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Mission Accomplished!

963-A

Series: God's Living Legends II

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INTO HIS LIKENESS RADIO

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Just look at it! It could have been such a beautiful home perfectly designed, beautifully constructed, wonderfully furnished, but for years it has been surrounded by a yard with no trees, no grass, no landscaping. What's wrong? It's almost finished!

Just look at it! General Motors' newest addition to their famous line of sports cars—a brand new model Fancimobile, complete with the best tires, chrome trim, tinted glass, platinum wheels and retractable headlights...and *no paint!*

You say no one would buy a car with no paint! Why? Because no one wants something that is unfinished. The reason is that God in His infinite wisdom has wonderfully designed all of life with the concept of completion in mind.

You see, everything God ever started, He finished. And He expects His children to do exactly the same. Because you see, the miracle of miracles is that His character in us will produce in us the very same qualities that so astound us in Him.

Therefore, it is imperative as we journey through life that one of the qualities that we earnestly seek for the Spirit to reproduce in our lives is the quality of completion, that God-ordained attitude that will not quit simply because the going gets rough. God's plan for His man or woman is this: he or she sees a need, surrenders to the task, and remains in place until the task is done. The world says, if the going gets rough, quit. If you are not appreciated, move on. If the marriage is tough, get out. If the job is not as easy as you had hoped, get another one. Fortunately for us, our God does not operate that way. And aren't we glad He doesn't?

God gives us assignments, gives us all we'll ever need in the way of tools and talents to do what He has asked us to do, then in His infinite love, He plans for us *to remain in place* until we can say *mission accomplished!*

Sometimes those assignments on the surface seem to be beyond our comprehension. Such is the case in today's story as

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we return to the land of God's Living Legends, and another look at the life of Solomon, the man who asked for God's very heart and received it.

In our last study, King Solomon had beautifully demonstrated the supernatural wisdom that God had given him. The world around him, *even the unbelieving world*, had been heard to exclaim, "Wiser than all men is he." Now with the whole world looking on to see what this fountain of godly wisdom would do next, Solomon sets out to do exactly what he has been called to do. He sets out to build a house for his God.

We renew our look at this Living Legend by opening our Bibles to I Kings, chapter five, where we find the story of a conditional treaty made between two friendly nations, a treaty that will benefit both nations and will allow God to use even those who are not His to meet the needs of those who are. I Kings 5 begins like this:

Now Hiram king of Tyre sent his servants to Solomon, because he heard that they had anointed him king in place of his father, for Hiram had always loved David.

Then Solomon sent to Hiram, saying:

You know how my father David could not build a house for the name of the LORD his God because of the wars which were fought against him on every side, until the LORD put his foes under the soles of his feet.

But now the LORD my God has given me rest on every side; there is neither adversary nor evil occurrence.

And behold, I propose to build a house for the name of the LORD my God, as the Lord spoke to my father David, saying, "Your son, whom I will set on your throne in your place, he shall build the house for My name." (I Kings 5:1-5 NKJV)

I- THE TEMPLE OF GOD IN ISRAEL

A- The Order

The order in which this story unfolds is obvious. God has given Solomon a specific job to do. Old Sol did not call a committee meeting or a Deacon's meeting, and say, "Hey, guys, what can we do for God this month? He needs a new house to dwell in. Let's appoint a finance committee, and a building committee, and a fund-raising committee, and go after it." No, Solomon did not proceed that way.

Notice first of all what Solomon wasn't doing.

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1- Solomon wasn't building God a house to make God's ministry more effective. God was having no problem ministering. The effectiveness of God's ability to reach people or communicate with people was not limited to the scope of the temple they had to worship in. It wasn't then, and it isn't now.

2- Solomon wasn't building God a house to make God more attractive to the world. God doesn't need a temple or a cathedral or anything else to make Him attractive to the world. God has told us that, "the heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handiwork" in Psalm 19:1. Can you build a building so attractive that it will outshine the sun? Can you build a house for God so magnificent it will overpower the grandeur of the stars? No, God had a reason for building this house, but it wasn't to make Him more attractive to the world. God did not want the world to mistake Him for a building made with hands. He doesn't today, either.

