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Here's Hope
by Rev. Jerry Rea

Better

David was an awesome leader. His military conquests are legendary. His ability to merge peoples into a great nation is nothing short of miraculous. God, however, would not allow David to build the temple. That task, He assigned to Solomon. We have here, an example of God's directions into that which is best suited for us and His kingdom. Could David have built the Temple? He absolutely could have built the Temple. God used David in greater ways. Through David, God united the people of Israel, so when Solomon completed the building there would be people to inhabit the building. God's plan was just right for both Solomon and David. The "glory" of David and the "glory" of Solomon were different, but both men built God's kingdom. God may say "no" to you in one area so that He can use you in another one. God is working with you and on you. Believe in that and hope for it.

God often has a "better" plan than anything we could envision. You may have always wanted to be a missionary, but God had a better idea. He may have wanted to use your heart for missions in the local church to build the financial support that in-the-field missionaries need. He may use you to teach our children the need and importance of missions. That "reach-out" attitude is fading in our church culture today. We are more about self-fulfillment than we are about servanthood. Jesus came to "seek and save" the lost. We need that "seek and save" mindset in our churches. It's not enough to "sit and soak" the gospel. We need to stretch out to others who have not met Him, and would have little chance to know Him without you. If you teach children to reach out, you have taught them something much better than just putting another trophy on the wall. Jesus came to us, and we need to mimic His attitude and go into the entire world. That is a *better* idea.

The things that are the heart of Christianity are not confined to this world and this time. We call the teachings of Christ "eternal." They are supremely useful for here and now. Their real value, though, does not appear until we sense and see their importance for the next life as well. There's something bigger and better than this world. We don't actually "see" it, but we believe it. We feel it in our heart of hearts. The vision of *that* world brings hope and joy to *this* world. Jesus taught us to lay up treasures for that world. He lived here, but He lived *for* there. He taught, like no one ever had, of the world to come. Against the backdrop of eternity, the Christian ethic makes sense. Against the picture of the world beyond, the things we suffer are worth it. We see a glimpse or a glimmer of another world in the generation that follows us. It often dawns on us that much of our lives has been spent. Then, we look at those who follow. We say "their whole life is ahead of them." We long for their eternal "connection" with that which will outlive us all. We live and long for that better world.

My hope for those who follow,
Jerry Rea