



SERMON NOTES & TRANSCRIPT

Fulfill Your Ministry

The Levites, the Local Church and Your Place on the Team

Every believer is a minister. Like the clans of Levi, we each carry a part of the house of God: hospitality, kids and youth, worship and media, and the ministry of provision. The city will be reached at the rate of vision, manpower and generosity.

PREACHED BY

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SERIES

We're Relentlessly Driven by the Mission, Week 4 of 4

MAIN TEXT

Numbers 3:5-6

Contents

01 Sermon Transcript

02 Preaching Notes

03 Scripture List

04 About the Preacher

WATCH THE MESSAGE

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0:00 Every believer is a minister

5:38 Numbers 3 and 4: the tribe of Levi

8:58 The Gershonites: hospitality

14:01 The Merarites: kids and youth

18:13 What keeps teenagers rooted

20:34 The Kohathites: worship and media

28:21 The ministry of provision

33:02 Vision, manpower and generosity

34:28 Joash's chest: the house restored

Sermon Transcript

All right, turn with me in your Bibles to — let me pick a Scripture here. Let's go to Numbers chapter 3, verse 5. Numbers chapter 3, verse 5. We'll go there shortly, just keep your finger there. I'm actually going to read less text than I normally do, but I'm going to teach you more Bible than I normally do. So I know that sounds counterintuitive, but I'm going to teach, because if we read this text it would actually be the whole message, and then we'd leave, and it ain't one of those that would land there real good. This one needs a little explaining. Amen.

There's some Bible verses you can just do that. We could just read Romans 5 and then call it a day and head on out of here. This ain't Romans 5. Amen. And we've been in a series for the past several weeks called "We Are Relentlessly Driven By The Mission." We've been talking about the Great Commission. We started in week one talking about just that: what is the Great Commission of the church?

MATTHEW 28:19-20 ESV

¹⁹ Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

Week two we talked about some strategies that we know will be fruitful for reaching the lost. Last week we talked about how we can maximize our efforts by staying in our lane. By staying in our lane. And last week what we talked about specifically, we talked about staying in the right lane, because there's a right lane and there's a wrong lane when it comes to reaching the city, and we want to be in the right lane.

We want to be in the right lane morally, ethically, theologically, but also pragmatically, strategically. Stay in the right lane. We stay in our lane. We can't be every other church in the city. We can only be who we are. Amen. How many of y'all love it when you cook something for everybody for dinner and they want something else? I can only put on the table what I can put on the table. Amen. So we stay in our lane. And then we talked about, I stay in my lane. I stay in my lane. You stay in your lane. She stays in her lane. He stays in his lane. We all have unique and individual graces on our life that we have to operate in.

Amen. Hey, that's a good place to say amen. All right. Don't make me beg, honey. Don't make me beg for 'em. Amen. Hallelujah. So last week we ended by talking about the king and the priest, and how there are believers who are in the ministry in the marketplace, and how there are believers who are in ministry in the ministry. There are kings who are believers in the marketplace, there are priests who are believers in the ministry. But this morning I'm going to challenge that, because sometimes in the kingdom — in fact, a lot of times in the kingdom — you will find that you will hear something, and the full understanding of that thing is that it is "yes, and." Yes, and. So there is a truth that there are believers who are in the marketplace and there are believers who are in the ministry. That is true. And the Bible says in 1 Peter chapter 2, verse 9, that "you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light."

1 PETER 2:9 ESV

⁹ But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.

See, it's true that yes, there are believers in the marketplace and there are believers in the ministry, but it is also true that every believer is also a minister. Every believer is a minister.

Now, you won't know this song, I promise, because the worship leader at our church wrote this little song, and we used to sing this when I got saved. I remember it. And he just used to sing this little song that said, [worship] Ben Stone wrote that. So if anybody from Kingwood is watching today, you remember that song. "Everyone a minister, everyone a Christ giver." 1 Peter chapter 2 said it right there. It said that we are a royal priesthood to declare that he has called us out of darkness into his marvelous light. You are a testimony of his marvelous light. Amen. Hallelujah. Everyone's a minister.

So today what I want to do — this will not come from the text that I'm going to teach you. I'm going to borrow a title for this message from a portion of Scripture I'm not even going to read today. I will just pull one out. It's 2 Timothy. Paul writes a charge to young Timothy, a minister that is taking hold of leadership in the early church, and it is believed that 2 Timothy is written on the night before Paul is executed for the gospel. It is believed that Paul writes this and he goes to heaven. Now, we don't know that for sure, but we do know for certain that this was written — this is one of the last letters that he ever wrote. And he writes to Timothy, and towards the end of the book he just says this phrase: "Fulfill your ministry."

2 TIMOTHY 4:5 ESV

⁵ But as for you, always be sober-minded, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.

Fulfill your ministry. So today my message title is "Fulfill Your Ministry," and we're talking about fulfilling your ministry today.

Numbers chapter 3 and verse 4 — we're not, or, I'm sorry, not 3 and verse 4. It's Numbers 3 and 4. Both of those chapters are our text for today. That's why I'm not reading them. It's going to be really long if I do. Numbers 3 and 4 tell us about the tribe of Levi. They tell us about the tribe of Levi, who are the ministers of the Old Testament. They are the ministers of the old covenant. And they're going to demonstrate for us this morning where we have opportunities to fulfill our ministry in the church. Look at your neighbor and say, "Fulfill your ministry." Fulfill your ministry. Fulfill your ministry. Numbers 3 and 4.

I do want to just look at Numbers 3, verse 5 for a moment, just so we can anchor into something.

NUMBERS 3:5-6 ESV

⁵ And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ⁶ "Bring the tribe of Levi near, and set them before Aaron the priest, that they may minister to him.

"And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, 'Bring the tribe of Levi near, and set them before Aaron the priest, that they may minister to him.'" Now, for the Levites, their ministry happened in the tabernacle. For us, it happens in the church. They

were the tabernacle. We were the church — or, we are the church. We must understand, if we're going to understand how what I'm going to teach you today works, we have to understand what the structure in the nation of Israel looked like. It's very simple. The nation of Israel was a nation as a whole that was divided into 12 tribes. Okay, can all of you count to 12? Okay, then you're good. You've got good theology today. Amen.

Amen. So it's 12 tribes. The tribes were then further broken down into clans. They were broken down into clans. These were sections of the tribes. And then clans were broken into families, and families into individuals. So this is why whenever it tells you about someone in the Bible — for instance, like a Boaz, or a David, or a Solomon, or a Zechariah, or a Jesus — that it gives you all of this context to see how this broke down. It gives you all that. That's what those genealogies tell you. It tells you where they were at in the tribes. And so this morning I want to tell you about the three clans of the tribe of Levi that fulfill the ministry of the church. These are the three clans of the tribe of Levi. They're the Gershonites, the Merarites, and the Kohathites.

