

'Building Blocks of Faith Series' Sermons in the Book of Nehemiah

Message 7 - 'Faulty Finance...Dangerous Division' Nehemiah 5: 1 - 13



Nehemiah has demonstrated by the grace of God time and time again, the ability to lead the people in this work. As we considered these verses, you can see some of the qualities of spiritual leadership apparent in the life of this diligent man. There are occasions in the life of a leader when he has to be courageous and deal with difficulties head on, Nehemiah confronted a situation that threatened to hamstring the work. You can see:

1. Greedy Exploitation – Opposition to the work arose from within, as the rich Jews were greedily exploiting their poorer brethren by extracting usury from them. The rich Jews were unwilling to help, and so were forcing people to sell their homes, and even worse, their children, whilst having no ability to redeem them back. This was a very clear violation of God's Law. These rich men were greedily exploiting the poor in order to make themselves rich. Greed was one of the major sins that the prophets had been moved to denounce before the Babylonian Captivity (Isa. 56:9-12). Undoubtedly God has a special concern for the poor and will not hold them guiltless who seek to greedily exploit them.

2. Godly Example – Nehemiah becomes consumed with a righteous anger, and rightly so, as this greedy exploitation was in opposition to the desire of God, in making the people captive. So Nehemiah calls a great assembly and appeals to their love, he bases his appeal on the Word of God, he points them to the sovereign God's redemptive purpose, he challenges them about their witness to the gentiles, he convicts them and commands them to repay in full. These are things that we also need to cherish, examining ourselves and our conduct. Nehemiah was able to point to his own conduct as an example to the people, how we too, should desire to be blameless.

3. Guided Eventuality – You can see how Nehemiah made the necessary outcome very clear before the people, and made them agree together by form of a great assembly. The outcome was one that united the people so that they were able to say Amen together, but also the process and the outcome had not been devoid of the presence of God, and so they praised God together following the conclusion of the meeting. What a lesson to be learnt, that in every aspect of the church, especially in matters of business, we need to deal with every problem, practical or spiritual in the light of the will of God as set forth in His inerrant Word.

4. Redemption - as you consider the law, it states that if a man was destitute, then a loan should be given as a gift. We are destitute, our sin has made you totally depraved, and we are undone. It has placed us at enmity with a holy God and in our state as sinners, we face a future without hope. How pleased I am to say that there is one who has orchestrated redemption. Jesus Christ died for sinners so that all those who trust in His name can be redeemed, your debt cancelled, and a restoration to a right relationship with the heavenly Father. What is more is this, it is a debt that can never be repayed, and so God in His tender love and mercy through the merits of His Son and the application of His Spirit, offers this redemption as a gift of grace. So, you need to repent of your sin, to turn from it, and to come to the Saviour who is able to redeem, and draw you out of the bondage of sin, and place you firmly in the grasp of His grace. What a wonderful redemption!



Penzance Baptist Church
'Upholding the Ordinary Means of Grace'

Pastor Jonathan Stobbs