3- Solomon wasn't building God a house to make more room for the people to worship. That wasn't the object of this building program, either. Solomon wasn't building a house for God to enlarge His ministry, make Him more attractive, or make more room for the people. Solomon was building a house for God *because God told him to.*

That's the only reason to build anything. God's reasons may vary for His various building enterprises, but one thing is for sure, He doesn't need us to determine when or how or why we need to build. He needs us to linger before Him on our knees until He tells us what to do. David, Solomon's father, had really wanted to build God a house. And he had all of the tools, all of the funds, all of the raw materials. David had only one problem. God hadn't told him to. So when he went to the prophet for his approval, you may remember, the prophet, on God's behalf, had to give David the sad story that God really didn't need a new temple just yet; and David, the man of war, was not the man to do the job.

But with Solomon, it was a different story. God had said to David in I Chronicles 28:6, "It is your son Solomon who shall build My house". And God had told Solomon, "Thou art the man and now is the time." So now God's man had God's commission to do God's work.

So the order is important. The time to embark on any "project" for the Lord's glory is *after and only after you have a clear word*

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from God to do so. The fact that the church up the street built a new building doesn't mean your church is called to do the same; or the fact that your sister went to the mission field, doesn't mean that's what God is calling you to do; or the fact that your best friend felt led to a certain church or a certain ministry is not the issue. You stand still and wait for God to call you to the task. Once you have been called, the finances, the manpower, the strength, and the wisdom will not be factors. What God begins, He finishes. What man begins, God often allows to founder, that man might know that he is neither the architect nor the general contractor of God's magnificent plan.

B- The Timing

Issue number two has to do with the timing. So often the greatest mistakes in the ministry of God's people occur because men and women mistake the will of God for the timing of God. What an easy thing to do. We pray for a plan. We ask for wisdom. We seek out a ministry. Then when God in His infinite wisdom discloses the plan and gives us wisdom, we get on our spiritual motorcycles and speed off into the sunset without so much as waiting for our marching orders. What a waste of God's precious grace. Knowing what we are to do does not commission us to do it. It merely equips us to pray more effectively. Our task is not to take a call from God as a call to be God, but rather as a call to fall down before God and wait patiently for further instructions.

In other words, the fact that God has called you to a certain task does not give you the license to perform that task until He has clearly indicated the time is right. To God, the timing of a matter is more often used to demonstrate His Glory than the matter itself. Truly, most miracles are construed to be miracles because the timing itself leaves little or no doubt that they are of God. So do not rob God of the Glory that is rightfully His. Once you determine what His Will is, wait patiently for the perfect time before you proceed. Such is the mark of the sensitivity of God's man or woman. When the time was right, Solomon began the process of building the temple.

C- The Detail

Notice next the infinite attention to detail that a loving God showed in His dealing with Solomon. Mark it. Every time in Scripture that God gave instructions to build something, He gave it down to the very last centimeter; down to the very texture of

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the materials, the volume of the materials, the adornment, the coloring, the mode of fastening those materials; every detail is vital to God.

Study carefully Noah's instructions for building the ark. What an architect God is! No detail left out. No measurement incomplete. God is a God of detail. The universe itself is proof of that fact. The human body is proof of that. And the very measure to detail given in every Biblical project God ordained is proof of His infinite concern over the details of life. That is why I flinch when people say God is only concerned with the major principles of life; the filling in of the blanks is up to us. I squirm when someone says that God does not have a specific plan, a specific job, a specific husband or wife, a specific church, a specific ministry for each of us. In Matthew 10:30 and Luke 12:7 says that, "the very hairs of your head are numbered." Psalm 139:13 (NIV) says, "You (God) knit me together in my mother's womb." And verse 16 that He scheduled each day of our lives even before we were born. Not interested in details? Our God is the inventor of detail; He has designed every nerve and blood vessel. Every snowflake. Every raindrop is a custom-made testimony to the grandeur of His concern over the details of life. So don't ever say that a certain decision is of no consequence to God. Every thought you think and every move you make is of consequence to God. Ours is a God of detail. And the Scripture is a book that records that detail down to the very jot and tittle.