NUMBERS 3:21-37 ESV

²¹ To Gershon belonged the clan of the Libnites and the clan of the Shimeites; these were the clans of the Gershonites. ²² Their listing according to the number of all the males from a month old and upward was 7,500. ²³ The clans of the Gershonites were to camp behind the tabernacle on the west, ²⁴ with Eliasaph, the son of Lael as chief of the fathers' house of the Gershonites. ²⁵ And the guard duty of the sons of Gershon in the tent of meeting involved the tabernacle, the tent with its covering, the screen for the entrance of the tent of meeting, ²⁶ the hangings of the court, the screen for the door of the court that is around the tabernacle and the altar, and its cords—all the service connected with these. ²⁷ To Kohath belonged the clan of the Amramites and the clan of the Izharites and the clan of the Hebronites and the clan of the Uzzielites; these are the clans of the Kohathites. ²⁸ According to the number of all the males, from a month old and upward, there were 8,600, keeping guard over the sanctuary. ²⁹ The clans of the sons of Kohath were to camp on the south side of the tabernacle, ³⁰ with Elizaphan the son of Uzziel as chief of the fathers' house of the clans of the Kohathites. ³¹ And their guard duty involved the ark, the table, the lampstand, the altars, the vessels of the sanctuary with which the priests minister, and the screen; all the service connected with these. ³² And Eleazar the son of Aaron the priest was to be chief over the chiefs of the Levites, and to have oversight of those who kept guard over the sanctuary. ³³ To Merari belonged the clan of the Mahlites and the clan of the Mushites: these are the clans of Merari. ³⁴ Their listing according to the number of all the males from a month old and upward was 6,200. ³⁵ And the chief of the fathers' house of the clans of Merari was Zuriel the son of Abihail. They were to camp on the north side of the tabernacle. ³⁶ And the appointed guard duty of the sons of Merari involved the frames of the tabernacle, the bars, the pillars, the bases, and all their accessories; all the service connected with these; ³⁷ also the pillars around the court, with their bases and pegs and cords.

NUMBERS 4:1-33 ESV

¹ The LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying, ² “Take a census of the sons of Kohath from among the sons of Levi, by their clans and their fathers’ houses, ³ from thirty years old up to fifty years old, all who can come on duty, to do the work in the tent of meeting. ⁴ This is the service of the sons of Kohath in the tent of meeting: the most holy things. ⁵ When the camp is to set out, Aaron and his sons shall go in and take down the veil of the screen and cover the ark of the testimony with it. ⁶ Then they shall put on it a covering of goatskin and spread on top of that a cloth all of blue, and shall put in its poles. ⁷ And over the table of the bread of the Presence they shall spread a cloth of blue and put on it the plates, the dishes for incense, the bowls, and the flagons for the drink offering; the regular showbread also shall be on it. ⁸ Then they shall spread over them a cloth of scarlet and cover the same with a covering of goatskin, and shall put in its poles. ⁹ And they shall take a cloth of blue and cover the lampstand for the light, with its lamps, its tongs, its trays, and all the vessels for oil with which it is supplied. ¹⁰ And they shall put it with all its utensils in a covering of goatskin and put it on the carrying frame. ¹¹ And over the golden altar they shall spread a cloth of blue and cover it with a covering of goatskin, and shall put in its poles. ¹² And they shall take all the vessels of the service that are used in the sanctuary and put them in a cloth of blue and cover them with a covering of goatskin and put them on the carrying frame. ¹³ And they shall take away the ashes from the altar and spread a purple cloth over it. ¹⁴ And they shall put on it all the utensils of the altar, which are used for the service there, the fire pans, the forks, the shovels, and the basins, all the utensils of the altar; and they shall spread on it a covering of goatskin, and shall put in its poles. ¹⁵ And when Aaron and his sons have finished covering the sanctuary and all the furnishings of the sanctuary, as the camp sets out, after that the sons of Kohath shall come to carry these, but they must not touch the holy things, lest they die. These are the things of the tent of meeting that the sons of Kohath are to carry. ¹⁶ “And Eleazar the son of Aaron the priest shall have charge of the oil for the light, the fragrant incense, the regular grain offering, and the anointing oil, with the oversight of the whole tabernacle and all that is in it, of the sanctuary and its vessels.” ¹⁷ The LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying, ¹⁸ “Let not the tribe of the clans of the Kohathites be destroyed from among the Levites, ¹⁹ but deal thus with them, that they may live and not die when they come near to the most holy things: Aaron and his sons shall go in and appoint them each to his task and to his burden, ²⁰ but they shall not go in to look on the holy things even for a moment, lest they die.” ²¹ The LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ²² “Take a census of the sons of Gershon also, by their fathers’ houses and by their clans. ²³ From thirty years old up to fifty years old, you shall list them, all who can come to do duty, to do service in the tent of meeting. ²⁴ This is the service of the clans of the Gershonites, in serving and bearing burdens: ²⁵ they shall carry the curtains of the tabernacle and the tent of meeting with its covering and the covering of goatskin that is on top of it and the screen for the entrance of the tent of meeting ²⁶ and the hangings of the court and the screen for the entrance of the gate of the court that is around the tabernacle and the altar, and their cords and all the equipment for their service. And they shall do all that needs to be done with regard to them. ²⁷ All the service of the sons of the Gershonites shall be at the command of Aaron and his sons, in all that they are to carry and in all that they have to do. And you shall assign to their charge all that they are to carry. ²⁸ This is the service of the clans of the sons of the Gershonites in the tent of meeting, and their guard duty is to be under the direction of Ithamar the son of Aaron the priest. ²⁹ “As for the sons of Merari, you shall list them by their clans and their fathers’ houses. ³⁰ From thirty years old up to fifty years old, you shall list them, everyone who can come on duty, to do the service of the tent of meeting. ³¹ And this is what they are charged to carry, as the whole of their service in the tent of meeting: the frames of the tabernacle, with its bars, pillars, and bases, ³² and the pillars around the court with their bases, pegs, and cords, with all their equipment and all

their accessories. And you shall list by name the objects that they are required to carry.³³ This is the service of the clans of the sons of Merari, the whole of their service in the tent of meeting, under the direction of Ithamar the son of Aaron the priest.”

Y'all live next door to any of them? Amen. They fell off on the last names. Hallelujah. But the Gershonites, the Merarites, the Kohathites. And I'd also just like to make a note to you real quick before we move on, that we often kind of look at the tribe of Levi and think of them all as priests, but they weren't. It was actually a very small portion of the tribe of Levi that were priests. But the entire tribe of Levi served in the house of the Lord. They served the tabernacle.

So we're going to get started. Are you ready? Shout yes. Give the Lord a hand clap of praise. Pat yourself on the head and rub your belly at the same time. Hallelujah. We'll get it all from you today. Amen. Number one, let's talk about the Gershonites. It's going to be very line upon line today. Let's talk about the Gershonites. They had a very simple job in the house of the Lord. They had a very simple job in the tabernacle. They handled all of the fabric elements of the tabernacle. They did all of the curtains, the coverings, they put up the screens that would divide different areas. They essentially set the atmosphere and the boundaries for the house of the Lord. They set the boundaries and the atmosphere for God's dwelling place.

