

Kev's sermon notes for eGroups

Sunday, March 21, 2021

Elevation Church - Broadcasting from Ballantyne Campus – Charlotte, NC USA

Pastor: Robert Madu – Starting a new church in Dallas TX – The Social Church of Dallas TX - with the grand opening Easter Sunday on April 4, 2021.

Sermon Title: “No Crown – Pride is like Carbon Monoxide (the silent killer) of your Faith – Pride is the Sin Beneath Our Sin – Pride is at the root of all bitterness – Pride is the Deadbolt that will block your access to God – Humility is the hinge that will Open up Heaven in your Life – Godly Confidence is Note Pride – Don’t get caught up in the CRAP (criticism, rejection, advice and praise) – We can’t handle the weight of Glory – We were only made to deflect glory back to our creator.

See this remarkable sermon from one year ago by Pastor Robert Madu:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4G8LvFNbLYs&t=52s>

Elevation Worship

- “Echo”: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z8agqyGlaD8>
- “Gone”: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lxHTUEhHoQg>
- “Worthy”: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ak5WTb-mgeA>
- “You Are worthy of it All – From you are all things – For You Deserve the Glory”
- “There is a Cloud” - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MOKXYe0a4MY>

Scripture for this week:

- **John 3: 22 to 30:** *“John Testifies Again About Jesus - 22 After this, Jesus and his disciples went out into the Judean countryside, where he spent some time with them, and baptized. 23 Now John also was baptizing at Aenon near Salim, because there was plenty of water, and people were coming and being baptized. 24 (This was before John was put in prison.) 25 An argument developed between some of John’s disciples and a certain Jew over the matter of ceremonial washing. 26 They came to John and said to him, “Rabbi, that man who was with you on the other side of the Jordan — the one you testified about—look, he is baptizing, and everyone is going to him.” 27 To this John replied, “A person can receive only what is given them from heaven. 28 You yourselves can testify that I said, ‘I am not the Messiah but am sent ahead of him.’ 29 The bride belongs to the bridegroom. The friend who attends the bridegroom waits and listens for him, and is full of joy when he hears the bridegroom’s voice. That joy is mine, and it is now complete. 30 He must become greater; I must become less.” 31 The one who comes from above is above all; the one who is from the earth belongs to the earth, and speaks as one from the earth. The one who comes from heaven is above all. 32 He testifies to what he has seen and heard, but no one accepts his testimony. 33 Whoever has accepted it has certified that God is truthful. 34 For the one whom God has sent speaks the words of God, for God[i] gives the Spirit without limit. 35 The Father loves the Son and has placed everything in his hands. 36 Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God’s wrath remains on them.”*
- **Rev 4: 9 to 11:** *“6 In the center, around the throne, were four living creatures, and they were covered with eyes, in front and in back. 7 The first living creature was like a lion, the second was like an ox, the third had a face like a man, the fourth was like a flying eagle. 8 Each of the four living*

creatures had six wings and was covered with eyes all around, even under its wings. Day and night they never stop saying: “‘Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty,’ who was, and is, and is to come.” 9 Whenever the living creatures give glory, honor and thanks to him who sits on the throne and who lives for ever and ever, 10 the twenty-four elders fall down before him who sits on the throne and worship him who lives for ever and ever. They lay their crowns before the throne and say: 11 “You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they were created and have their being.”

- **James 4: 4 to 9:** 4 You adulterous people,[a] don't you know that friendship with the world means enmity against God? Therefore, anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God. 5 Or do you think Scripture says without reason that he jealously longs for the spirit he has caused to dwell in us? 6 But he gives us more grace. That is why Scripture says: “God opposes the proud but shows favor to the humble.” 7 Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. 8 Come near to God and he will come near to you. Wash your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded. 9 Grieve, mourn and wail. Change your laughter to mourning and your joy to gloom. 10 Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up. 11 Brothers and sisters, do not slander one another. Anyone who speaks against a brother or sister or judges them speaks against the law and judges it. When you judge the law, you are not keeping it, but sitting in judgment on it. 12 There is only one Lawgiver and Judge, the one who is able to save and destroy. But you—who are you to judge your neighbor?
- 1 Samuel 17 – David and Goliath – **Key point:** Godly Confidence is not Pride
- 2 Samuel 24 – **Key point:** The pride of David results in the death of 70,000

