

## Exodus 35:5

*“Take from among you an offering to the Lord. Whoever is of a willing heart, let him bring it as an offering to the Lord: gold, silver, and bronze; . . .”*

Moses had been instructed to build the Tabernacle. It was to be an elaborate facility with a solid silver foundation, golden walls, intricately woven tapestries and highly detailed furnishing. Every detail was given to Moses, including its size, shape, and purpose. However, two things had been left out; materials and labor. At one time, Moses, as a prince of Egypt, had been an extremely wealthy man with all the resources of Egypt at his disposal. For a nation that had erected structures like the pyramids, building the Tabernacle would not be beyond their means, and Moses could have underwritten the entire project. But those days were passed. Moses had forsaken all the riches of Egypt. In a word, Moses was broke. Where would the resources come from to build? The answer is found in two words that are repeated over and over in Exodus 35: stirred and willing. After explaining to the people the vision he had received from God regarding the building, he instructed them to go back to their tents. It was there, as families gathered together, that their hearts were stirred by the Lord. They determined to offer the Lord a portion of what had been given to them. We read, those with a willing heart brought a free will offering to the Lord. For some it was golden earrings, for others necklaces, rings or other jewelry. Some brought precious stones, while others brought their abilities as an offering; making themselves available to be part of the construction team. In each case, we read they brought willingly of what the Lord had given them, and that all the labor was directed and empowered by the Spirit of the Lord. As the project gets underway, the leaders find they are facing an interesting problem. They examined the plans and realized the people had given too much. Moses has to instruct the people to stop giving to the Lord. They had more than enough supplied to accomplish the task. We learn some very important lessons about giving and receiving from this text. First, note that Moses was only interested in building what he had received directly from the Lord. He did not take on a additional projects that were more than the Lord wanted. He sought the Lord and built what the Lord desired. Second, Moses did not attempt to coerce the people. He allowed each man to go home to his family and determine what they would willingly give to the Lord. In the church today, too much pressure is being placed upon God's people to give. We need to encourage people to seek the Lord, and give willingly. Finally, people gave a variety of things. Those who had wealth, gave gold and other precious things, those who had skills, gave their

abilities, but all who gave were richly blessed as the Tabernacle was completed, and served as a place for people to meet with God.

Pastor Jim