

**Exodus 35, 36:1-7**  
**January 4, 2015**

**Open with Prayer**

**HOOK:**

Q: When you hear the word TOOLS, what comes to mind?

Q: How many tools do you think you own?

If you think about it, we have tools *everywhere!* We can find them in our garage, in our kitchens, in our cars, in our computers, apps on our computers, at our workplaces. Our world is not short on tools!

Q: Why are tools important? Why do we own so many of them? [We need them to help us get our work done, whether at home or at the office or on the farm or whatever.]

It goes without saying that tools are useless if we don't use them, don't learn to use them, or don't keep them sharpened.

**Transition:** In today's lesson, we are going to discover that when God asks His people to build a tabernacle, He gives them very specific instructions. But more importantly, He equips them with TOOLS in order to successfully complete the work. As I processed today's lesson, it occurred to me that we begin to see a model of "church" emerge that is similar to the model we see in the NT. God calls His people together, He tells His people what He wants done, then He gives them the tools necessary to successfully partner with Him.

**Transition to Invitation:** So as we begin today's study, I invite you to embrace that each of us can share in God's work by understanding the model church He's designed for us and generously using the TOOLS He's given each us to partner with Him to build His kingdom. Let's look at the model, identify the tools, and at the end ask, "How do I fit in God's church with the tools He's given me?" Let's begin to listen to Moses relay the information the Lord had given him.

**BOOK (NIV 1984):** [Read Exodus 35:1-19] **Moses Relays the Lord's commands**

Observations/Process Qs-

V.1:

- Moses assembled the whole Israelite community and said to them, "These are the things the LORD has commanded you to do:

V.2:

- For six days, work is to be done, but the seventh day shall be your holy day, a Sabbath of rest to the LORD. Whoever does any work on it must be put to death.

V.3:

- Do not light a fire in any of your dwellings on the Sabbath day."

V.4:

- Moses said to the **whole Israelite community**, "This is what the LORD has commanded:

V.5:

- From what you have, take an offering for the LORD. **Everyone who is willing** is to bring to the LORD an offering of gold, silver and bronze;
- V.6:
- blue, purple and scarlet yarn and fine linen; goat hair;
- V.7:
- ram skins dyed red and hides of sea cows; acacia wood;
- V.8:
- olive oil for the light; spices for the anointing oil and for the fragrant incense;
- V.9:
- and onyx stones and other gems to be mounted on the ephod and breastpiece.
- V.10:
- “**All who are skilled** among you are to come and make everything the LORD has commanded:
- V.11:
- the tabernacle with its tent and its covering, clasps, frames, crossbars, posts and bases;
- V.12:
- the ark with its poles and the atonement cover and the curtain that shields it;
- V.13:
- the table with its poles and all its articles and the bread of the Presence;
- V.14:
- the lampstand that is for light with its accessories, lamps and oil for the light;
- V.15:
- the altar of incense with its poles, the anointing oil and the fragrant incense; the curtain for the doorway at the entrance to the tabernacle;
- V.16:
- the altar of burnt offering with its bronze grating, its poles and all its utensils; the bronze basin with its stand;
- V.17:
- the curtains of the courtyard with its posts and bases, and the curtain for the entrance to the courtyard;
- V.18:
- the tent pegs for the tabernacle and for the courtyard, and their ropes;
- V.19:
- the woven garments worn for ministering in the sanctuary—both the sacred garments for Aaron the priest and the garments for his sons when they serve as priests.”

### **Process Observations and Questions:**

**Q v.1-3:** Of all the communication Moses received from the Lord, the message sure seems heavy-handed on the surface. However, why do you think it was important to establish the commandment to rest on Sabbath? [**Toussaint** - Since the Sabbath was the sign of the covenant God made with Israel (**x-ref Ex 31:16-17**), its observance was crucial. Moses’ words to the people about the **Sabbath** occur here at the beginning of chapters 35-40, not at the end as in God’s instructions in chapters 25-31. This is because Israel had demonstrated a tendency to disobey. If the covenant were to be maintained, instructions about the sign of the covenant had to be obeyed.]

**Q:** So how does this commandment fit within the “model church?” [Sabbath is to be observed to honor the covenant between God and His chosen people.]