Now, if there's a modern connection to what we do today in the modern church — there's a modern connection — and this would be the hospitality team in a church. I'm going to just go ahead and prepare y'all for something. Let me take a little sip there before I do it. Hallelujah. Y'all think I've just been telling y'all how to do good church. I'm about to show you how prophetic this whole thing is. I'm about to show you what the Bible says about how to build a church. Are you ready for it? Because I don't know about you, I want to build it God's way. Amen. And that's what we're going to talk about. So the modern connection for the Gershonites, it's the hospitality team. They set the tone for the house. They set the tone. Just like the Gershonites, they create the environment that welcomes people into the presence of the Lord. Greeters, parking lot people. Do we have parking lot people yet?

We're going to have parking lot people one day. When you leave today, I want you to get it in your mind, someone saying, “We'll see you next week,” as you drive out, because that guy will be there sometime. Why don't you go home and write down what he looks like? Maybe it'll be prophetic, in Jesus' name. Maybe it'll be a vision. But parking lot people, people who make coffee. Just so y'all know, pray for our coffee maker. That thing has given us a fit. But Miss Jackie's going to fix it today, in Jesus' name. We got a plan. We have chemicals. Amen. People who do the coffee, people who do the first impressions. When you greet someone as they walk into the front door, that's a first impression.

You make people feel like they belong before they ever hear a single word in the house. That's powerful. That's powerful. It's even more powerful when you think about the fact that you don't know who's walking — now I feel like preaching all of a sudden, I'm sorry — when you don't know who's walking through the door. Because see, I walked into the house of the Lord week after week after week and I was living in hell on earth. I was raised by two alcoholics. I didn't know what I was going to come home to. I was watching somebody get beat all the time, run off in a car all the time. Regularly had to make phone calls to my grandparents to say, “We've got to go find this parent again, I haven't seen them in three hours.” So when I came to the house of the Lord, somebody setting an atmosphere that felt welcoming, it changed my life. It's not a small thing. It's a huge thing.

Because I don't know about you, I don't know about the people, you know, but what I know is these people are responsible for me being in the ministry today. Somebody give the Lord a praise. Hallelujah. Studies from Lifeway and

Church Answers show that first-time guests — I told you this a few weeks ago — often return based on their decision to return; it is often based on how they were greeted, treated, and seated. A preacher must have wrote that. But how they're greeted, treated, and seated. In fact, Lifeway goes on and says that first-time guests shared these preferences in surveys. These are things that first-time guests look for who end up coming back to church. They look for clear signage. They look for empathetic greeters. They look for visible hospitality.

Let me just toss this in. Some people don't even want the hospitality, they just want to know where they can find it. That's why we're doing this, so when people walk in they can go, "I know I can talk to that person. They can help me. I can trust them with my kids." Somebody ought to say amen right there. Amen. So clear signage, visible hospitality, and not feeling put on the spot. That's why we never ask first-time guests to — y'all remember when we used to do this and we'd have them stand up and everybody clapped for them? And we don't do that anymore. They won't be put on the spot, in Jesus' name.

So the Gershonites, they're the hospitality team. They build the atmosphere of the church. They build the boundaries of the church. On occasion, somebody on the hospitality team is going to have to say, "We don't go in there. We'll go in that room. That's the room with the safe." Amen. We're going to keep you out of that room. Sometimes they've got to set the boundaries, but they keep everybody moving where they've got to go.

Number two, the Merarites. The Merarites. Their job was to carry and maintain all the structural elements of the tabernacle: the beams, the bases, the pegs, the pillars. Everything that held everything together. So while the Gershonites are bringing all of the curtains, the Merarites are bringing all of the structure. The modern connection for us is our kids and our youth teams. Our kids and our youth teams, they're the Merarites in the modern-day church, because they build the framework for spiritual formation. Youth and children's ministry gives us the greatest head start with a believer. They give us the greatest head start to see someone live for Jesus for the rest of their life. They don't just serve during service, they shape future generations, because nothing stands without structure. Nothing stands without.

Now, pragmatically, from a strategic point of view, 62 percent of parents say that their decision to come to a church is strongly based on their children's ministry. It is a huge decision maker. In fact, I have even been told, "We want to come to your church. We're waiting to see how your children's ministry does." We've been through a little bit of shaking over the last few years in the children's ministry. People are waiting to see what happens. They're ready to come, waiting for a solution. And I am so grateful for our children's ministry team that has stepped into what they're doing right now. Let me just say just a quick word about Tiffany. Tiffany was thrust into children's ministry before I got here, and she has stepped up and kept that thing running and been doing a great job. And she's not in the room, but you ought to sow a seed of appreciation and clap your hands for her right now. Hallelujah.

Now, about two-thirds of Christians come to the faith between the ages of 18 — I'm sorry, before the age of 18 — and 43 percent come to know the Lord before the age of 12. Children's ministry and youth ministry are not optional. They are urgent. They are incredibly important. I want you to know that I actively work on figuring out solutions for the next generation. I've talked to multiple district youth directors. I have talked to youth pastors. I was talking to a youth pastor about something yesterday that I'm not going to tell you about, because I don't want to get your hopes up. Amen. But I've been talking to people. I'm trying to do what we can to get that solved, because it is so important. And specifically with teenagers, there is a massive dropout rate that we have to be aware of.

When kids turn 18 years old, it's pretty well understood that we're going to lose them. In fact, when kids turn 18 years old — church kids, your kids, your grandkids that are in church right now — when they turn 18 years old, 60 percent of them will walk away from the church, and statistically only 20 percent will come back. That's where we're losing them. But thank God for smart people. Amen. And this is what the smart people tell us. They said the main reasons that these kids leave are because of life transitions. They go to college or work, or they move, and they just haven't figured out how to make church part of their life. It becomes a complication. They feel disconnected from the church. They have intellectual doubts and unanswered questions. Or they perceive the church to be irrelevant and judgmental.

But the most critical window to shape a person's faith is before they turn 18 years old, before they graduate high school. If you got kids graduating from high school at 15, you're hurting your pastor here. I need three more years. Slow them down, in Jesus' name.

Now, what keeps them rooted in church? We also know this. There are five things that they've identified that keep kids in church. This is from the Fuller Youth Institute. It was part of a project that they did for a book called the Sticky Faith Project. Five things. Number one is that they serve regularly in ministry. I will tell you that I am not only the product today of people who were kind to me and prayed for me, to the point that I preached about one of them when I left my last church — preached a message on this woman, that kind — but I'll tell you what, I'm also the product of a bass guitar. Because I got my hands on a bass. I found a place that I was useful and God changed my life with no more than four strings. I didn't even need as many as guitar players. Amen.

So, serving regularly. Being mentored by an adult outside of their family — that's why youth leaders are important. Parents with an active, visible faith. Parents with an active, visible faith. Worshiping with the whole church. Worshiping with the whole church. And being taught how to read the Bible, which I will tell you, in three weeks we are starting a series. If you have never read the Bible or have found reading the Bible difficult, I am going to rock your world. I'm going to teach you how to hear from the Lord over a six-week series. Amen. It's going to be good. Those five things we know work.

