Teaching Notes

*The Circle Maker* by Mark Batterson

Chapter 6

For February 17, 2013 Zadok Orchestra Lifegroup

1. Intro

A. Pray

B. Review:

* + 1. What were your takeaways from what Michael taught last week from the book of Joshua?
    2. Takeaways from the book so far?
    3. Any additional prayer cards to add to album?
    4. Give album to someone else to take home this week. Ask them to covenant to pray for each card at least once.

C. Today we are going to cover chapter 6 of *The Circle Maker.*

1. Teaching Chapter 6: “You Can’t Never Always Sometimes Tell.”
   1. Assign Scriptures for various people to read:
      1. Jeremiah 33:3
      2. Acts 10:1-3
      3. Acts 2:1-4
      4. Acts 2:5-12
      5. Acts 2:13-18

B. Vision beyond your resources:

* + 1. Tell the story of Batterson’s meeting about church government which resulted in a $3 million gift.
       1. The reason they gave was “**because you have vision beyond your resources.”**
       2. Batterson: *“We refuse to let our budget determine our vision. That left-brained approach is a wrong-brained approach because it’s based on our limited resources rather than on God’s unlimited provision. Faith is allowing your God-given vision to determine your budget”* (Circle Maker, 60).
       3. *“That certainly does not mean you practice poor financial stewardship, spend beyond your means, and accumulate a huge debt load. It does mean that you take a step of faith when God gives you a vision because you trust that the One who gave you the vision is going to make provision. And for the record, if the vision is from God, it will most definitely be beyond your means. Having vision beyond your resources is synonymous with dreaming big. And it may feel like you’re setting yourself up for failure, but you’re actually setting God up for a miracle. How God performs the miracle is His job. Your job is drawing a circle around the God-given dream. And if you do your job, you might just find yourself standing waist-deep in three feet of quail*” (Circle Maker, 60-61).
    2. The $3 million gift was an answer to a prayer circle (asking for a $2 million gift) Batterson and his fellow circle makers had been praying for 4 years.
       1. But first he tried to manufacture the answer himself (and lost $15,000). He learned not to try to manufacture God’s answer.
       2. He also learned from this experience that “no doesn’t always mean no; sometimes it means not yet” (Circle Maker, 62).
       3. He learned that we shouldn’t seek answers as much as we should seek God. “*If you seek answers you won’t find them, but if you seek God, the answers will find you. There comes a point after you have prayed through that you need to let go and let God. How? By resisting the temptation to manufacture your own answer to your own prayer”* (Circle Maker, 63).
       4. When God finally answered, it was $3 million, not $2 million. Batterson asked God why, and God said, “Mark, I just wanted to show you that I can do one better” (Circle Maker, 65).

C. The element of surprise:

* + 1. Batterson’s grandmother had a saying, “You can’t never always sometimes tell.”
    2. He translates this as “Anything could happen.” When you pray, *““you can’t never always sometimes tell.” Anything could happen! You never know when or how or where God will answer it. Prayer adds an element of surprise to your life that is more fun than a surprise party or surprise gift or surprise romance. In fact, prayer turns life into a party, a gift, a romance”* (Circle Maker, 63).

D. God loves surprises. Jeremiah 33:3.

* + 1. Because God loves surprises, Batterson has been praying: “**Lord, do something unpredictable and uncontrollable**” (Circle Maker, 64).
    2. He states: “*That is a scary prayer, especially for a control freak like me, but it doesn’t scare me nearly as much as a life void of holy surprises. And you can’t have it both ways. If you want God to surprise you, you have to give up control. You will lose a measure of predictability, but you will begin to see God move in uncontrollable ways! Anything could happen. Anyplace. Anytime*” (Circle Maker, 64).

E. Here’s a Biblical surprise: Read Acts 10:1-3.

* + 1. The Gospel was opened up to the Gentiles as a result of that holy surprise.
    2. God dropped that phrase “*One day at about three in the afternoon*” into Batterson’s spirit just before he got the phone call about the $3 million donation. And guess what time that call came? About 3 PM.