**Q:** As we look at the emerging model of church, how many people were invited to participate in worship and to serve God? [Everyone – men and women; the whole Israelite community]

**Q v.5:** When God commanded His people to bring Him an offering, what was His key criteria that He was looking for? [He only wanted people who were “willing” to bring the Lord an offering]

**Q:** What spiritual truths can we glean from this section of Scripture?

- God gives us free will to serve Him.
- God invites both men and women to serve Him.
- Just because He gives us wealth or skills, doesn’t mean people are willing to use them.
- God desires a *heart* that is *willing* to serve Him, otherwise it’s not meaningful to Him.
- Honoring the Sabbath still matters to Him. We are to keep it holy.

### **Read Exodus 35:20-35 The response of the Israelite community**

V.20:

- Then the whole Israelite community withdrew from Moses’ presence,

V.21:

- and **everyone who was willing and whose heart moved him** came and brought an offering to the LORD for the work on the Tent of Meeting, for all its service, and for the sacred garments.

V.22:

- **All who were willing**, men and women alike, came and brought gold jewelry of all kinds: brooches, earrings, rings and ornaments. They all presented their gold as a wave offering to the LORD. [A wave offering was literally an offering like wheat, or the breast of a ram, that was waved by the priest to the Lord. X-Ref Ex 29:24, 26-27]

V.23:

- **Everyone** who had blue, purple or scarlet yarn or fine linen, or goat hair, ram skins dyed red or hides of sea cows brought them.

V.24:

- Those presenting an offering of silver or bronze brought it as an offering to the LORD, and everyone who had acacia wood for any part of the work brought it.

V.25:

- **Every skilled woman** spun with her hands and brought what she had spun—blue, purple or scarlet yarn or fine linen.

V.26:

- And **all the women who were willing** and **had the skill** spun the goat hair.

V.27:

- The leaders brought onyx stones and other gems to be mounted on the ephod and breastpiece.

V.28:

- They also brought spices and olive oil for the light and for the anointing oil and for the fragrant incense.

V.29:

- All the Israelite **men and women who were willing** brought to the LORD freewill offerings for all the work the LORD through Moses had commanded them to do.

V.30:

- Then Moses said to the Israelites, “See, the LORD has chosen Bezalel son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah,

V.31:

- and **he has filled him with the Spirit of God**, with skill, ability and knowledge in all kinds of crafts—

V.32:

- to make artistic designs for work in gold, silver and bronze,

V.33:

- to cut and set stones, to work in wood and to engage in all kinds of artistic craftsmanship.

V.34:

- And he has given both him and Oholiab son of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan, the ability to teach others.

V.35:

- **He has filled them with skill to do all kinds of work** as craftsmen, designers, embroiderers in blue, purple and scarlet yarn and fine linen, and weavers—all of them master craftsmen and designers.

### **Process Observations and Questions:**

**Q v.21-26:** How did the Israelite community respond? [Everyone, men and women, who were “willing” and whose “heart moved them” brought what they had to contribute to the work of the tabernacle.]

**Q: v.21,22,25,26,29:** Again, what was the key reason that everyone who was skilled responded so favorably to the Lord’s commands? [They were “willing”]

**Q v.30:** Who are the project leaders overseeing the building of the tabernacle? [Bezalel, Oholiab]

**Q:** Who chose Bezalel and Oholiab? [The Lord]

**Q v.31:** When the Lord chose Bezalel, what did He do to set them apart? [He filled them with His Holy Spirit; with skill, ability and knowledge in all kinds of crafts]

**Q v.34:** What did the Lord give to both Bezalel and Oholiab? [The ability to teach others and the skill to do all kinds of work as craftsmen, etc.]

**Q:** So what are the tools the Lord has given the Israelite community? [His Spirit, Skills, Abilities]

**Q:** Let’s think about the church model that appears in this text. How would you describe it? [Go to dry erase board and help class describe the hierarchy]

- Head of the Church = God
- “Pastor” of the church = Moses
- “Leaders in the Church” = Bezalel, Oholiab
- “People of God” = the Israelite community [treasured possession, His holy nation, a kingdom of priests Ex 19:6]
- The people of God are equipped with skills, abilities, and resources to give to the work of the tabernacle

### **Read Exodus 36:1-7 The Generosity of the Israelite Community**

V.1:

- So Bezalel, Oholiab and every skilled person to whom the LORD has given skill and ability to know how to carry out all the work of constructing the sanctuary are to do the work just as the LORD has commanded.”