We read in I Kings 5 and 6 that Solomon and Hiram made a successful agreement by which Hiram's people brought in cedar and fir trees from Lebanon in exchange for huge quantities of wheat and oil from Israel. We all need to be reminded that no nation is an island unto itself. And in Scripture it is clear that God honored friendly trade agreements with people who honored God's people. It is just as clear that trade agreements or arms agreements with those who are God's enemies always reaped a harvest of regret. Hiram was a friend of God's people, and Hiram's men and Solomon's men worked side by side. Look again at chapter five,

And the king commanded them to quarry large stones, costly stones, and hewn stones, to lay the foundation of the temple.

So Solomon's builders, Hiram's builders, and the Gebalites quarried them; and they prepared timber and stones to build the temple.

(I Kings 5:17,18 NKJV)

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God expected His people to labor faithfully. And He expected every detail to be according to the Master's plan. He expected there to be a specific time of beginning and a specific time of conclusion. It wasn't an open-ended "do it as you see fit" kind of plan. Once it was determined to be God's will to build the temple, and once it was determined to be God's time to build the temple, and once they had discovered God's plan to build the temple, they had but one thing to do—build the temple. And build it to God's exact specifications. Let's read on in chapter six,

And it came to pass in the four hundred and eightieth year after the children of Israel had come out of the land of Egypt, in the fourth year of Solomon's reign over Israel, in the month of Ziv, which is the second month, that he began to build the house of the Lord.

Now the house which King Solomon built for the LORD, its length was sixty cubits, its width twenty, and its height thirty cubits.

The vestibule in front of the sanctuary of the house was twenty cubits long across the width of the house, and the width of the vestibule extended ten cubits from the front of the house.

And he made for the house windows with beveled frames.

Against the wall of the temple he built chambers all around, against the walls of the temple, all around the sanctuary and the inner sanctuary. Thus he made side chambers all around it

The lowest chamber was five cubits wide, the middle was six cubits wide, and the third was seven cubits wide; for he made narrow ledges around the outside of the temple, so that the support beams would not be fastened into the walls of the temple. (1 Kings 6:1-6 NKJV)

So he built the temple and finished it, and he paneled the temple with beams and boards of cedar.

And he built side chambers against the entire temple, each five cubits high; they were attached to the temple with cedar beams.

Then the word of the LORD came to Solomon saying:

"Concerning this temple which you are building, if you walk in My statutes, execute My judgments, keep all My commandments, and walk in them, then I will perform My word with you, which I spoke to your father David.

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And I will dwell among the children of Israel, and will not forsake My people Israel.”

So Solomon built the temple and finished it.

(I Kings 6:9-14 NKJV)

In the fourth year the foundation of the house of the LORD was laid, in the month of Ziv.

And in the eleventh year, in the month Bul, which is the eighth month, the house was finished in all its details and according to all its plans. So he was seven years in building it.

(I Kings 6:37,38 NKJV)

D- The Completion

It took seven years! But then that's not unusual. God's projects usually take time. The reason is that things that happen quickly tend to produce very little character. Things that happen in the process of time not only accomplish their intended goals, but as they are taking place, God has enough time to teach us the lessons He wants us to learn, lessons which are in themselves often more important than the project or the miracle. Give your children projects to do that require time; it will teach them God's perspective of patience and God's perspective of life. God could have built that temple in less than a second. He could have spoken a word from heaven and rocks would have formed walls, windows would have taken shape, gold would have flowed into the crevices, and precious stones would have been inlaid that would cause the jewelers of the world to stand in awe.