F. Here’s another Biblical surprise: Pentecost.

* + 1. Acts 2:1-4: The coming of the Surprise Himself.
    2. Acts 2:5-12: Emphasize verse 12: “So they were all amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, “Whatever could this mean?”
       1. “Amazed and perplexed.” Batterson writes: *“A few years ago, I had a revelation while reading the description of what happened on the day of Pentecost. It says the people were “amazed and perplexed.” All of us want to be amazed by God, right? It’s easy to pray, “Amaze me!” But I don’t know anyone who prays, “Perplex me!” But it’s a package deal. If you aren’t willing to be perplexed, you’ll never be amazed”* (Circle Maker, 66).
       2. The difference between amazed and perplexed is that amazed is a happy, awestruck wonder, but perplexed is something we don’t understand.

On the day of Pentecost, a noise was heard across the entire city. Fire appeared in the air and hovered over the people. People started speaking languages they had never learned. Nobody understood it.

Peter saw the vision of the unclean animals coming down from Heaven in a sheet. God told him to arise and eat, and Peter didn’t understand it. God in His patience repeated the vision three times. Peter still didn’t understand, but he went with Cornelius and the Gospel was opened up to the Gentiles.

Batterson writes: *“It’s at this place where God wants to do something unprecedented that many of us get stuck spiritually. Instead of operating by faith, we switch back to our default setting of logic. Instead of embracing the new move of God, we fall back into the rut of our old routines. Peter was perplexed by this vision, but he took a step of faith. He risked his reputation…”* (Circle Maker, 67).

God allows us to see things and dream things that are beyond our ability to comprehend. God does miraculous works that are beyond our ability to comprehend.

“Are [we] willing to be perplexed? Are [we] open to holy surprises? Do [we] have the courage for God to move in unpredictable and uncontrollable ways?” (Circle Maker, 67).

III. Application & Discussion:

1. Discuss personal thoughts: I don’t want this stuff to be mere theory. I’m hungry for God Himself, and I’m hungry to see His purposes established in us as an orchestra.
2. **I’m hungry for the ministry of the musicians to be unleashed**. There is so much anointing in this group. Even people that don’t know us have been telling me for almost two years now that they hear a new sound; that when we play, they sense the presence of God in a new way they never felt before.
3. Kim has been playing flute with us in the healing rooms, and we’re getting testimonies about when people hear her play, God delivers them from their emotional turmoil and they go to a whole new place in God. It’s the ministry of the musicians.
4. The ministry of the musicians is not just to support the singers. That may be part of what we do, but according to the Bible, that’s really not what it’s about at all.
5. **The ministry of the musicians in the Biblical model has always been directly to God.** People benefit from it, yes, the same way the hunter benefits when the bird dog points. They follow our example and worship. But our ministry is to the Father Himself. The sound we make on our instruments is the song of our heart directly to the heart of the Father.
6. According to the Biblical pattern, when the musicians play, the song of our heart and OUR INTIMACY WITH GOD so releases the atmosphere of Heaven that everything that is not perfectly in agreement with Heaven flees.
7. David sat in Saul’s court and worshipped with his harp. He didn’t sing to Saul. He sang to God; it was between David and God. But the demons that tormented Saul fled every time David played. Why? Because God inhabits the praise of His people.
8. That word “praise” is “tehillah” in Hebrew. It is the personal song of our heart directly to God and none other. We are musicians. God made us that way; He has separated us unto Himself and reserved our ministry directly for Himself. He has placed a song directly in our hearts, and when we release it out of our spirits straight to Him, He inhabits that song, the atmosphere of Heaven is released, and Jesus receives the reward of His suffering because every bit of evil must flee and God’s people are brought back into their redemptive purpose.
9. This is the ministry of the musicians. I want to see God move like THIS. We are HIS orchestra, separated unto Himself personally. I want God to do something uncontrollable and unpredictable in us. That when we play, cancers would fall off people’s bodies. When we play, young men and women who think they are gay would see the light of Jesus and those homosexual demons who are tormenting them would flee. That when we play, the prophetic word goes forth because the atmosphere of Heaven so pervades the place where we are. That when we play, the Holy Spirit drives out spirits of depression and people are filled with righteousness, peace, and joy. I want to see God amaze and perplex us: in our numbers, in our personal life, and in our ministry as musicians
10. But that will only happen as long as we are willing for it to. As long as we’re willing to step out in faith even when we don’t understand. As long as we’re willing to be completely out of the realm of our intellect and let God be God.