V.2:

- Then Moses summoned Bezalel and Oholiab and every skilled person to whom the LORD had given ability and who was willing to come and do the work.

V.3:

- They received from Moses all the offerings the Israelites had brought to carry out the work of constructing the sanctuary. And the people continued to bring freewill offerings morning after morning. [**Freewill Offering** - Gift given at the impulse of the giver (Exod. 35:21–29; 36:3–7; Lev. 7:16). The distinctive mark of the freewill offering was the “stirred hearts” and “willing spirits” of the givers. The tabernacle was constructed using materials given as freewill offerings (Exod. 35:29). The people’s desire to give was so great that Moses was compelled to ask that no more gifts be given. – Holman Illustrated Bible Dictionary, p. 600]

V.4:

- So all the skilled craftsmen who were doing all the work on the sanctuary left their work

V.5:

- and said to Moses, “The people are bringing more than enough for doing the work the LORD commanded to be done.”

V.6:

- Then Moses gave an order and they sent this word throughout the camp: “No man or woman is to make anything else as an offering for the sanctuary.” And so the people were restrained from bringing more,

V.7:

- because what they already had was more than enough to do all the work.

### **Process Observations and Questions:**

**Q:** What strikes you the most based on what we just read? [Moses had to tell the people to quit bringing in offerings because they had “more than enough.” The people **“were restrained”** from bringing more!]

**Q:** Have you ever attended a church where the pastor had to say, “Please quit giving. We have more than enough!” [I’ve never heard that!]

**Q:** Let’s compare the NT church model to the OT model [Go to DEB]:

- X-Ref I Peter 2:4-9; Eph 4:11-16]
- We are living stones forming
- Christ is the Head of the Church
- He calls out pastors to lead His church
- All of us have been given tools: His Holy Spirit, spiritual gifts, resources, talents and abilities.

### **LOOK:**

God has called each of us into His kingdom, which means we are a part of His church universal, which means we have been empowered by the Holy Spirit to use the tools and gifts that He’s given us to partner with Him. But let me shift your thinking: I want you to consider that YOU are His TOOL to further the work of His church.

In Acts 9:15 the Lord tells Ananias to go to Paul who had been blinded on the road to Damascus, and Ananias was protesting because of everything he heard about Paul. But the Lord said, “Go! This man is my chosen *instrument* to carry my name before the Gentiles and their kings and before the people of Israel.

In 2 Tim 2:21 Paul is writing to Timothy describing the characteristics of a soldier of Christ, and one of them was being sanctified. He says, “In a large house there are articles not only of gold and silver, but also of wood and clay; some are for noble purposes and some for ignoble. <sup>21</sup> If a man cleanses himself from the latter, he will be an *instrument* for noble purposes, made holy, useful to the Master and prepared to do any good work.”

There is a song that has been sung in churches over the ages that has the refrain, “Lord, let me be your *instrument* of peace.” Are you getting the picture that YOU are His TOOL?

As we learned today, He can equip us with everything needed to partner with Him, but we are also responsible for having the right mindset of WILLINGNESS. Are your HEARTS MOVED to serve him wholeheartedly in whatever He calls you to do?

**Close in Prayer**

### **Commentaries for Today's Lesson:**

**Wiersbe, W. W. (1993). *Wiersbe's Expository Outlines on the Old Testament* (Ex 35:1–39:43). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.**

#### **I. The People Bring Their Gifts (35:1–29)**

Moses had already told the people that God wanted their willing gifts so that the tabernacle could be built (25:1–8). What grace that God would accept gifts from a people who had disobeyed Him and grieved His heart. These were to be willing gifts from the heart (vv. 5, 21, 26, 29), for the Lord loves a cheerful giver (2 Cor. 9:6–8). Most of this wealth probably came from the people of Egypt (12:35–36)—delayed wages for all the work the Jews had done for the Egyptians. It was “the Lord’s offering” (vv. 22, 24, 29), and therefore, they wanted to give their best. In fact, they gave so generously that Moses had to stop them from bringing more (36:4–7). We wonder if that problem ever exists in the church today!