Question: "Wouldn't that have glorified God more?" Answer: "No." You say, "How do you know that?" Because if it would have, God would have done it. Nothing is too hard for God we read in Jeremiah 32:7. God could have performed what the world calls a miracle and saved Solomon hours of labor, millions of dollars, and enough headaches to put Excedrin out of business. He could have. But in the process, would His children have learned about faithfulness, diligence, cooperation, steadfastness, or stewardship? No, they would have only come to know a God who, like a genie in a bottle, is at the beck and call of His children to save them from having to live in a real world. God chose something better than that, not only in this case, but throughout all of Scripture. He chose to *use the process* to purify the saints, while *through the process* He was accomplishing His purpose.

The main issue was and is this: God wanted His children to

Mission Accomplished!

know that anything He gave them to do was worth finishing. This project took seven long years. That's 96 months! That's 2,880 days. That's a long time. So Solomon began, Solomon persisted, and Solomon finished what he started.

Then once Solomon had completed God's house, we read these words,

So all the work that King Solomon had done for the house of the Lord was finished; and Solomon brought in the things which his father David had dedicated: the silver and the gold and the furnishings. He put them in the treasuries of the house of the LORD.
(I Kings 7:51 NKJV)

Now I realize that the spiritual truths are available to us in this passage are virtually unlimited. I also realize that the details of the materials and the plans of the temple give us beautiful pictures of spiritual realities. But somehow I believe that we, more than anything else in looking at this story, ought to be overcome with awe at the painstaking faithfulness Solomon exhibited, and the unfailing dedication God's people demonstrated as they prepared for, began, and continued this project until it had been completed.

Perhaps I am overcome with this truth because I believe one of the greatest weaknesses in Christianity today is the absence of commitment. Please hear me out. I do not mean the absence of commitment to Christ. I believe that there is in our midst today a deep awakening of spiritual vitality such as the world has seldom known. No, I do not mean the absence of a commitment to Christ. I mean the absence of commitment to finish that which Christ has called us to do. There is a marked difference.

Christians change jobs today the way they used to change clothes. They change clothes the way they used to trade in cars. They discard basic Biblical doctrines that have stood the test of generations for quick answers and painless solutions that circumvent the process in order to hasten the product. And they wonder why the world around them is confused. There is, in modern Christianity, the absence of that incredible quality called commitment. I do not mean commitment to Christ. I mean commitment to that part of Christ's body to which they have been called. That commitment to the most menial of tasks within that body that needs to be done. I mean commitment to remain in place until it can be said of them, *mission accomplished*.

II-THE TEMPLE OF GOD IN YOU

There is, I believe, a vital portrait in Scripture that builds on this illustration of the temple of God and typifies God's concept of completion. It is to that portrait and the accompanying principles that we will focus our attention for the remainder of this lesson.

In Acts, chapter seven, an amazing truth was declared to the church that set the stage for even more amazing truths that were to follow. In this passage, Stephen is preaching and, having reminded his somewhat hostile congregation of the manner in which God had revealed Himself in ages past, he makes this incredible statement,

Our fathers had the tabernacle of witness in the wilderness, as He appointed, instructing Moses to make it according to the pattern that he had seen,

which our fathers, having received it in turn, also brought with Joshua into the land possessed by the Gentiles, whom God drove out before the face of our fathers until the days of David,

who found favor before God and asked to find a dwelling for the God of Jacob.

But Solomon built Him a house.

However, the Most High does not dwell in temples made with hands, as the prophet says:

“Heaven is My throne, And earth is My footstool. What house will you build for Me?” says the Lord, “Or what is the place of My rest?

Has My hand not made all these things?”
(Acts 7:44-50 NKJV)

In other words, God's temple project was a temporary one for a reason and for a season. Now God has a new plan and a new habitation.

In I Corinthians, chapter three, Paul, in dealing with the issue of the believer's security, and the believer's rewards, tells us where that habitation is as he makes this astonishing statement:

Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?

If anyone defiles the temple of God, God will destroy him. For the temple of God is holy, which temple you are.

