

ARM Prison Outreach International

"Ministers' Minute" Volume II Number 9

How To Tackle a Big Job

Editor's Note: This "MM" is the 9th email message of 2003 in a series that ARM is sending as an encouragement to preachers and Christian workers around the world. Many of you face huge challenges; they seem insurmountable. It is my prayer that this message will encourage you and those you teach. May God bless your labors! -- Rod Farthing, Development Director

1 Chronicles 28:1-21

OPEN:

A US Marshall was traveling across the prairie during the days of the Old West looking for a famous outlaw named Big Jake. He came to a small town and as he passed through the town, he noticed a watering hole and decided to stop and quench his thirst. After ordering a root beer, he stood and observed the other clientele in the saloon.

Suddenly the door swung open, and a cowboy came running in yelling "Big Jake's comin'!" Within seconds the establishment had cleared, leaving the Marshall and his root beer all alone. Sure enough, a huge seven-and-a-half foot, 500 pound cowboy came swaggering in, tearing out the front door frame with his broad shoulders.

The cowboy looked around, marched over to the Marshall, picked him up by the scruff of the neck, bellowing "Gimme a root beer!" The Marshall complied, placing the full bottle next to a glass on the counter. The cowboy tossed back the glass, then bit the neck off of the bottle and emptied it.

At that point, the Marshall, quaking in his boots, asked "Sir, would you care for another?" To which the cowboy replied, "Nope. I gotta go. Big Jake's comin'!"

Sounds like to me that the Marshall had his work cut out for him! You could say he had a BIG JOB TO DO! A Big job. Do you have any "BIG JOBS" challenging you? Large tasks that loom ahead, work to tackle that seems bigger than you can handle? Solomon the King was in that situation in our text:

1 Chr 28:20 David also said to Solomon his son, "Be strong and courageous, and do the work. Do not be afraid or discouraged, for the LORD God, my God, is with you. He will not fail you or forsake you until all the work for the service of the temple of the LORD is finished. 21 The divisions of the priests and Levites are ready for all the work on the temple of God, and every willing man skilled in any craft will help you in all the work. The officials and all the people will obey your every command." (NIV)

This is the heart of our text, but let's read the earlier verses of the chapter to get the full picture:

What a job! Have you been in this situation? Facing a huge task, an important task? A difficult challenge? Do you face one now? It might be an assignment on your job, or it might be a challenge in your family or personal life. Think about it: Do you face a big task right now?

Let me say at the outset that we're getting advice not only from the Inspired writer in Scripture, King David, we're getting advice from THE GIANT SLAYER! Take that into consideration, I'm sure Solomon did. ("Daddy, tell me the giant story again!")

The key to success in tackling Big Jake or any other huge job is first asking this question:

Is it God's Work? Look at verse 20 "God is with you." There is the key. As you face your big challenge, ask yourself: "Is this God's work I am doing? Is it His Will that this be done?" If it is, what an encouragement we have as we begin. If it is not, we ought to re-think whether it is worthy of our time and effort.

Solomon's huge challenge was definitely in God's will. And Knowing it is yields the key factors that will give us the power and grace and wherewithal to be successful. Listen to what David said in I Chr 28:6 "God said to me: 'Solomon your son is the one who will build my house and my courts, for I have chosen him to be my son, and I will be his father.'"

We may not be THAT sure that what we do is God's will, but we CAN search His Word and search our hearts and assure ourselves that what we tackle is indeed God's will. Sticking with your commitment to read (or listen) thru the NT is in God's will. Raising that son or daughter in the way of the Lord is in God's will. Conquering that sin or evil habit is in God's will. We can know. And when we see that this job is not ours only, but also God's plan, what encouragement we find!

1. If it is God's work, we can face the big job with God's Partnership v.6 "God is with you" Vs 20

From Adam on, human beings have been privileged and challenged to work as the partners of God! What a joy! What a blessing! We are doing the will of the Creator and we are HIS HELPERS!

Charles Spurgeon, the great British evangelist once had an experience that

illustrates the power of partnering with God. He had been out in the country to preach, and, when traveling back to London, suddenly found that he had lost his railway ticket. A gentleman, the only other occupant of the compartment, noticing that he was fumbling about in his pocket, said, "I hope you have not lost anything, sir?" Mr. Spurgeon thanked him, and told him that he had lost his ticket, and that by a remarkable coincidence he had neither watch nor money with him. "But," added Mr. Spurgeon, "I am not at all troubled, for I have been on my Master's business, and I am quite sure all will be well. I have had so many interpositions of Divine Providence, in small matters as well as great ones, that I feel as if, whatever happens to me, I am bound to fall on my feet. . . ." The gentleman seemed interested, and said that no doubt all would be right. When the ticket collector came to the compartment, the collector touched his hat to Mr. Spurgeon's companion, who simply said to the conductor, "It is all right, William," whereupon the conductor again saluted and retired. After he had gone Mr. Spurgeon said to the gentleman, "It is very strange that the conductor did not ask for my ticket." "No, Mr. Spurgeon," he replied, using his name for the first time, "it is only another illustration of what you told me about the Providence of God watching over you, even in small matters; I am the general manager of the line, and it was no doubt divinely arranged that I should be your companion just when I could be of service to you."

When you team up with the Creator, you have partner that will help you do the big jobs!

ARM INTERESTING FACT!