#### **II. The Gifted People Give Their Service (35:30–39:43)**

The Holy Spirit gave Bezaleel and Aholiab the wisdom to know what to do and the ability to do it. In like manner, God has given gifts to His people today so that the church might be built up (1 Cor. 12–14; Eph. 4:1–17; Rom. 12). Bezaleel and Aholiab did not do all the work themselves but taught others who assisted them.

In the succeeding verses, Moses names the various parts of the tabernacle one by one, as well as the garments of the priests. God is concerned with every detail of our work and does not minimize any aspect of it. The smallest hook for the curtains was as important to Him as the brazen altar. If we are faithful in the small things, God can trust us with the bigger things (Luke 16:10).

Scholars have estimated that in the construction of the tabernacle, the people used nearly a ton of gold, about three and a quarter tons of silver, and two and a quarter tons of bronze. It was not an inexpensive structure!

**Toussaint, S. D. (1985). *Acts*. (J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck, Eds.) *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*. (Vol. 1, pp. 159–160). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.**

##### *a. The reiteration of Sabbath observance (35:1–3)*

35:1–3. **Moses** had **the whole Israelite community** (cf. v. 4 and comments on 12:3) assemble so he could give them the Lord’s instructions. Verse 2 of chapter 35 repeats almost word for word the command in 31:15. Since the Sabbath was the sign of the covenant God made with Israel (31:16–17), its observance was crucial. Moses’ words to the people about the **Sabbath** occur here at the beginning of chapters 35–40, not at the end as in God’s instructions in chapters 25–31. This is because Israel had demonstrated a tendency to disobey. If the covenant were to be maintained, instructions about the sign of the covenant had to be obeyed. Also because of the people’s excitement in constructing the tabernacle, it was important that worship not be neglected even in doing worshipful work. The prohibition against **a fire ... on the Sabbath** (35:3) is a corollary to the order not to **work** (v. 2) by cooking food (cf. 16:23).

*b. The gathering of materials (35:4–29)*

35:4–9. As **Moses** continued his address to Israel, he urged the people to gather from their possessions the things needed for making the tabernacle (cf. 25:1–9). These materials, to be given voluntarily (whoever **is willing**; cf. 35:21, 29), were **an offering for the LORD**.

35:10–19. Then Moses called for workers (**all who are skilled among you**) to make the various furnishings, utensils, and priests' **garments**. The order in which these items are listed is the same as the order in which they are discussed in 36:8–39:31.

35:20–29. The people willingly committed themselves to the project by offering their goods and services. Whereas 25:3 referred to the need for **gold ... silver**, and **bronze**, a point is added here (35:22) that **gold jewelry** was **brought**. **Women** were involved not only in bringing offerings (vv. 22, 29) but also in spinning **yarn ... linen**, and **goat hair**.

*c. The appointment of Bezalel and Oholiab (35:30–36:1)*

35:30–36:1. This section is similar to 31:1–11. A new element in this description is the statement about **the ability** of **Bezalel** and **Oholiab ... to teach others** (35:34). This passage (35:30–36:1) stresses the **skill** of the many workmen.

*d. The commencement of the work (36:2–7)*

36:2–7. **Bezalel and Oholiab** took oversight of the project with **every skilled person to whom the LORD had given ability** (v. 2; cf. v. 1) **and who was willing to ... work**. Again (cf. 35:21, 29) the emphasis is on the willingness of the people to participate with labor and materials. In fact **the people** brought so many materials—even **more than enough**—that they had to be **restrained**. An inventory of materials brought is included in 38:21–31.

**Cabal, T., Brand, C. O., Clendenen, E. R., Copan, P., Moreland, J. P., & Powell, D. (2007). The Apologetics Study Bible: Real Questions, Straight Answers, Stronger Faith (p. 142). Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers.**

**35:2** For a discussion of why the death penalty for violating the Sabbath does not apply to Christians, see note on **20:8–11**: How are Christians obligated to “remember the Sabbath day,” or seventh day of the week? May a Christian work on Saturdays? The fourth commandment is unique among the Ten Commandments in containing both ceremonial and moral elements. It establishes a key element in a religious calendar, designating one day in seven as holy. But it is also moral, directing people to be imitators of God in His rest from the work of creation, and to use His gift of time for sacred purposes. Because it can be taken in both a ceremonial and moral sense, this commandment became a center of controversy in Jesus’ ministry, and continued to be so in the history of the church.