(I Corinthians 3:16,17 NKJV)

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In II Corinthians 6, Paul, in describing the holiness of the marriage vow and the awesome consequences of unequal yoking, adds this phrase again:

And what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For you are the temple of the living God. As God has said: "I will dwell in them And walk among them. I will be their God, And they shall be My people." (II Corinthians 6:16 NKJV)

So God is still in the temple-building business. Only now He has designed a variety of temples in which to dwell, has given them each their individual glory, and assigned to each temple one sub-contractor, whose job it is to assist in the completion of the building He, the Master Architect, has so graciously and so perfectly designed.

A- The Necessity

You are the temple of God provided, that is, that you have yielded the title of your life to the Master Builder and given Him the right to take and make of you a holy habitation of the Living God. It is not a random option for your consideration. Either you are or you aren't a temple of God. If you are, He is in the process of refashioning the edifice of your life from a ramshackled tenement Satan feels comfortable in to that of a magnificent cathedral, a temple of worship so beautiful the King of kings has decided to take up residence there. The truth is: either Christ dwells in your heart or He doesn't. Either you *are* the temple of God or you *aren't*. That is the first question that you must answer. Have you been born again? Has there ever been a time in your life when you consciously said "Yes" to Jesus Christ? May I remind you this moment that there are no "almost" Christians. There are no "nearly-saved" people in this world. God is in the temple-building business, and every temple He builds knows it's a temple.

B- The Materials

To build that temple, God needs special materials. Just as He sent to Lebanon for cedar and fir, so He sent all the way to Heaven to find the one perfect, totally flameproof, perfectly indestructible covering for each holy building He was to build. That covering is the blood of His dear Son. And just as it cost Him a huge amount to purchase the materials for Solomon's temple, so He was willing to pay the greatest price of all to build His most priceless temple of all—you.

C- The Beginning

So the price has been paid, the materials are available, and the question of questions is, “Has there been a spiritual beginning in your life?” There had to come a day when Solomon made a final choice. His father had made provision for him, his people had agreed to sacrifice to make it happen, and the price had been paid. But at some point in time there had to be a beginning. There had to be a time when Solomon by faith said I will not turn back; as of this date, I give myself to building the temple God has commanded me to build. There had to be a beginning. There has to be one for you as well. There has to be a time when you say, “Yes, I invite the King to come and dwell in my heart. From this day forward, I want the Living God to take up residence in my life and take control of my life.” There has to be a moment of truth when you invite Christ to be your Lord. It doesn’t just happen any more than Solomon just happened to begin building the temple. It was a definite, specific decision. And it changed the course of Israel’s history.

I simply must ask you as you proceed with this study, “Have you personally come to the place where without a doubt you know that Jesus Christ lives in your heart? Are you certain that your life is the temple of the Living God?” If not, I lovingly encourage you, this moment, in the name of the King of kings, Jesus Christ, the one who died for your sins, to invite Him into your life right now. He will save you; He will cleanse you; and He will immediately come inside of you, and take up residence within you. You will become, though still under construction, nonetheless, a breathtakingly beautiful temple of God in the making.

D- The Blueprints

Like the temple of old, the temple in you is not being constructed without a serious set of plans. God just doesn’t work that way. Just as every measurement and every particle of material was prescribed in detail before ever the project began, so our Master Craftsman, the Lord Jesus, foreordained that we should be transformed into His very likeness even before the foundation of the world. So He designed and submitted a graphically detailed set of blueprints that describe down to the very nature of our responses what kind of temple we were to become, exact replicas of Himself. He has packaged these blueprints into a marvelously

Mission Accomplished!

readable set of guidelines for temple building, and He has called it “The Bible”. Just as Solomon’s success was dependent upon his faithfulness to the instructions God had given him, even so, our success in building the temple God has designed for us rests totally on how faithfully we honor the blueprints of His Word.

E- The Completion

The key to it all, however, rests in the matter of the doctrine of completion. By the doctrine of completion I mean that God-ordained and demonstrated concept that demands of God’s children that they, even as their Lord, understand that what God begins, God plans to finish; and thus what they begin, God plans for them to finish as well.