So I just want to tell you, as much as I would like to have a youth ministry like yesterday, what's actually more helpful is we want to make sure that every teenager in the church is serving in ministry. So if you have a teenager, let me tell you what they need to do. They need to get involved in kids ministry. They need to get involved on the hospitality team, or they need to get involved in this room. Because if they'll get involved in ministry, I'm telling you — I'll not toss this in because I'm putting it on tape, but I'm going to say it anyway: should have treated me better in real time. Amen. But my youth pastor hated my guts. I don't understand it. I've never gotten it. He was horrible to me. But you know what kept me? That bass. Once I got my hands on that bass, it kept me. I'm telling you, if you get involved in ministry, it'll change your life. I like it so much, I decided to do it all the time. Amen. Hallelujah.

Number three. Number three, the Kohathites. The Kohathites. The Kohathites carried the most sacred items. They carried the ark, the altars, the lampstand, the table of showbread, and utensils. But they could not carry what the priest had covered. So there were some things that the priest still had to deal with, but in terms of all of the other sacred items, they carried those things, and they had to do it with reverence. And the connection to that is, I just call it this room. It's everything that happens in this room. It's the worship.

By the way, just — I'm painting a little vision for y'all. I don't like being the only guy up here. It's just what we're doing right now. Not doing what I want, I'm doing what I can. If I was doing what I wanted, I'd be getting paid \$320,000 a year and only showing up for five hours a week. Amen. So I said, "That sounds like a good deal. How do you get in on that?"

Amen. But this isn't what I want. This is just what we're doing right now. There will be a day where you see a stage full of people. And people that look like you, people that don't look like you. Men, women, big, small, tall, short, white, black, Mexican, Puerto Rican. Who else can we get up here? Pakistani? I might have me a Chinese fellow. I used to have a Chinese piano player. Shout out Virgil Fung, I see you. Amen. He was my piano player there for a long time.

But what happens in this room? It's the things that happen in this room. This is where the Kohathites operate. They carry the most sacred thing. So we've got the worship team that carries in great degree our incense before the Lord. But we also have people back in the media team who carry the gospel. Over the next few weeks we're going to have people getting on these cameras, and then I can come off the platform and get in your face when I'm asking for them. Amen. So I'll get right down and I said, "Come on, somebody say amen." I'll be right in your face and we'll be moving around the room.

Because I'll tell you what, I told somebody at Calvary, the last church that we were at — someone was saying how great the message was that morning, which I appreciated, I'll take that anywhere I can get it, amen, I'll let you tell it to me today — but they said the message was great. I said, "You know who the best preacher in the whole house is?" And I was standing by the camera platform, and I grabbed the camera guy by the ankle. I said, "This guy right here reaches more people than I do."

In fact, last week — I'm just talking a little bit now, y'all got to forgive me — but last week I posted this just a few days ago. I posted a video of Wednesday night's teaching, because I wanted to try something out for this weekend, because we're not doing everything we can right now. So I took the message from Wednesday night and I posted it on the internet. And I think there were about — you were here Wednesday night, right? There were like 40 people in the room, something like that. Say somewhere in that 30, 40, something like that. Thirty, forty people in the room Wednesday night. That message has already been watched by over 500 people. I'll tell you what, that camera is a better preacher than I am any day of the week. It has an incredible reach. It can go around the world. It can do incredible things. The people who operate that, they carry the sacredness of the gospel to the world. To the world. That's huge. That's not a small thing.

We had a girl one time — I posted a video about pens, and I'm just telling stories. Posted a video about pens. You think, "Why did you post a video about pens?" Because I write in my Bible, and I think you should too. Amen. And so I was talking about the pens I use in my Bible, and I guess I had keyword tagged it in a way that a girl who went to Oxford in England — she was studying to be a doctor. Hallelujah. She pulled up this video on YouTube, watched it, thought the video was fun, because I like to have a good time. Amen. And she watched the video, then she started watching some more of my videos. The girl, looking for pens to study a textbook as she's becoming a doctor, she gives her life to Jesus Christ watching those videos online. I'm telling you, that thing right there is powerful, and we're going to reach the world with it, in Jesus' name. Amen. Hallelujah.

Just last week I looked at a video that I had shared from a sermon that I preached here. Over 25,000 people have watched that video from a month ago. Y'all didn't know you had impact, did you? That's impact right there. Twenty-five thousand people.

In fact, I looked at this — it's all right, I'm back — I was looking at this. I wanted to see how our Facebook page was performing compared to when Easter happened this year. How many of y'all know Easter is a pretty big day in the church? If not, we need to get you in a discipleship class. There's some stuff we got to teach you. But Easter is a big day in the church. It's the biggest day of the year. Some pastors call it Super Bowl Sunday. Amen. Because it's a big day in

the church. So I wanted to see how the Facebook page performed in April versus September month to date. Month to date — this was yesterday, I think, I checked it. In September, or in April, we had 10,019 people look at all of our Facebook content. At the time we were still live streaming. We don't live stream, but we do post our videos every week, so you can listen to this 18 times. Hallelujah. I looked at the September month-to-date numbers on Facebook. Our content has been viewed — versus 10,019 times at Easter, all of the month of April — month to date for September, 19,968 times. And there ain't nothing happening in September.

I'm talking about reaching people. The Kohathites, they carry this sacred thing that we have to distribute to the world. Amen. Hallelujah. This ministry is powerful. It has so much potential to reach the city, to reach the nation, to reach the world. And I'll be honest with you, I want people to get saved in Saraland. I'll take people getting saved in Dubuque, Wyoming. I really don't care if people are going to heaven, I'm good with that. Somebody say amen. Hallelujah.

So you've got the Gershonites, the Merarites, the Kohathites. Gershonites are similar to a hospitality team in a church. The Merarites, they create the structure. They create the framework that young people and children hold on to for all of their life. And then you've got the Kohathites, who operate in this room, and they carry the atmosphere of this room. They carry the gospel and they magnify the ministry in this room.

And I just think it'd be appropriate this morning, if over the last few weeks you've signed up to join the team or you've actively joined the team — if you're working in kids ministry, y'all came in on a good Sunday for this — if you work in kids ministry, if you are working on the hospitality team, if you're back in the media booth, I want all of you just to stand on your feet this morning. And I want us to give you a hand clap of appreciation right now. I feel the Lord on this. Let's just — God bless you. Thank you. And we can get you on the team by the end of the day. Amen. In fact, I would encourage you to do that. Sign up to be on the team.

Now, there are some of you that are sitting there and you're going, "Okay, well, that all sounds good, but I don't think I see myself doing any of that stuff." And I want to just say something to you. We're in a heavy recruiting mode. I've been very strong on this. I have pushed this to the limit on some of y'all, and I don't apologize for it, because you need to hear it. People are dying and going to hell, and somebody's got to get in between them. Somebody's got to step up and stop it. So I've been saying, "You got to join the team, you got to join the team, you got to join the team." But if you don't see yourself on the team, let me just say, that is okay. It is okay.

I need you to hear this: that some of the rhetoric comes from the place of the reality that our church has experienced some difficulties over the last year especially, and we need your help. We need your help. I need you to hear me. Your pastor needs you to step up and get involved. Because if one can put a thousand to flight, two can put ten thousand to flight.

DEUTERONOMY 32:30 ESV

³⁰ How could one have chased a thousand, and two have put ten thousand to flight, unless their Rock had sold them, and the LORD had given them up?

