

In the Shadow of God

Thank you for gathering with us today. Those of you here and to you watching via livestreaming. Today is special because we say good-bye to our FTF journey that we started about 2 months ago. We don't really end the journey, we just begin to focus on other things as well. I feel honored to speak today, to deliver the "Send-off" message as we move on. Kind of like a "Benediction".

I have brought some props to help me with this message today (*Grab an end wrench*). I could have the tools that a dental hygienist uses, I could have brought the tools that chemistry teacher uses but I brought these. I will tell you why in a moment. This is an end wrench. To be more precise, a combination wrench. One end is open and one end is closed. This tool comes in many different sizes and styles. Every tool box in the world probably has some of these in it. It is designed for loosening or tightening nuts and bolts. If you happen to be a farmer you have probably discovered other uses for it like prying and hammering. It can even help you think. (Scratch my head). Very versatile, this one happens to be left handed (switch hands) and right handed. As man is always advancing, here are some sockets and ratchets. Same concept just a little quicker. For you really quick people... (Hold up Craftsman drill).

These tools are all Craftsman brand. Craftsman is the name of tools that come from Sears. The term Craftsman is defined as a person who is skilled at a particular craft. I think that Sears was trying to market their line of tools to "skilled" people as quality product. They may not be the best tool made but the warranty is. **Lifetime warranty!** Which is a good warranty, if you live a long time. Something I've learned from my dad who has at least 2 of everything Sears makes. He goes to flea market and looks for damaged or broken Craftsman brand tools and then buys them for next to nothing. He then takes them to the Sears store where they honor the "lifetime" warranty and he gets new tools. Very thrifty. I guess he is trying to get THREE of everything they make.

My father is quite a craftsman though. He was a farmer and worked maintenance his entire life. Even after he retired he worked for me fixing everything that broke at Timber Ridge. When I was young I would spend many evenings in the shop helping fix or build things. A special time for me. Later on in life I remember a sign I saw that still makes me laugh. It was at a lawnmower shop. There on the wall in there service area was a sign that said, "There is nothing more embarrassing that watching your boss do the very thing that you just told him was impossible"! Many times with my dad, he would tell me to, "Put that starter back on" or "why don't you put that clutch back together". I would then work and twist, turn and manipulate, but couldn't do it. I would then say, "It won't go". He would then come over and with the skilled touch of a craftsman, proceed to do the very thing that I just said was impossible!

Our passage that Bob read for today is about Bezalel. In Ex 35:31, we find that he is filled with wisdom, understanding, knowledge and craftsmanship. Workmanship in the King James Version. A true craftsman. He works with gold, silver and bronze. Cutting of stones and carving of wood. He is an engraver, a designer, and embroiderer and a weaver. Wow, what a craftsman! Could you imagine the help wanted ad that Moses would have put to fill this position?

Wanted- team of Experienced Architects, Engineers and Designers to help Yahweh dwell among his people. Send references, List of past projects and resume to

I have reading a lot of help wanted adds lately, they all want experience, references, and so on.

Bob read to us about Moses's introduction of Bezalel to the children of God but if we turn back to chapter 31 of Exodus, we can read where God introduces Bezalel to Moses. "I have called Bezalel, the son of Uri, the son of Hur..." and "I have filled him with the Spirit of God" (Ex 31:1-3) you see, Bezalel had his degree, Bezalel, CBG (Commissioned By God). We don't know a lot about Bezalel, but we do know a few things. First, his name means "In the Shadow of God". Second Josephus records that Bezalel, son of Uri, son of Hur. Hur was the Husband of Mariam, making Bezalel the great nephew of Moses. Third, Jewish history tells us that Bezalel was said to be around 13 years old. A child! Can you imagine the call that Moses makes to the employment agency now? Hello? I need to build the first dwelling place for God to dwell with his people, could you send over a teenager? No... no experience needed, No I don't need any references but they must have his CBG, Commissioned By God!

Bezalel: In the Shadow of God / Some things we can draw from this word picture of being in the shadow of God. First, shadows are cast by something solid, something looming, a presence. There is a sense of security, of safety. In Isaiah 49:2, the Bible says "In the shadow of his hand he has concealed me" The feeling of a covering of protection. Second, shadows resemble what is casting them. Melanie and I love to walk go for walks and sometimes she takes pictures of our shadows. They kind of look like us but without the details. I especially like it when the sun is low in the sky. Our shadows get really long. It makes me look taller and skinnier. When I was young and working with my dad some would say "I was in his shadow". Thirdly, because of the security, there is a boldness, a confidence, "this is home turf"! "If God is with me, who can possibly be against me?" (Rom 8:31). David told Saul, "This big oaf is going down! I killed a lion and a bear and this uncircumcised Philistine will be like one of them, I'm in the shadow of God, I'm on home turf!

Bezalel was not experienced when he began the construction of the tabernacle, the ark, the mercy seat, the tools, utensils, the clothes and garments, even the oil,. Every skilled craftsman starts somewhere. Every baker bakes their first cake / Every mechanic changes their first spark plug / Every Biologist dissect their first frog. Maybe during this Fanning the Flame journey God has revealed his desire in some new area for you? Maybe as we study the Thom Rainer book, *I am a Church Member*. A new priority of unity might be revealed to you? Maybe as we have conversation as Neil spoke about last week, there is something "tugging" at your heart?

Oh dear saints, Live in the Shadow of God. Have this attitude as we use our God-given Spiritual gifts. We should feel a sense of security, a sense of boldness. We are on our Home field!