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- **Please consider joining an eGroup (small group) so you don't have to walk this walk alone? – See www.elevationchurch.cc.**
- **Interested in joining Elevation Church: See: www.elevationchurch.cc**
- **Interested in leading an eGroup? See: www.elevationchurch.cc**
- **Interested in serving at Elevation Church: See: www.elevationchurch.cc**
- **Interested in attending or leading a watch party: See: www.elevationchurch.cc**
- Here Comes Church:
 - Interested in serving at Elevation Church: See: www.elevationchurch.cc
 - Please consider joining an eGroup (small group) so you don't have to walk this walk alone? – See www.elevationchurch.cc.
 - Recall the remarkable testimony of Kiante beating depression and alcoholism with the help of Cole and his eGroup – where everyone's story was similar to mine – surrounded by people that truly cared for him – where “he left all of the hurt in the baptism tank.”
 - One year ago, Pastor Robert Madu shared a sermon called “The Beauty of Being Stuck.”
 - Pray to God that we all move together.

- Easter Worship experiences – all times USA Eastern
 - Friday, April 2, 2021 – 7PM and 10PM
 - Sunday, April 4, 2021 – 9:20 AM, 11:20 AM, 1:50 PM, and more times
 - See: www.elevationchurch.org.
- **Opening prayer by Robert Madu on 3/21/2021: “We thank God for the breath to receive everything that God has for us – lift up our hands and open our mouths in the spirit of expectation to receive everything – are you ready to receive everything that God has for you? We have to be expectant to receive from God because most times we do not know what it is – whatever it is – Father we honor you today – Have your way in this place – Do whatever you want to do and shape whatever you want to shape – move whatever you want to move – we do have great anticipation despite what we have been through – we are still anticipating – And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose (Rm 8:28) – speak to our hearts in Jesus name, Amen.**
- So honored and humbled to speak to you – this being my 6th visit to Elevation Church.
- Time is measured in minutes but life is measured in moments – and I’ll never forget my last visit in March 2021 when I spoke to you at the start of a global pandemic - and we did not know (at the time) what the future was going to look like – and isn’t it awesome that we are still here – we are still standing – and don’t act like you weren’t scared this time last year – this is the beauty of our God – and we are still standing – and we are still here.
- **See John 3: 22 to 30 and Rev 4: 9 to 11.**
- In my 16 years of preaching I always use creative props to illustrate what God is trying to tell us – as pastors we have been given the daunting task of articulating the good news of the gospel and Jesus Christ – to express the inexpressible – to talk about a kingdom that is so transcendent – the kingdom of God – who’s ways are above our ways – whose thoughts are above our thoughts – something that is almost impossible to articulate but our spirit understands – it is a difficult task to articulate the ideas of the kingdom of God.
- When Jesus tried to communicate the kingdom of God to his people he used stories or parables – using things of this earth to explain things that they could never fully understand.
- Jesus used parables and pastors today use props – during one sermon for a youth meeting I used a cow tongue – to explain the tongue has the most lethal weapon on earth – a gross example but not as gross as the things that come out of kids’ mouths in the school cafeteria.
- **Today I want to talk to you about a carbon dioxide detector – and use this as a prop.**
- **We can see smoke but we can’t see carbon monoxide – because it is a colorless and odorless gas - a.k.a. the silent killer according to the CDC.**
- **Over 20,000 people per year find themselves in emergency rooms due to carbon monoxide exposure – and 400 people per year die in the US because of carbon monoxide exposure.**
- **I want to talk to you about another silent killer today – it’s called pride.**
- **Pride is the carbon monoxide of sin – slowly suffocating the plans that God has for your life. Pride will stop God from doing things exceedingly and abundantly in your life. Pride will shut down God’s plan for your life – Pride is what destroys marriages - Pride is what ruins relationships – Pride is what tears apart families – Pride causes you to hold onto bitterness where you refuse to forgive – Pride is the reason that family members haven’t talk to each other for years – Pride destroys churches and shuts down ministries – Pride kills good companies.**