If I have learned anything in the past few weeks, it is how limited your pastor is. There is only so much I can do. There are days that I work at this church until I feel like if I don't drive home, I'll probably shut down before I can actually get in the car. I'm serious about this. I need your help. I need you to step up. If you have a gift, the Lord has a need of you.

But if that's not you, there's still a ministry for you. Maybe you say, "I can't join that." There's still a ministry for you. In fact, if you were to look at the numbers, the tribe of Levi was only less than five percent of all of Israel. There were 11 other tribes that made up 95 percent. That even challenges the 80/20 rule. There's 95 percent of people that did not work in tabernacle service, but they all had a ministry, and that is the ministry of provision. The ministry of provision and giving. Deuteronomy chapter 12, verse 19 says, "Take care that you do not neglect the Levite as long as you live in the land."

DEUTERONOMY 12:19 ESV

¹⁹ Take care that you do not neglect the Levite as long as you live in your land.

What it means is, it says there are people who are working in the ministry. There are Gershonites, there are Merarites, there are Kohathites, and they're doing the work of the ministry. Do not forget them and leave them without provision. God forbid somebody serve in kids ministry but we don't have diapers. God forbid someone serve in ministry, in kids ministry, and we had the audacity to tell them, "You go buy the diapers out of your own pocket." There's a ministry of provision that allows us to honor the work of the Lord and still be a part of what God is doing.

I do want to just say — and I don't want to act like — you're incredibly generous people. And I don't want to act like there's nothing coming in. Some of you give in a way that blows my mind. You're incredibly generous, and I just want to let you know that over this last year, if you have made a decision to sow above and beyond, you are so appreciated. There are days that decisions get made that can only be made because of you. And there are things that we've been able to do since I arrived I haven't had to think twice about, because of your faithful giving. And you're so appreciated.

There is a level of giving that's called tithing. Every believer is called to it: 10 percent of your income returned back to the Lord.

MALACHI 3:10 ESV

¹⁰ Bring the full tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. And thereby put me to the test, says the LORD of hosts, if I will not open the windows of heaven for you and pour down for you a blessing until there is no more need.

I'm not going to teach on it this morning, but I figure, some clarity — I'll let you know where I stand. I tithe. I'm not exempt from it. So we tithe. Everybody's called to do that. But there is another level than just tithing. It's called generosity. Generosity. The world of the generous gets larger and larger.

PROVERBS 11:24-25 ESV

²⁴ One gives freely, yet grows all the richer; another withholds what he should give, and only suffers want.

²⁵ Whoever brings blessing will be enriched, and one who waters will himself be watered.

When we're generous to the Lord, ministry happens and our world gets bigger.

And I just want to be clear, I do not want to mince words. I would never dare to manipulate you when I can just be honest with you. And I'm not taking an offering this morning. And I'll be honest with you, this is a good place to put one,

but I'm not doing that this morning. This is not an appeal to get your money. This is not an appeal to get you to pony up or to empty your pockets.

Reaching the city will move at the rate of three things. Reaching Mobile County with the gospel will move at the rate of three things. And I'm not trying to be heavy-handed, but reaching your family and your kids and your grandkids will move at the rate of three things. One is vision. One is vision. We have to have a word and a direction from the Lord. We have to. Number two is manpower. It's the team. It's the Gershonites and the Merarites and the Kohathites coming together and doing the work of the tabernacle in the house of the Lord. It's people saying, "There's work that has to be done in the church and I'm going to do it. I'm going to be a part of that." And the third is generosity. The third is generosity. We will reach this city at the speed of your generosity.

God is about — this is not in my notes — God is about to call some of you to a greater level of giving than you have ever operated in in your life. And God is about to make some of your worlds bigger than they have ever been. Bigger than they have ever been. The psalmist said, "I've never seen the righteous forsaken or his seed begging for bread."

PSALM 37:25 ESV

²⁵ I have been young, and now am old, yet I have not seen the righteous forsaken or his children begging for bread.

Hallelujah.

Last week I mentioned Joash and Jehoiada, the king and the priest. I told you, as we were talking about the differences between kings and priests, that the king and the priest came together. Jehoiada and Joash. Joash the king, Jehoiada the priest. They came together and they led an apostate, wicked nation of Judah back to the Lord. By the way, you need to be with me next week. I am going to preach about a prophetic word that I received on a soon-coming revival. I do believe there are some things that might be aligning. And I always hold that stuff loosely, but I got a word from the Lord about two years ago in the secret place. I'm going to share some insights on that next week.

But Jehoiada and Joash, they lead this apostate, rebellious nation that is far from God back to the Lord. They lead them back into the presence. So it's a great awakening in Judah. What I didn't tell you last week is how it happened. Jehoiada the priest had saw that the house of the Lord was in disrepair, and Joash the king made a pathway for people in Judah and Israel to come and to give to the house of the Lord for its repair. In fact, what they did is they took a chest and they put it next to the altar, and they bore a hole in it, and they called it a Joash chest.

2 CHRONICLES 24:4-12 ESV

⁴ After this Joash decided to restore the house of the LORD. ⁵ And he gathered the priests and the Levites and said to them, “Go out to the cities of Judah and gather from all Israel money to repair the house of your God from year to year, and see that you act quickly.” But the Levites did not act quickly. ⁶ So the king summoned Jehoiada the chief and said to him, “Why have you not required the Levites to bring in from Judah and Jerusalem the tax levied by Moses, the servant of the LORD, and the congregation of Israel for the tent of testimony?” ⁷ For the sons of Athaliah, that wicked woman, had broken into the house of God, and had also used all the dedicated things of the house of the LORD for the Baals. ⁸ So the king commanded, and they made a chest and set it outside the gate of the house of the LORD. ⁹ And proclamation was made throughout Judah and Jerusalem to bring in for the LORD the tax that Moses the servant of God laid on Israel in the wilderness. ¹⁰ And all the princes and all the people rejoiced and brought their tax and dropped it into the chest until they had finished. ¹¹ And whenever the chest was brought to the king’s officers by the Levites, when they saw that there was much money in it, the king’s secretary and the officer of the chief priest would come and empty the chest and take it and return it to its place. Thus they did day after day, and collected money in abundance. ¹² And the king and Jehoiada gave it to those who had charge of the work of the house of the LORD, and they hired masons and carpenters to restore the house of the LORD, and also workers in iron and bronze to repair the house of the LORD.

2 KINGS 12:9 ESV

⁹ Then Jehoiada the priest took a chest and bored a hole in the lid of it and set it beside the altar on the right side as one entered the house of the LORD. And the priests who guarded the threshold put in it all the money that was brought into the house of the LORD.

And it was a place that people would bring additional offering and they would put it in that chest. And as the chest would fill up, they would go in and they would repair the house of the Lord.

And I don’t see the connection in the physical, but when I look at the Word, I see that they did a construction project, and somehow God took the faith and the faithfulness and the showing up and the sowing and the getting involved, and he took that and he turned it to a revival that hit the whole nation. I don’t see the connection in the physical, but in the spirit it happens, because God is a God who honors faith. In fact, 2 Chronicles chapter 24, verse 13 says just that.

2 CHRONICLES 24:13 ESV

¹³ So those who were engaged in the work labored, and the repairing went forward in their hands, and they restored the house of God to its proper condition and strengthened it.

