites because they were unfaithful to Him. He punished them by limiting their scope of ministry.

They may serve in my sanctuary, having charge of the gates of the temple and serving in it; they may slaughter the burnt offerings and sacrifices for the people and stand before the people and serve them...They are not to come near to serve me as priests. – v. 11 & 13a

When I first began to understand what God was saying in these verses, I realized that my thinking was the exact opposite! I used to think that if I remained faithful to God, that He would reward me by giving me a platform of ministry so I could minister to His people. But God rewarded the descendants of Zadok by allowing them, and them only, to minister to Him personally! God's gift to the faithful was Himself.

Please don't get me wrong; ministry to God's people is essential. People are broken, hurting and in desperate need of Jesus. It's for that reason that God allowed even the unfaithful Levites to minister to His people. But I think God reveals to us in this section of Scripture that the most important ministry we can take part in is ministry to the Lord Himself.

What does this mean for us? It means that when we gather for worship and we sing a hymn or a song, our primary purpose is to sing for Him. It means that if we come from a church where we're free to use other Biblical expressions of worship like clapping, dancing or lifting our hands, we do that for His pleasure, not ours. It means that our main objective when we gather for worship should be to bless the heart of God. Worship isn't primarily about us; it's about Him! Psalm 22:3 says:

Yet You are holy, O You who are enthroned upon the praises of Israel. (NASB)
Together, let's make a huge throne for God!

Personally, I am so thankful for everything the Lord gives to me; His Presence, His Word, His Mercy, His Grace and so much more. I want to receive everything the Lord has for me. I'm sure we can all agree on that. In response to the goodness of God, what if we began dancing for Him, like king David, not because we felt comfortable doing it or enjoyed it ourselves, but solely because He would like it? What if we began singing and shouting His praise, just like the people of Israel, not because we liked the song or it felt good, but because it would make God smile? If we knew we could bless God's heart by worshipping outside of our comfort zones or traditions, would we? I think that when we make it our goal to bless God in any way we can, we enter into the ministry of the sons of Zadok.

1 Peter 2:9 says:

But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.

We are all priests; every one of us. We are all called to ministry and we must continue to minister to people. Let's also accept God's invitation to minister to Him personally.