- Pride is the one thing that stops God from doing things through you and in you – Pride has always been the problem – Pride is Americas biggest strong hold.
- Saint Augustine says pride is “the sin beneath the sin” – on the surface it looks like one thing – at the bottom of it, is just pride – here are some examples:
 - Anxiety or worry - at the root of this is pride because we are upset because our expectations were not met – and we placed all of these requirements on our own version of a pre-packaged and manageable God.
 - Indecisiveness – at its root, it is a problem of Pride – because if we take a step of faith and then become overwhelmed with the possibility of failure – we never step into what God has for us - but rather to stay in a perpetual zone of procrastination.
 - Bitterness – we hold onto bitterness because we think we’re better than somebody else.
- Pride is the sin beneath the sin.
- Pride proceeded the fall of man – Pride is what turned an angel of God into a devil and along with 2/3 of the other angels.
- Pride is the deadbolt that will block our access into the presence of God.
- Humility is the hinge upon which heavens open up in our lives.
- Begin your day with humility if you want to see God move in your life. Drop to your knees and tell God you can’t do this without Him – I don’t know how to be a business owner – I don’t know how to be a mom – I don’t know how to be a dad – God, I need your help – God you are not in addition to my life - you are my life – and I need you.
- We when we begin our day like that, this is what gets God’s attention – God is attracted to the fragrance of humility.
- See James 4: 6-8: “But he gives us more grace. That is why Scripture says: “God opposes the proud but shows favor to the humble.” 7 Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. 8 Come near to God and he will come near to you.”
- James tells us that the devil will flee if we resist him – and if we are prideful God will resist me – and the Devil will always want you to be prideful.
- Pride as the silent killer.
- I love the ethos of Elevation Church – “see what God can do through you” – the thing that will stop what God can do through you is pride – are you super prideful? The problem with pride is that it hides – where pride even stops us from admitting that we are prideful – Pride is like bad breath – you are generally the last person to know that you have it – but it affects everybody.
- Do you consider yourself humble? And even have a web site called a www.epitomeofhumility.com.
- So what does humility look like? Pride hides and humility stays hidden – And some things that may look like humility actually represent pride in disguise – and what may look like pride on the outside is actually humility and confidence in what God can do through you.
- See 1 Samuel 17 – David and Goliath – Key point: Godly Confidence is not Pride – and might even look like arrogance.
- God can do great things through you when you trust him.
- 2 Samuel 24 – Key point: The pride of David (counting his military) resulted in the death of 70,000 – David forgot to about trusting God in all things.
- I wish there was a pride monoxide detector – to let us know when are prideful.

