

“Making A Name”  
Pastor Wally Contreras  
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“Now the whole earth had one language and the same words. And as people migrated from the east, they found a plain in the land of Shinar and settled there. And they said to one another, “Come, let us make bricks, and burn them thoroughly.” And they had brick for stone, and bitumen for mortar. Then they said, “Come, let us build ourselves a city and a tower with its top in the heavens, and let us make a name for ourselves, lest we be dispersed over the face of the whole earth.” And the LORD came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of man had built. And the LORD said, “Behold, they are one people, and they have all one language, and this is only the beginning of what they will do. And nothing that they propose to do will now be impossible for them. Come, let us go down and there confuse their language, so that they may not understand one another's speech.” So the LORD dispersed them from there over the face of all the earth, and they left off building the city. Therefore its name was called Babel, because there the LORD confused the language of all the earth. And from there the LORD dispersed them over the face of all the earth.” (Genesis 11:1-9)

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The Scripture that Pastor Wally read from at the begging of the service (Psalm 2) said in part, “Earth-leaders push for position, Demagogues and delegates meet for summit talks, The God-deniers, the Messiah-defiers: “Let's get free of God! Cast loose from Messiah!” Heaven-throned God breaks out laughing. At first he's amused at their presumption; then he gets good and angry. Furiously, he shuts them up.” (Psalm 2:2-5, The Message) Most have heard the Yiddish proverb “Man plans, God laughs”. I make plans, but when the project wraps up, things aren't quite what I expected them to be or nothing at all like I thought it would turn out. Do any examples of plans in my life come to mind? What was the plan and how did it turn out?

Pastor Wally said that I am created to be creative and to be productive. My mind immediately goes to “creating” things and my answer would be that I've not really “created” anything – I just use things that others have created. 1 Corinthians 14:33a reminds me “For God is not a God of confusion but of peace.” There is order in His creation. So, in my life, my family, my work, do I create peace or confusion, order or disorder, clarity or obscurity?

Which attributes lead to being productive and why?

Pastor Wally pointed out that Nimrod was the “project manager” for the people who settled on the plain in the land of Shinar for the “City and Tower Building Project” so they could “make a name for [themselves]” and keep from being dispersed. Nimrod was the son of Cush, the grandson of Ham, and the great-grandson of Noah. There is a saying, “Don’t be such a Nimrod.” In modern English, being called a “Nimrod” has come to mean someone lacking judgement or intelligence. Though Nimrod was called a “mighty warrior” and a “mighty hunter before the LORD” (Genesis 10:9), his character and decisions were at times not the best. The Hebrew name “Nimrod” means “rebellious,” which fit his character and actions in the Bible. His going against God demonstrated a real lack judgement, so to be a Nimrod is, and always was, to lack judgement. In what way(s), if any, could folks have said to me, “Don’t be such a Nimrod!” and why?

Regarding Genesis 11:4 (“Let us make a name for ourselves”), R.C. Sproul once pointed out that: “Friedrich Nietzsche, the nineteenth-century atheist philosopher, said the most fundamental drive of the human heart is the “will to power,” a lust for dominance. This is what drives fallen humanity. It’s the legacy of Eden, the living out of the serpent’s seduction when he said, “You shall be as gods.” Why should God get all the glory?...I remember sitting transfixed and watching Walter Cronkite and some former astronauts describe the first landing of human beings on the moon. When I heard the words of Neil Armstrong, “That’s one small step for a man; one giant leap for mankind,” I was as excited as anybody else by this incredible accomplishment, this conquest of a whole new frontier. But there was also something that bothered me when I heard those words. It sounded like the Tower of Babel all over again, a boasting in human achievement rather than bowing in prayer, saying, “This is for Your glory, O God. This is the fulfillment of the scientific enterprise You gave us in Eden to have dominion over the earth.” In what way(s) in the last couple of weeks have I tried to grab some of God’s glory for myself? Are there stolen “glory moments” that I need to confess to God and ask His forgiveness and surrender to Him the glory that is due Him?

Pastor Wally pointed out that the Westminster Catechism begins with “Q. 1. What is the chief end of man? A. Man's chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy him forever. R.C. Sproul concluded his article by saying, “The greatest building project mankind ever attempted was resisted by God. And it ended in chaos and confusion. Every attempt of man to build his own ultimate city and kingdom will end in chaos. Any success we enjoy will be short-lived, for the Lord will bring into judgment every hidden thing, every secret thought (Eccl. 12:14). Nothing built for the glory of man will survive His scrutiny. But what is done for God’s glory will endure forever.” There are folks who have spent their entire adult lives “climbing the corporate ladder” only to find that their ladder was leaning up against the wrong building. Will the goal(s) of my life and my effort(s) to “climb to the top” of success (however I may define that term) “survive His scrutiny”? Is my “chief end [ ] to glorify God, and to enjoy him forever”? If so, how so? If not, why not?

Do I need to review, reconsider, and/or reprioritize, or just hit the re-start button on my life's "mission"? If so, why so? If not, why not?

"And God blessed them. And God said to them, 'Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.'" (Genesis 1:28) After the Great Flood, "...God blessed Noah and his sons and said to them, 'Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth.'" (Genesis 9:1) Before Jesus left his disciples to return to the Father, He said, "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, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age." (Matthew 28:19-20) Pastor Wally said that God gave out big missions to be accomplished and God also gave everyone the ability to accomplish those missions. Have I accepted the mission that God has given me and am fully trusting that He will give me the ability needed to accomplish that mission or is there something less than full compliance on my part? Explain.

Pastor Wally asked, "Am I doing anything that hinders God?" And???

"Trust in the LORD, and do good; dwell in the land and befriend faithfulness. Delight yourself in the LORD, and he will give you the desires of your heart. Commit your way to the LORD; trust in him, and he will act. He will bring forth your righteousness as the light, and your justice as the noonday." (Psalm 37:3-6) "Therefore do not be anxious, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For the Gentiles seek after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you." (Matthew 6:31-33) To what degree do these verses characterize my day-to-day life? Explain.

Pastor Wally asked if I am trusting God's direction. Before answering that question, am I fervently and frequently seeking God's direction? If so, how so? If not, why not?

Do I trust God's direction in my life? If so, how so? If not, why not?

Lastly, am I acting on His direction in my life? If so, how so? If not, why not?