Solomon did not have an easy task. It took seven long years of the labors of his people before he could enjoy even one minute of worship. He faced organizational difficulties, management difficulties, and the frustrations of having to wait patiently, year after year, for the project to be completed. But Solomon understood that what God begins, God plans to complete. And it is as though Solomon were speaking to us today asking of us, “Do you understand that principle, my child? Do you understand that principle of completion?”

III- THE GOAL OF GOD FOR YOU

A- God’s Finished Work

The goal of God for each of us is two-fold. First of all, it is to enter into the freedom that comes from realizing that what God has begun in us, He plans to finish. It is His nature to do so, and it will be done regardless of our worthiness or our works. What He plans to complete is our salvation. He plans to deliver us spotless, without blemish, into the presence of the Father on that glorious day when we shall become the bride of the Christ. The Scripture is clear on that.

Being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ;
(Philippians 1:6 NKJV)

Jesus said to them, “My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to finish His work.” (John 4:34 NKJV)

“I have glorified You on the earth. I have finished the work which You have given Me to do.” (John 17:4 NKJV)

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So when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, "It is finished!" And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit.

(John 19:30 NKJV)

Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith,

(Hebrews 12:2a NKJV)

Jesus Christ had one objective in mind, from the moment He laid aside those robes of glory and took upon Himself the garments of a slave. That objective was *to finish the work the Father gave Him to do*. Once that work was finished, we were eternally secure. A God who always keeps His Word, and who always finishes what He starts completed the circle of salvation when His precious Son cried aloud from that Cross, "It is finished". You and I were set free once and for all from sin's penalty and sin's power. It was finished. God was not teasing mankind. He promised to deliver His own Son as a ransom for our sins, and He did it. Now He has promised to keep us secure in the Father's hands until He comes back for us, and He will. God is a finisher. He will do what He has promised, and He will return exactly as He promised as well.

The issue, then, is not whether or not God will finish what He started. The issue is, whether or not you and I will be faithful to finish the work He has called us to do.

In Acts 20, Paul, addressing the Ephesian elders, makes this concise statement of the purpose of his ministry. Listen:

But none of these things move me; nor do I count my life dear to myself, so that I may finish my race with joy, and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God.

(Acts 20:24 NKJV)

Did he? Read II Timothy 4,

For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure is at hand.

I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.

(II Timothy 4:6,7 NKJV)

B- Our Call to Completion

There, then is a living lesson from Solomon. It is this: Do not stop short of your goal! So many of us are like that football team that lost 56-0, but spent the next week bragging about their statistics. They led in first downs, pass receptions, and hot dogs sold. But they never crossed the goal line. So no one was impressed with their statistics. The object of the game wasn't first downs. The object was to win the game.

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I believe Satan has won a decisive battle in many of our lives by allowing us to confuse the object of the conflict. Some of us are so artificially puffed up about the spiritual statistics of our lives, we have lost sight of the fact that we have stopped short of our objective. We may be winning the battle, but losing the war.

God is in the temple building business. He is in the process of changing you into a vessel through which great glory and honor can accrue to His name. As He did with Solomon, He has at great personal cost purchased all you will ever need to complete the project. His part has been done. As it was with Solomon, so it is with you. There had to be a beginning. I trust there has been. I trust that you, at some time in your life, perhaps even this hour, have consciously invited God's Son to be your Savior.

Ask yourself candidly, honestly, these questions: "Can I, like Paul, say, 'I have fought the good fight'? And by God's grace will I be able to say when I finish the course, 'I kept the faith'? Am I certain that Jesus will say to me, 'Well done, thou good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of the Lord'?"

Or has the freshness, like the sweet fragrance that fills the air after a summer rain, blown away with the winds of adversity, until the joy of that first love is no longer even a healthy memory?

Did we start the race with so much enthusiasm that we got winded, and decided to drop out for a while until another crisis causes us to remember the crown that's waiting in the hands of our King, as we cross the finish line?