- We all have images of pride in the form of boastful people with sunglasses on – thinking that pride only comes in the form of superiority – however there is another version of pride that comes in the form of inferiority – “no one ever cares about me – no one ever calls on me” – me – me – me – this is still pride – because the only thing pride cares about is that you are the center of your world
- **And it is hard to know what pride looks like – and we need a detector - Humility and pride manifest themselves in how we respond to given situations – here are the detectors that allows us to understand the difference between humility (which stays hidden) and pride (which tries to hide)**
 - **How do you respond to criticism? What is your initial response when someone criticizes you? Is it to deflect and deny? Do you immediately get defensive? Are you completely deflated when someone criticizes you? Humble people are able to laugh at themselves – and extract value in everything – humble people are open to feedback and this allows them to grow – they don’t deflect and they are not defeated.**
 - **How do you respond to rejection? We all hate being rejected by stuck-up people – Prideful people reject people that reject them.**
 - **How do you respond to advice? Prideful people do not want advice they just want confirmation of a particular bias or belief system – to hear their opinion in someone else’s voice.**
 - **How do you respond to praise – to the cheer? – to the hand clap? – How much do you like being liked? Humble people say they have nothing to prove and nothing to lose – psychiatrists are researching intensely the impact of social media on our brains and our need for praise and reaffirmation – an unhealthy need to be noticed by other people – to get the validation and reaffirmation from other people – even if it means that we receive likes from complete strangers.**
- **CRAP = Criticism, Rejection, Advice and Praise – and how do you respond to this? How do you respond to the CRAP of life?**
- **See what Paul says in Phil 3 – Forgetting what is behind – and press on to what is ahead – treating all of his prior accomplishments as CRAP – and pressing forward to know Jesus – to forget the pedigree and the wins to know Jesus better – and in our humility, we know Him.**
- **In John 3: 22 to 30, John the Baptist has to forget about the CRAP and raise Jesus up – the heavens opened up on the hinge of humility.**
- **Pride blocks the access – don’t get caught up in the CRAP - Pride shuts us out from knowing God – don’t become intoxicated by the approval of others – otherwise we miss out on the greatest treasure which is knowing God.**
- **Recall the Latin phrase: “Memores Sumus Vestri in Mortale” – Translation: During a victory parade, the servants job was to hold the crown and whisper into the ear of a Caesar – “Remember that you are mortal.” You are going to die and don’t let the praise of this crowd go to your head – do not become intoxicated by the cheers of the crowd. Kev’s bonus study: See the below additional notes at the end of this document.**
- **We were not created to receive glory – we cannot handle the weight of His glory on our lives – it will crush us – glory will crush us - we were we were we created to reflect glory – to give it back to God.**
- See Rev 4: 9 to 11:

- When John gets to the throne, there are 24 elders – the church of the living God – 12 tribes of the old testament and 12 disciples in the new testament.
- And all of the elders have a crown – and this represents the crown that we will receive for being faithful on earth – and yes this means that there is an award even while we were in the middle of suffering – that God is a great record keeper – and we do not have to fight her own battles alone – He will reward us for being nice to people and loving our enemies – and blessing those that curse us – thank God that there is a crown for the reward.
- John also says in Revelation that the elders take their crowns off when in the presence of God – although they got the reward, the greatest reward and greatest joy is God - and to be in his presence – so the elders cast down their crowns before God.
- The greatest reward is Him – not the recognition – not how much we are known – we have the reward – it is His presences.

Kev's bonus: An Explanation of the Latin phrase: "Memores Sumus Vestri in Mortale"

Comments by Goran Blazeski in 2017 as quoted in www.thevintagenews.com

In Ancient Rome, a slave would continuously whisper 'Remember you are mortal' in the ears of victorious generals as they were paraded through the streets after coming home, triumphant, from battle.

After every major military victory in ancient Rome, a "triumph," as it was called, was celebrated in Rome. It was a ceremonial procession granted to victorious generals who drove in a chariot drawn by four horses. They would ride through the streets to the temple of Jupiter, on the Capitoline Hill, to offer sacrifice in the temple. When they reached the foot of the Capitoline, some of the leading captives may have been taken off for execution.