It says, “So those who were engaged in the work labored, and the repairing went forward in their hands, and they restored the house of God to its proper condition and strengthened it.” And I don’t know about you, but I just feel like a strong church could wreck this city in all the right ways. Amen.

Preaching Notes

Before You Preach

This message closes a four-week series on the mission of the church. Week three ended with kings and priests: believers in the marketplace and believers in the ministry. This week answers with a “yes, and”: that is true, and every believer is also a minister.

The text is Numbers 3 and 4, but do not read it. It is long, and read aloud it would be the whole sermon. Read Numbers 3:5-6 to anchor the message, then teach the three clans of Levi and their assignments. Tell the congregation up front: less reading today, more teaching.

The research figures in this message (guest return rates, when people come to faith, teen dropout) need current sources before you use them. Check them, cite them, and keep them brief. The media and Facebook numbers in point three belong to one church in one month; use your own church’s numbers.

The message ends on giving, but it is not an offering appeal. Say so plainly.

Introduction

We have been in a series called We’re Relentlessly Driven by the Mission:

- Week one: the Great Commission.
- Week two: strategies that we know will be fruitful for reaching the lost.
- Week three: stay in your lane. The right lane, our lane and my lane. We can’t be every other church in the city. We can only be who we are.

Last week ended with kings and priests: kings are believers in the marketplace, and priests are believers in the ministry. That is true. But a lot of truth in the kingdom is “yes, and.”

1 PETER 2:9 ESV

⁹ But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.

Yes, there are believers in the marketplace and believers in the ministry. And every believer is also a minister.

Illustration: “Everyone a Minister.” When I got saved, our worship leader, Ben Stone, wrote a little song we sang called “Everyone a Minister.” First Peter says it: we are a royal priesthood, called out of darkness into His marvelous light. You are a testimony of His marvelous light.

THE TITLE

The title comes from a passage we will not read today. Near the end of 2 Timothy, one of the last letters Paul wrote before his execution, he charges young Timothy to “fulfill your ministry” (2 Timothy 4:5).

Have the congregation say it to a neighbor: **“Fulfill your ministry.”**

The Tribe of Levi

Our text is Numbers 3 and 4, both chapters. They tell us about the tribe of Levi, the ministers of the old covenant, and they show us where we have opportunities to fulfill our ministry in the church.

NUMBERS 3:5-6 ESV

⁵ And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ⁶ “Bring the tribe of Levi near, and set them before Aaron the priest, that they may minister to him.

For the Levites, ministry happened in the tabernacle. For us, it happens in the church.

Israel’s structure. The nation was divided into 12 tribes. Tribes were divided into clans, clans into families, and families into individuals. That is what the genealogies are doing when they introduce a Boaz, a David or Jesus: they show where a person fits.

The tribe of Levi had three clans that carried the work of the tabernacle: **the Gershonites, the Merarites and the Kohathites.**

A note before we start: we tend to think of all the Levites as priests, but only a small portion of the tribe, Aaron and his sons, were priests. The entire tribe served in the house of the Lord.

1. The Gershonites: Hospitality

Their job: They handled the fabric of the tabernacle: the curtains, the coverings and the screens that divided its areas (Numbers 3:25-26; 4:24-28). They set the atmosphere and the boundaries of God’s dwelling place.

The modern connection: the hospitality team. Greeters, parking team, coffee crew and first impressions volunteers set the tone of the house. Like the Gershonites, they create the environment that welcomes people into the presence of the Lord. **You make people feel like they belong before they ever hear a single word in the house.**

Illustration: a welcome that changed my life. You never know who is walking through the door. I was raised by two alcoholics. I never knew what I would come home to. I watched someone get hurt again and again, and I regularly called my grandparents to say, “We have to go find this parent again.” When I walked into the house of the Lord week after week, someone had set an atmosphere that felt welcoming. It changed my life. Those people are part of the reason I am in ministry today. Hospitality is not a small thing. It is a huge thing.

What guests look for. Studies from Lifeway Research and Church Answers suggest that first-time guests often decide whether to return based on how they were greeted, treated and seated. In Lifeway's surveys, guests named these preferences:

- Clear signage
- Empathetic greeters
- Visible hospitality
- Not feeling put on the spot

Some guests do not even want hospitality right away; they just want to know where to find it, and who they can trust with their kids. That is also why we do not ask first-time guests to stand up and be recognized.

The Gershonites set boundaries too. Sometimes a hospitality volunteer has to say, kindly, "We don't go in that room." They keep everyone moving where they need to go.

2. The Merarites: Kids and Youth

Their job: They carried and maintained the structure of the tabernacle: the frames, bars, pillars, bases and pegs that held everything together (Numbers 3:36-37; 4:29-33). The Gershonites brought the curtains. The Merarites brought the structure.

The modern connection: kids and youth teams. They build the framework for spiritual formation. Children's and youth ministry give us the greatest head start in seeing someone live for Jesus for the rest of their life. **They don't just serve during service. They shape future generations, because nothing stands without structure.**

Why it matters. Pastor Jason's notes cite these figures (sources to confirm before preaching):

- 62% of parents say children's ministry was a decisive factor in choosing a church.
- About two-thirds of Christians came to faith before age 18, and 43% before age 12.

Children's and youth ministry is not optional. It is urgent.

Honor the people already doing this work by name. Families are watching to see what a church does for their kids.

TEENAGERS: THE DROPOUT REALITY

According to Lifeway Research, among young adults who attended church regularly as teenagers, about two-thirds stopped attending for a time between ages 18 and 22, and only about a third of those came back regularly in their twenties. (From the pulpit, this was summarized as 60% walking away and 20% coming back.)

The main reasons they gave:

- Life transitions: college, work, moving
- Feeling disconnected from the church

- Intellectual doubts and unanswered questions
- Seeing the church as irrelevant or judgmental

The most critical window to shape a lasting faith is before they graduate from high school.

WHAT KEEPS THEM ROOTED

Research from Lifeway and the Fuller Youth Institute's Sticky Faith project points to five shared experiences of teens who stay in church into adulthood:

- **Serving regularly in ministry.**
- **Being mentored by an adult outside their family.** That is why youth leaders matter.
- **Parents with an active, visible faith.**
- **Worshiping with the whole church.**
- **Being taught how to read the Bible.**

Illustration: four strings. I am the product of people who were kind to me and prayed for me. I am also the product of a bass guitar. I got my hands on a bass, found a place where I was useful, and God changed my life with no more than four strings. My youth pastor was hard on me. But what kept me was that bass. Serving kept me.

Application: If you have a teenager, get them serving: in kids ministry, on the hospitality team, or on the worship and media teams. Get involved in ministry, and it will change your life.

3. The Kohathites: Worship and Media

Their job: They carried the most sacred things: the ark, the table, the lampstand, the altars and the vessels of the sanctuary (Numbers 3:31). But they could only carry what the priests had first covered, and they had to do it with reverence: “they must not touch the holy things, lest they die” (Numbers 4:15). The priests themselves came from this clan, through Aaron.

