

Ezra 8:24-30 (New International Version)

²⁴ Then I set apart twelve of the leading priests, namely, Sherebiah, Hashabiah and ten of their brothers,

²⁵ and I weighed out to them the offering of silver and gold and the articles that the king, his advisers, his officials and all Israel present there had donated for the house of our God.

²⁶ I weighed out to them 650 talents^[a] of silver, silver articles weighing 100 talents,^[b] 100 talents^[c] of gold,

²⁷ 20 bowls of gold valued at 1,000 darics,^[d] and two fine articles of polished bronze, as precious as gold.

²⁸ I said to them, "You as well as these articles are consecrated to the LORD. The silver and gold are a freewill offering to the LORD, the God of your ancestors.

²⁹ Guard them carefully until you weigh them out in the chambers of the house of the LORD in Jerusalem before the leading priests and the Levites and the family heads of Israel."

³⁰ Then the priests and Levites received the silver and gold and sacred articles that had been weighed out to be taken to the house of our God in Jerusalem.

Footnotes:

- a. [Ezra 8:26](#) That is, about 24 tons or about 22 metric tons
- b. [Ezra 8:26](#) That is, about 3 3/4 tons or about 3.4 metric tons
- c. [Ezra 8:26](#) That is, about 3 3/4 tons or about 3.4 metric tons
- d. [Ezra 8:27](#) That is, about 19 pounds or about 8.4 kilograms¹

¹ All Scripture from BibleGateway.com

Good Morning First Baptist Members and Friends. I greet you this morning with Good News. We have not heard the last from Jesus.

² My Father's house has many rooms; if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you?

³ And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am. (John 14:2-3 NIV)

Now I don't know how you may feel about that, but I hear it as a promise and for me it is Good News. But it is Good News only for those who are ready when He returns. So this morning, if you are ready, working on getting ready and/or understand the need to be getting ready I invite you to make some noise for Jesus. Praise Him with your voices, praise Him with your tambourine, praise Him for He and He alone is worthy of all praise.

For the past four Sundays we have been considering the book of Ezra and looking for a 21st century application within the story of the Jews return to the Promised Land after being exiled and taken into captivity because of their disobedience. We have asked:

WHAT DID YOU DO WHEN YOU GOT HOME?

WHAT HAVE YOU GOT TO SHOUT ABOUT?

WHO IS THE GOD IN YOUR TEMPLE?

HOW ARE YOU TREATING THE TEMPLE GOD HAS GIVEN TO YOU?

WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT ANSWERED PRAYER?

This Sunday is sermon #5 in a 9 sermon series. I will focus my words for this morning on a portion of two verses 24, 28.

²⁴ **Then I set apart** twelve of the leading priests, namely, Sherebiah, Hashabiah and ten of their brothers,

²⁸ I said to them,

"You as well as these articles are consecrated to the LORD.
The silver and gold are a freewill offering to the LORD,
the God of your ancestors.

Would you pray with me as we consider this theme:

I AM CONSECRATED TO THE LORD
SHALL WE PRAY!

Father we come this morning a little tired, a little sad, a little discouraged for the events of the past week have posed challenges. Yet it is Sunday morning and in obedience to the scripture we have come to your house to praise and worship you. We are asking you to send your Holy Spirit to be with us for a little while. Allow us to hear a Word that will lift our hearts, a Word that will strengthen us for the coming week, a Word that will sustain and transform us into the people you have called us to be. Abba, use me this morning to bring that Word. In the name of your Son Jesus the Christ we pray. AMEN and AMEN.

I AM CONSECRATED TO THE LORD

I hope that you have noticed that this morning's title does not ask a question, as I usually do. But rather it is a statement, a statement that I pray you are able to claim for yourself.