What about our commitment to spend time alone with God? Our commitment to stay in the Word, whatever the cost? Our conviction that Jesus was worth more to us than fame, than things, than acceptance? Until we tasted fame, or things, or acceptance! What about the fire that drove us to share our faith with those we knew were facing an endless eternity apart from God? What about our commitment to pour our lives into other people until God had raised up men and women through the process of discipleship willing to take the baton and complete the race? What about our conviction that God had so blessed us through the body of His family where He placed us that we were going to invest our lives in that church, in that ministry, in that work. Or, did something come along a little more attractive, a little more appealing, a little more convenient, and suddenly we construe the church to be something that is designed to tickle

Mission Accomplished!

our fancy and meet our needs, when in reality it is designed to be a pipeline into which we pour ourselves in order to give ourselves away!

What about our commitment to that husband or wife until death do us part? Sickness or health? Or was that before the lightning bolt of reality swept us into that humanistic vacuum that says marriage is designed for you to be loved, when God defined marriage as an earthly tool to depict a heavenly principle, which is how to love someone who just may not ever return that love?

What about the commitment you made to your employer when he or she offered you a job and you had none. Are you still as loyal to your job as you were then? Or are you working half-heartedly with one hand, dialing an employment agency with the other, because you think God owes you a better deal?

When the seal of God is evident in the life of the Christian, He finishes what he starts. The emblem of a steadfast heart is like a birthmark on the believer's spirit, in a world that is so wrapped up in itself, it lives in track shoes waiting to take off for the next "good deal" that comes along.

The Christian's commitment to his marriage ought to be the shining light in a world of bankrupt families. The Christian's commitment to his job ought to be a radiant glow in the caverns of a world that is so busy clamoring for more benefits it never says thank you for giving him a job. The Christian's commitment to his church ought to be so real that he or she would die rather than abandon his family, and everyone in that family who is hurting ought to be the alarm bell for everyone else who isn't to love.

And my friend, the Christian's commitment to staying on course and finishing the race in the things of life that really matter ought to be so second nature, it ought never to enter our minds to forsake the Word, abandon prayer, forget to share our faith, or consider earthly pleasures more valuable than heavenly treasures.

The world is fluid, changing, uncertain, and confused. They are looking for anchors, for steadfastness, for someone or something that is constant and secure. They are looking for men and women who can approach each new day knowing that if

Mission Accomplished!

Christ were to come that day, He could honestly say, “Well done, my child”, and they could honestly say, “Mission accomplished.”

I don't know about you, but there's an unfinished temple that lives in my body, and I've laid aside some of the jewels of conviction before they were in place. I've left some precious metals unused, some bricks are being wasted, and there are some tools God gave me early on to work with that are rusting from neglect.

Solomon didn't do that. He finished what he started. And the whole nation was blessed in the process. By God's grace, let's go back and finish whatever it was we started. It's the mark of a man or woman of God to do so.

Let's don't ever walk away from another task God calls us to do until we can honestly say, “Mission accomplished.”

Mission Accomplished!

MISSION ACCOMPLISHED!

Mission accomplished! Dear Lord, may you say
Those beautiful words on that wonderful day
When into thy presence in heavenly skies
By grace, we behold the love in Your eyes.

And listen intently to hear from the Son,
Those priceless of words, "My child, 'twas well done."
Oh, the joy to behold Thy precious, dear face
And know in our hearts that we finished the race.

To come to the end and feel no remorse
To have never looked back to question the course
To know that the temple our Lord had refined
Was fit for the King for whom it was designed.

To know that though oftimes was bitter the cup
The call of the Master was, "Child, don't give up,"
To know at the root of the Savior's dear heart
Were the words, "Child just finish whatever you start."

We were to complete the course He had drawn
Though our spirits grew tired, we were to go on
Faithful and steadfast, consistent and true
Remaining devoted till all life was through.

Oh, God, may we hear from your lips on that day
Those words of rejoicing none other can say
As we flee to thine arms and fall at thy feet,
"Mission accomplished! Journey complete!"

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(05.05.15)