

God's N.T.B. (Never Too Busy)

Most of our friends are at Family Camp this weekend.
They are privileged to hear a wonderful preacher.
They get to hear great music and sing with hundreds of people.
And here we are feeling left out or left behind.
How could our service ever compare to the Harmattan experience?
Friends will come back pumped about their great camp experience.
They will say, "You should have been there, it was awesome."
Well we certainly are not in competition with anyone this morning.
We do not come together to try and out-do the next guys.
We simply want to see God move powerfully in our midst.
So let's look at a great service in the Old Testament.
Let's peak in on the very first service held in Solomon's Temple.
The Temple was seven years in the making.
That first service was a day of celebration.
It was the kind of celebration that said, "You should have been here!"
I can hardly comprehend the magnitude of that first service.
The King was present and led the people in worship.
The workers and craftsmen who constructed the Temple were there.
30,000 men worked on preparing the building materials.
There were 70,000 burden bearers.
80,000 men were cutting huge stones in the quarry.
There were 3,300 chief officers (1 Kings 5:13-17).
Solomon assembled the elders of Israel and all the heads of tribes.
He assembled the leaders of the fathers' houses.
All the priests were there.
And all the men of Israel assembled to the King. (1 Kings 8:1-3)
It was a huge congregation.
The offering was so big it couldn't even be counted (1 Kings 8:5).
It was a huge congregation and a huge offering.
What is this service in comparison?
And yet we get to experience the very same thing they did that day so long ago.
As magnificent as the temple was, something even greater was being celebrated.
The Temple was spectacular.
It was the talk of the nations.
Much of the inside was layered with gold.
Huge rocks had been quarried miles away and silently put into place.
No tool had been used at the construction site.
But that is not what they were celebrating.
Their celebration had only one focus.
And that focus was the presence of God Almighty in their midst.
Solomon prayed; **"O Lord, God of Israel, there is no God like you in all of heaven above or on the earth below. You keep Your covenant and show unfailing love to all who walk before You in wholehearted devotion."** (1 Kings 8:23)
Earlier in the service there had been an amazing display of God's presence.
"When the priests withdrew from the Holy Place, the cloud filled the temple of the Lord. And the priests could not perform their service because of the cloud, for the glory of the Lord filled His temple." (1 Kings 8:10-11)
It was God's holy presence that transformed that service of celebration.

It was not about the work of their hands or the size of their offering.
It wasn't a huge crowd but it was the fact that God was there in their midst.
The glory of the Lord flooded the landscape.
God took over and rearranged their plans.
His presence was so dynamic that they brought another offering to the Lord.
This one was considerably smaller.
It was only 22,000 oxen and 120,000 sheep (1 Kings 8:63).
Even so, the "offering plates" couldn't hold it (1 Kings 8:64).
God's presence created in the people a holy discontent.
There had to be more that they could do for their God.
They had to find more ways of expressing their love for Him.
Their love needed to flow ceaselessly, continuously, conspicuously.
As Solomon blessed the people he reminded them of several truths.

1. "God gives rest to His people (vs. 56a)

He provides us with quiet in the midst of a world of chaos.
Does He do that so that we can live a life of leisure and bask in decadence?
No! It is so we can be more fruitful and serve Him wholeheartedly.
We will never serve God wholeheartedly if we never live in God's rest.
No one can serve God wholeheartedly while living a frantic life.
Apart from God's rest we are going to try and conquer in our strength.
That is why the generation of Israel that left Egypt never entered Canaan.
They didn't see how they could possibly possess that land.
They were not strong enough, big enough, or equipped enough.
They had never learned to receive the Lord's rest.
They relied on their own strength - which is never enough.
They tried to figure out how to defeat the people God had already defeated.
All they had to do was rest in their Heavenly Father.
That is where they failed and why they wandered 40 years.
That entire generation needlessly died in the wilderness.
All they needed to recognize was the rest that God gives.

God wants to lead you into His rest.

Is that where you are right now?

Or are you living in turmoil, stress, strain, anxiety?

Why don't you turn everything over to Him?

One of the memory verses from VBS was Nahum 1:7

"The Lord is good, a refuge in times of trouble. He cares for those who trust in Him."

God wants to give us rest if we will just let Him.

2. A second truth Solomon reminded the people was "God fulfills all His promises (vs. 56b)

God never fails, generation after generation after generation.
Solomon began building the temple 480 years after God delivered Israel.
Israel had dwelt in Egypt for 430 years.
For most of that time they had been treated as slaves.
But God promised deliverance.
He raised up Moses to lead the people to the Promised Land.
They had now enjoyed that Promised Land for 440 years.
For over 900 years God had remained faithful to His promises to Abraham.
900 years earlier God took Abraham to a new land, the Promised Land.
900 years before God promised Abraham descendants as numerous as the stars.

Try to imagine life 900 years ago!

900 years ago there were no computers, telephones, TV, radios, Ipods.

900 years ago there were no insulated houses, central heat-air-plumbing.

900 years ago there were no trains-planes-automobiles, or space ships.

Gravity hadn't been discovered.

The earth was still considered to be flat.

900 years ago the crusades were still being fought.

900 years ago there was no electricity.

900 years ago there was no Canada or USA.

There were no protestant churches and no English Bible.

912 years ago today in 1100 Henry I became King of England.

In the last 900 years England has had 43 Monarchs.

A lot can change in 900 years.

But for those 900 years of Israel's history not once had God's promises failed.

Israel was reminded that they could trust God.

That is what Solomon wanted the people to celebrate.

He wanted them to celebrate God's rest.

He wanted them to celebrate God's faithfulness.

3. And there was a third thing he wanted them to celebrate.

He wanted them to celebrate "God's presence with His people" (vs. 57)

God's Never Too Busy!

He wants to be with His people.

He was with those who went before us.

He never misses anything that happens in our lives.

He is a very present help in the time of trouble.

He never wants to leave us nor forsake us.

He doesn't want to miss a thing that happens in our lives.

But we push Him out of the way don't we?

We exclude Him from events or chapters of our lives.

We find a way around His will when our plans seem more pleasing.

All He asks is that we **"incline our hearts to Him, to walk in all His ways, and to keep His commandments, His statutes and His ordinances, which He commanded our fathers."** (vs. 58)

All we have to do is surrender to Him.

God's Never Too Busy and is never missing from our lives.

But we can exclude Him.

Solomon prays, **"may He maintain the cause of His servant, and the cause of His people Israel, as each day requires; that all the people of the earth may know that the Lord is God; there is no other. Let your heart therefore be wholly true to the Lord our God, walking in His statutes and keeping His commandments as at this day."** (vs. 59b - 61)

NOOMA VIDEO "KICKBALL" PLAYED HERE

Joy.

What did all these truths result in?

What was the outcome of God's presence and the people's responses?

We see it in verse 66.

"On the eighth day he sent the people away; and they blessed the king, and went to their homes joyful and glad of heart.

The truth about God results in joy in our hearts.

1. God Gives Rest; 2. God Never Fails; 3. God's Never Too Busy.

But there is one more truth found in verse 66.

"... for all the goodness that the Lord had shown to David His servant and to Israel His people."

When this great God is in our midst worship results in joy.

When our hearts are wholly true to the Lord we go home from worshipping God with a glad heart.

How are you going home today?

Closing Song - I've Got the Joy, Joy, Joy, Joy Down in My Heart