I AM CONSECRATED TO THE LORD

In order for you to claim this for yourself you need to be sure that you understand what consecrated means. There is a clue to the meaning in the words of Ezra "I set apart..." There are three meanings that will serve our purpose this morning.

used exclusively for a particular purpose

make or declare something sacred

dedicated formally to a religious or divine purpose

Do you have anything in your life that is **used exclusively for a particular purpose?** Don't make this a complicated question. Just think about simple things – garden tools stay exclusively in the garden – if kitchen tools are taken outside they become garden tools. The sponges and brushes and cleaning cloths we use in the bathroom are for the

bathroom and the clothes and brushed for the car are not to be used in the bathroom or the reverse. So can we agree that we have some things in our lives that are used exclusively for a particular purpose?

There are some things in our lives that we have declared sacred. Photo albums are sacred. A piece of jewelry with special significance in our lives is sacred. If we are into sports, our fishing pole, bowling ball, gym shoes are sacred. Are we able to agree that there are things in our lives that we have declared sacred?

Within God's church there are some things that we have dedicated for a religious or divine purpose. Our choir robes and my pulpit robes are used in God's house and have been dedicated for that purpose. We don't wear them outside, we don't use them to protect our clothes while we are cleaning and we don't toss them aside as we might do our own clothes. Our robes have a divine purpose. But not only our robes, our trays for communion, and even the sanctuary have all been dedicated, consecrated for a religious or divine purpose.

Are we able to agree that we have some things

used exclusively for a particular purpose

make or declare something sacred

dedicated formally to a religious or divine purpose ?

Do you remember the title of this sermon?

I AM CONSECRATED TO THE LORD

I am God's child made in His image for the purpose of being in relationship with Him.

Because I am God's child and made in His image this body that He gave me should be **sacred**. I should be careful where I take it, what it says

and does and who it hangs out with. Because, **I AM CONSECRATED TO THE LORD.**

Because I am God's child and made in His image the gifts that He gave me for teaching and preaching and organizing and giving and loving and discernment are to be declared sacred and **used for the edification of** God's kingdom here on earth.

Because I am God's child and made in His image the call that He has on my life has been dedicated and formally set aside **for His divine purpose.**

I am certain that **I AM CONSECRATED TO THE LORD. All of me. is consecrated my body, my gifts, my talents and my life.**

And now for the question, ARE YOU CONSECRATED TO THE LORD?

Allow me to remind you of a few things you should already know.

1. When Jesus died for your sins, rose again, returned to the Father and sent the Holy Spirit to comfort and guide you – you were granted the opportunity to be **CONSECRATED TO THE LORD.**

2. When you confessed that the Lord was God and you believed it you then **CONSECRATED YOURSELF TO THE LORD.**

Romans **10:9** because if **you confess** with **your** mouth that Jesus is Lord ¹⁰ and believe in **your** heart that God raised him from the dead, **you** will be saved. **10:10** For with the heart one believes and thus has righteousness ¹¹ and with the mouth one **confesses** and thus has salvation. ¹²

3. When you recognized the gift that God has given you and use it for the glory of God then you have **CONSECRATED YOURSELF TO THE LORD.**

⁸To one there is given through the Spirit a message **of wisdom**, to another a message of **knowledge** by means of the same Spirit, ⁹to another **faith** by the same Spirit, to

another gifts of **healing** by that one Spirit, ¹⁰to another **miraculous powers**, to another **prophecy**, to another **distinguishing between spirits, to another speaking in different kinds of tongues,**^[a] **and to still another the interpretation of tongues.**^[b] ¹¹All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he distributes them to each one, just as he determines. (1 Corinthians)

Is there anyone here that is able to join me and say?

I AM CONSECRATED TO THE LORD

Next week we move to the book of Nehemiah. I encourage you to read this book during the coming week, in order that you might have background for the coming sermons.

We often use the gifts God gives us whether we consecrate those gifts to Him or not. The act of consecration shows we know who made us, where our gifts come from, and we want to glorify Him, not us. When we consecrate ourselves to Him, it is not so we share in any glory as we use our gifts, but rather it is an act of pure worship and sacrifice, presented to our holy God, our Father and Creator, with humility and reverence.

1. Consecrated thorough your relationship with Jesus Christ.
2. Consecrated by living in the Spirit.
3. Consecrated by crucifying the flesh.
4. Consecrated by knowing who you are in Christ.