From June 11, 2002 through June 10, 2003, a total of 54,304 ARM American Bible Academy exams were graded on the Scantron grading machine. This is an average of over 1,000 exams graded per week!

2. If it's God's work, we can face the big job with Courage! v. 20

Courage is so important. Not an absence of fear but the commitment to fulfill our task in spite of the fear that threatens to stop us.

David, the aged father, the warrior of God, the giant slayer, looks into the eyes of his precious son, his successor on the throne and says: "Be strong and courageous, and do the work. Do not be afraid or discouraged, for the LORD God, my God, is with you."

The One who guided the one smooth stone to the forehead of Goliath of Gath is with you. Take courage. The One who parted the Red Sea and the Jordan

River is with you. Take courage. The One who sent His most precious Son, His Only Son, is with you. Take courage. The One who made the Heavens and the Earth is with you. Take courage.

Christian, beloved brother and sister, Take courage. I don't know how big the battle is that you face. I know not the size of the fight you're in. But I know this. If it is God's will that you work, God's will that you fight, you can take courage, for God is with you!

3. If it's God's work, we can face the big job with the help of God's people!

IN 28:21 David tells Solomon: "The divisions of the priests and Levites are ready for all the work on the temple of God, and every willing man skilled in any craft will help you in all the work."

Isn't the scariest part of tackling a huge task the thought of doing it alone? If it's God's will, brother, you do not tackle that challenge alone! David calls Solomon's eyes to see the allies that God had provided, the co-workers that are so important!

Consider these scriptures by Paul as he spoke of co-workers in HIS BIG JOB:

Rom 16:3 Greet Priscilla and Aquila, my fellow workers in Christ Jesus. 4 They risked their lives for me. Not only I but all the churches of the Gentiles are grateful to them. (NIV)

1 Cor 3:6 I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God made it grow. 7 So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow. 8 The man who plants and the man who waters have one purpose, and each will be rewarded according to his own labor. 9 For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, God's building. (NIV)

Phil 2:25 But I think it is necessary to send back to you Epaphroditus, my brother, fellow worker and fellow soldier, who is also your messenger, whom you sent to take care of my needs. 26 For he longs for all of you and is distressed because you heard he was ill. 27 Indeed he was ill, and almost died. But God had mercy on him, and not on him only but also on me, to spare me sorrow upon sorrow. 28 Therefore I am all the more eager to send him, so that when you see him again you may be glad and I may have less anxiety. 29 Welcome him in the Lord with great joy, and honor men like him,

30 because he almost died for the work of Christ, risking his life to make up for the help you could not give me. (NIV)

Paul had a big job, he sought to evangelize the whole world! He took the advice of David the giant slayer. He made sure it was God's work, then took courage and partnered with the people of God to see the dream come to pass!

Many of the great songwriters of the past have been men of renowned literary ability. One such writer was an Englishman named Sabine Baring-Gould. Mr. Gould was born in Exeter, England in 1834. Many of his earlier years were spent in France and Germany studying for the ministry. The first of his many small churches was a little mission in Harbury, a small town on the outskirts of Yorkshire. On a holiday known as White Monday (seven weeks after Easter), the children of his Sunday school were invited to join celebrations in the neighboring town of Yorkshire. Baring-Gould thought that they should have a song to sing as they marched along carrying their crosses and banners on the way to Yorkshire. He sat up most of the night before the holiday, writing verses. By morning he had completed a song, he taught it to the children the next day, using as a melody the theme from Haydn's Symphony in D. As they marched along they sang for the first time:

Onward Christian soldiers, Marching as to war,
With the cross of Jesus, Going on before.
Christ the royal Master Leads against the foe,
Forward into battle, See His banner go.

This song, like many others, has gone farther than the writer ever hoped and dreamed. Everywhere you go, in every country of the world, you hear the strains of this great Christian march. No longer is Haydn's theme used, but a wonderful composition arranged by Sir Arthur Sullivan, of Gilbert and Sullivan fame. The song as it is now, with Sullivan's music and Baring-Gould's verses, is a soul-stirring, fighting song, for real "soldiers of the cross."

Let me read you verse two:

At the sign of triumph Satan's host doth flee;
On then, Christian soldiers, on to victory!
Hell's foundations quiver at the shout of praise;
Brothers lift your voices, loud your anthems raise.

On to victory! Yes, when God is our Captain, when Christ is our Royal Master, we will win! We will finish the job. Solomon's temple was completed and it was glorious! Beloved, if you are tackling a big job for God and with God, you, too can take courage that the battle will be won! The job will be done! Praise the Lord! Give Him Glory!

Prayer: LORD, I am thankful that your ways and character never change. You are absolutely dependable. Help me to be strong and courageous in the big jobs you have selected for me to do, for I know you are always faithful and will never fail me or forsake me, regardless of circumstances. I know you will be my partner and strength and that your people will join in the task. Thank you for your unchanging,

unfailing, and unconditional love. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Do you need to partner with God today? To confess Christ as Lord and Savior and be immersed into Him for the remission of your sins? Don't tackle the big job of successful living without the partnership and help of the Lord of Life!

Decision song: Faith is the Victory #486

May you have great physical health and continuing spiritual vitality for the tasks within the Father's purposes!

**Rod Farthing, ARM National Development Director
"Remain faithful unto death .." Rev. 2:10B**

Is prayer your steering wheel or your spare tire? --Corrie Ten Boom