The modern connection: everything that happens in this room. The worship team carries, in a great degree, our incense before the Lord. The media team carries the gospel beyond the room. They are not just pressing buttons or singing songs. They help carry the Word and presence of God in a way people can receive it.

Paint the vision: one day a stage full of people of every age and background.

Illustration: the best preacher in the house. After a service at a previous church, someone told me the message was great. I grabbed the camera operator by the ankle and said, “This guy reaches more people than I do.”

Illustration: the pen video. I once posted a video about the pens I use to write in my Bible. A medical student at Oxford, looking for pens to study her textbooks, found it on YouTube, kept watching more videos, and gave her life to Jesus Christ.

Illustration: our reach. Share your church's own numbers here. At the time of this message:

- A Wednesday night teaching with thirty or forty people in the room had been watched by more than 500 people online within days.
- A sermon clip from a month earlier had been viewed more than 25,000 times.
- Facebook content was viewed 10,019 times in April, the month of Easter, and 19,968 times in September with the month not yet over.

This ministry has incredible potential to reach the city, the nation and the world.

Response: If you serve in kids, hospitality, worship or media, or signed up in the last few weeks, stand. Let the church thank you. If you want to join the team, sign up today.

4. The Ministry of Provision

Some of you are thinking, “That all sounds good, but I don’t see myself doing any of that.” That is okay.

Be honest about why the push to serve has been strong. People are dying without Christ, and somebody has to step in between. The church has been through a hard season, and it needs help. One will chase a thousand, and two will put ten thousand to flight (Deuteronomy 32:30). There is only so much one pastor can do. If you have a gift, the Lord has need of you.

But if you cannot join a team, there is still a ministry for you.

The tribe of Levi was a small fraction of Israel, roughly five percent or less. The rest of the tribes did not serve in the tabernacle, but they still had a ministry: **the ministry of provision.**

DEUTERONOMY 12:19 ESV

¹⁹ Take care that you do not neglect the Levite as long as you live in your land.

There are people doing the work of the ministry. Do not forget them and leave them without provision. God forbid someone serves in kids ministry and we tell them to buy the diapers out of their own pocket.

A word of gratitude. Many of you are incredibly generous. Some of you give in ways that are astonishing. There are decisions made in this church that can only be made because of you. Thank you.

Tithing and generosity. Every believer is called to tithe, returning ten percent of their income to the Lord (Malachi 3:10). The pastor is not exempt. But beyond the tithe is generosity. “One gives freely, yet grows all the richer” (Proverbs 11:24). When we are generous to the Lord, ministry happens and our world gets bigger.

Be clear: this is not an offering appeal, and nobody is being asked to empty their pockets.

Conclusion

Reaching the city will move at the rate of three things. So will reaching your family, your kids and your grandkids:

- **Vision.** We have to have a word and a direction from the Lord.
- **Manpower.** The team: the Gershonites, the Merarites and the Kohathites coming together to do the work of the house of the Lord.
- **Generosity.** We will reach this city at the speed of your generosity.

God is about to call some of you to a greater level of giving than you have ever known, and He is about to make your world bigger. As the psalmist said, “I have not seen the righteous forsaken or his children begging for bread” (Psalm 37:25).

Joash’s chest. Last week we saw King Joash and Jehoiada the priest lead an apostate nation back to the Lord. Here is how it happened. “Joash decided to restore the house of the LORD” (2 Chronicles 24:4). A chest was made to receive the people’s gifts. Second Kings says Jehoiada “took a chest and bored a hole in the lid of it and set it beside the altar” (2 Kings 12:9); Chronicles says they “set it outside the gate of the house of the LORD” (2 Chronicles 24:8). The people gave gladly, and as the chest filled, the money went to repair the house of God.

2 CHRONICLES 24:13 ESV

¹³ So those who were engaged in the work labored, and the repairing went forward in their hands, and they restored the house of God to its proper condition and strengthened it.

It was a construction project, and God turned it into a revival for a whole nation. You can’t always see the connection in the natural, but God honors faith: the showing up, the serving, the giving. A strong church can wreck a city in all the right ways.

Fulfill your ministry.

Scripture List

Every passage read, cited or alluded to in the message, in the order it comes up.

Read

Read aloud in the message.

1 PETER 2:9

⁹ But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.

NUMBERS 3:5-6

⁵ And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ⁶ “Bring the tribe of Levi near, and set them before Aaron the priest, that they may minister to him.

**DEUTERONOMY
12:19**

¹⁹ Take care that you do not neglect the Levite as long as you live in your land.

**2 CHRONICLES
24:13**

¹³ So those who were engaged in the work labored, and the repairing went forward in their hands, and they restored the house of God to its proper condition and strengthened it.

Cited

Named or quoted along the way.

2 TIMOTHY 4:5

⁵ But as for you, always be sober-minded, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.

NUMBERS 3:21-
37

²¹ To Gershon belonged the clan of the Libnites and the clan of the Shimeites; these were the clans of the Gershonites. ²² Their listing according to the number of all the males from a month old and upward was 7,500. ²³ The clans of the Gershonites were to camp behind the tabernacle on the west, ²⁴ with Eliasaph, the son of Lael as chief of the fathers' house of the Gershonites. ²⁵ And the guard duty of the sons of Gershon in the tent of meeting involved the tabernacle, the tent with its covering, the screen for the entrance of the tent of meeting, ²⁶ the hangings of the court, the screen for the door of the court that is around the tabernacle and the altar, and its cords—all the service connected with these. ²⁷ To Kohath belonged the clan of the Amramites and the clan of the Izharites and the clan of the Hebronites and the clan of the Uzzielites; these are the clans of the Kohathites. ²⁸ According to the number of all the males, from a month old and upward, there were 8,600, keeping guard over the sanctuary. ²⁹ The clans of the sons of Kohath were to camp on the south side of the tabernacle, ³⁰ with Elizaphan the son of Uzziel as chief of the fathers' house of the clans of the Kohathites. ³¹ And their guard duty involved the ark, the table, the lampstand, the altars, the vessels of the sanctuary with which the priests minister, and the screen; all the service connected with these. ³² And Eleazar the son of Aaron the priest was to be chief over the chiefs of the Levites, and to have oversight of those who kept guard over the sanctuary. ³³ To Merari belonged the clan of the Mahlites and the clan of the Mushites: these are the clans of Merari. ³⁴ Their listing according to the number of all the males from a month old and upward was 6,200. ³⁵ And the chief of the fathers' house of the clans of Merari was Zuriel the son of Abihail. They were to camp on the north side of the tabernacle. ³⁶ And the appointed guard duty of the sons of Merari involved the frames of the tabernacle, the bars, the pillars, the bases, and all their accessories; all the service connected with these; ³⁷ also the pillars around the court, with their bases and pegs and cords.