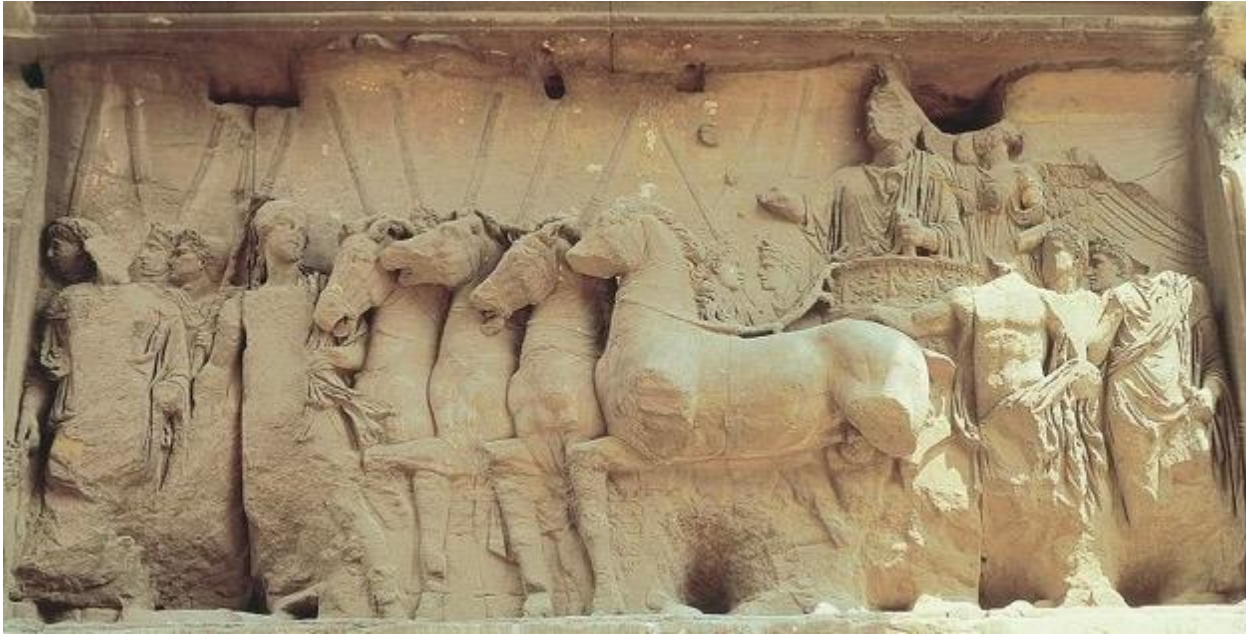
The ceremony usually started early in the morning and took up a whole day and sometimes even more than two days. Before the general entered the city at a specific point, the Porta Triumphalis, he would first give a speech praising his legions.



“70 AD After a summer of starvation and siege had been imposed on the city’s people during the fall of Jerusalem, the great Second Temple was finally on fire. No one knows who threw the flaming brand, or indeed how the temple had avoided such a fate for so long, but once the conflagration began there was no stopping it.”



The Arch of Titus is a 1st-century AD honorific arch located on the Via Sacra, Rome, just to the south-east of the Roman Forum. It was constructed in c. 81 AD by the Emperor Domitian shortly after the death of his older brother Titus to commemorate Titus's official victory of Titus together with their father, Vespasian, over the Jewish rebellion in Judaea.



Detail from the Arch of Titus showing his triumph held in the year 70 AD for his successful Siege of Jerusalem.

The victorious general who drove throughout the streets of Rome in the chariot, decorated with gold and ivory, was followed by his troops and preceded by his most glamorous prisoners and spoils, taken in war. The triumph for the victorious general offered extraordinary opportunities for self-publicity and therefore popularity with the people of Rome. The victorious general was seen as, in some way, divine, representing the god Jupiter.

Paintings depicting certain episodes of the battle were used in the ceremony. There were also musicians, as well as examples of the exotic plants and animals taken from the conquered country.

The general was dressed in an elaborate red or purple toga and his face was painted red to imitate the red-painted face of the statues of Mars, the god of war or Jupiter – the King of the gods. The red paint was made with vermillion, an opaque orange-red pigment, derived from powdered mineral cinnabar.

One of the most interesting parts of the triumph was that behind the victorious general in the chariot stood a slave, holding a golden crown over his head, and whispering to him throughout the procession, 'Remember you are mortal' in the ears of the victorious generals as they were paraded through the streets, reminding him that he is a man even when he is triumphing.

When the procession reached the temple of Jupiter, a bull was sacrificed and offered some of the war-booty in honor of Jupiter. When the ceremony was over, the general was given a musical escort to accompany him back home.

As Mary Beard, the author of *The Roman Triumph* wrote in her richly illustrated work, "Roman triumphs have provided a model for the celebration of military success for centuries.

Here is another story from us: “We bones that here are, for yours await” is written on the entrance in The Chapel of Bones in Portugal, a church adorned with 5,000 human skulls and bones

Through the last two millennia, there has hardly been a monarch, a dynast, or autocrat in the West who has not looked back to Rome for a lesson in how to mark a victory in war to assert his own personal power.”