NUMBERS 4:1-33

¹ The LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying, ² “Take a census of the sons of Kohath from among the sons of Levi, by their clans and their fathers’ houses, ³ from thirty years old up to fifty years old, all who can come on duty, to do the work in the tent of meeting. ⁴ This is the service of the sons of Kohath in the tent of meeting: the most holy things. ⁵ When the camp is to set out, Aaron and his sons shall go in and take down the veil of the screen and cover the ark of the testimony with it. ⁶ Then they shall put on it a covering of goatskin and spread on top of that a cloth all of blue, and shall put in its poles. ⁷ And over the table of the bread of the Presence they shall spread a cloth of blue and put on it the plates, the dishes for incense, the bowls, and the flagons for the drink offering; the regular showbread also shall be on it. ⁸ Then they shall spread over them a cloth of scarlet and cover the same with a covering of goatskin, and shall put in its poles. ⁹ And they shall take a cloth of blue and cover the lampstand for the light, with its lamps, its tongs, its trays, and all the vessels for oil with which it is supplied. ¹⁰ And they shall put it with all its utensils in a covering of goatskin and put it on the carrying frame. ¹¹ And over the golden altar they shall spread a cloth of blue and cover it with a covering of goatskin, and shall put in its poles. ¹² And they shall take all the vessels of the service that are used in the sanctuary and put them in a cloth of blue and cover them with a covering of goatskin and put them on the carrying frame. ¹³ And they shall take away the ashes from the altar and spread a purple cloth over it. ¹⁴ And they shall put on it all the utensils of the altar, which are used for the service there, the fire pans, the forks, the shovels, and the basins, all the utensils of the altar; and they shall spread on it a covering of goatskin, and shall put in its poles. ¹⁵ And when Aaron and his sons have finished covering the sanctuary and all the furnishings of the sanctuary, as the camp sets out, after that the sons of Kohath shall come to carry these, but they must not touch the holy things, lest they die. These are the things of the tent of meeting that the sons of Kohath are to carry. ¹⁶ “And Eleazar the son of Aaron the priest shall have charge of the oil for the light, the fragrant incense, the regular grain offering, and the anointing oil, with the oversight of the whole tabernacle and all that is in it, of the sanctuary and its vessels.” ¹⁷ The LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying, ¹⁸ “Let not the tribe of the clans of the Kohathites be destroyed from among the Levites, ¹⁹ but deal thus with them, that they may live and not die when they come near to the most holy things: Aaron and his sons shall go in and appoint them each to his task and to his burden, ²⁰ but they shall not go in to look on the holy things even for a moment, lest they die.” ²¹ The LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ²² “Take a census of the sons of Gershon also, by their fathers’ houses and by their clans. ²³ From thirty years old up to fifty years old, you shall list them, all who can come to do duty, to do service in the tent of meeting. ²⁴ This is the service of the clans of the Gershonites, in serving and bearing burdens: ²⁵ they shall carry the curtains of the tabernacle and the tent of meeting with its covering and the covering of goatskin that is on top of it and the screen for the

entrance of the tent of meeting²⁶ and the hangings of the court and the screen for the entrance of the gate of the court that is around the tabernacle and the altar, and their cords and all the equipment for their service. And they shall do all that needs to be done with regard to them.²⁷ All the service of the sons of the Gershonites shall be at the command of Aaron and his sons, in all that they are to carry and in all that they have to do. And you shall assign to their charge all that they are to carry.²⁸ This is the service of the clans of the sons of the Gershonites in the tent of meeting, and their guard duty is to be under the direction of Ithamar the son of Aaron the priest.²⁹ “As for the sons of Merari, you shall list them by their clans and their fathers’ houses.³⁰ From thirty years old up to fifty years old, you shall list them, everyone who can come on duty, to do the service of the tent of meeting.³¹ And this is what they are charged to carry, as the whole of their service in the tent of meeting: the frames of the tabernacle, with its bars, pillars, and bases,³² and the pillars around the court with their bases, pegs, and cords, with all their equipment and all their accessories. And you shall list by name the objects that they are required to carry.³³ This is the service of the clans of the sons of Merari, the whole of their service in the tent of meeting, under the direction of Ithamar the son of Aaron the priest.”

2 CHRONICLES
24:4-12

⁴ After this Joash decided to restore the house of the LORD. ⁵ And he gathered the priests and the Levites and said to them, “Go out to the cities of Judah and gather from all Israel money to repair the house of your God from year to year, and see that you act quickly.” But the Levites did not act quickly. ⁶ So the king summoned Jehoiada the chief and said to him, “Why have you not required the Levites to bring in from Judah and Jerusalem the tax levied by Moses, the servant of the LORD, and the congregation of Israel for the tent of testimony?” ⁷ For the sons of Athaliah, that wicked woman, had broken into the house of God, and had also used all the dedicated things of the house of the LORD for the Baals. ⁸ So the king commanded, and they made a chest and set it outside the gate of the house of the LORD. ⁹ And proclamation was made throughout Judah and Jerusalem to bring in for the LORD the tax that Moses the servant of God laid on Israel in the wilderness. ¹⁰ And all the princes and all the people rejoiced and brought their tax and dropped it into the chest until they had finished. ¹¹ And whenever the chest was brought to the king’s officers by the Levites, when they saw that there was much money in it, the king’s secretary and the officer of the chief priest would come and empty the chest and take it and return it to its place. Thus they did day after day, and collected money in abundance. ¹² And the king and Jehoiada gave it to those who had charge of the work of the house of the LORD, and they hired masons and carpenters to restore the house of the LORD, and also workers in iron and bronze to repair the house of the LORD.

Alluded to

Drawn on without naming the reference.

MATTHEW 28:19-20

¹⁹ Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

DEUTERONOMY 32:30

³⁰ How could one have chased a thousand, and two have put ten thousand to flight, unless their Rock had sold them, and the LORD had given them up?

MALACHI 3:10

¹⁰ Bring the full tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. And thereby put me to the test, says the LORD of hosts, if I will not open the windows of heaven for you and pour down for you a blessing until there is no more need.

PROVERBS 11:24-25

²⁴ One gives freely, yet grows all the richer; another withholds what he should give, and only suffers want. ²⁵ Whoever brings blessing will be enriched, and one who waters will himself be watered.

PSALM 37:25

²⁵ I have been young, and now am old, yet I have not seen the righteous forsaken or his children begging for bread.

2 KINGS 12:9

⁹ Then Jehoiada the priest took a chest and bored a hole in the lid of it and set it beside the altar on the right side as one entered the house of the LORD. And the priests who guarded the threshold put in it all the money that was brought into the house of the LORD.

ABOUT THE PREACHER



Pastor Jason Mayfield

SENIOR PASTOR, CITYLIGHT CHURCH

Pastor Jason Mayfield is the Senior Pastor of Citylight Church in Saraland, Alabama, where he and his wife, Ashleigh, lead a church devoted to Building Lives on Jesus. His preaching is rooted in the Bible, full of hope, and grounded in one conviction: an incredible life is built on the finished work of Jesus Christ.

For more than 20 years, Pastor Jason has given his life to the local church. He has been credentialed with the Assemblies of God for 21 years and ordained for 14, and he has led revitalization in churches that went on to rank among the Top 100 Fastest-Growing Churches in America. He carries a deep conviction that the church can be both excellent and supernatural, and a passion for revival.

He is an author and the creator of Tear Up Your Bible and POWER 27, a daily rhythm of Bible reading, prayer and worship. His resources have helped more than 100,000 people go deeper in the Scriptures. Above every title, his greatest joy is seeing people meet Jesus, be filled with the Spirit, and grow into everything God has called them to be.

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