

'Building Blocks of Faith Series'

Sermons in the Book of Nehemiah

Message 23 - 'A Call to Remember' Nehemiah 13



As we come to the end of this series in Nehemiah, it is truly like parting with an old friend. Nehemiah and the testimony of all that the Lord accomplished through him has delivered many lessons for us as individuals and as a church to heed. So it is in this final message that I want to call you to remember, to remember his example, but more importantly to remember the principles he laboured by, and his purpose, that being, the glory of God and the exaltation of His redeeming work. The truth is the godly leadership is based on principles alien to this world, and its worldly wisdom of what leadership is. As Christ reveals in His words (Matthew 20:25-28), the truest kind of leadership is one that demands service, sacrifice, and selflessness. So I want to bring to you a number of elements in this man's life that set him apart. Now as a whole they are the characteristics that godly leaders should possess, yet, all of us can learn and heed some of the individual lesson that are found here.

- 1. Nehemiah Submitted himself to the Lord** – The remarkable thing about Nehemiah is this, he had no other plans for his life than what God had for him. In his life he placed himself at the disposal of the Lord, and the Lord used him in ways that he could never have imagined. This also gave a powerful underlying confidence to the work that Nehemiah did as he knew it was in the hands of a mighty God. Therefore he submitted himself unto the Lord. Have you submitted yourself unto the Lord? Is your desire to live for Him? Not only was Nehemiah used in remarkable ways, but He also experienced the calm assurance that comes with walking in the will of God.
- 2. Nehemiah Depended on Prayer and Wisdom from Heaven** – In this wonderful book, it begins and ends with prayer. In fact, as we have gone through Nehemiah we have seen a recurring theme of Nehemiah's constant life of prayer. He often seeks the Lord's face and asks for His help. Do I, do you, spend time alone with the Lord in prayer? The toughest battles are often won on our knees. As one preacher once exclaimed, *'Pray for great things, expect great things, work for great things, but above all, pray!'*
- 3. Nehemiah had Vision for the Lord's Work** – Godly leaders have vision, they must have this to focus on, to remain single-minded in pursuit of the Lord's glory and to fulfil the work He has given. Note what Nehemiah says in chapter 6:3, *'I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down.'* He did not lose sight of what the Lord would have him do. For the leader it is imperative that he realises that the work that he does is unto the Lord and as such must give himself to it.
- 4. Nehemiah was Courageous and Acted Decisively** – As Nehemiah was serving the Lord and not man, he was not afraid to act boldly. He knew that whatever man attempted to do, the purposes of God would always triumph. He experienced many attacks from within and without, he witnessed people turning away, and each time he was bold and faithful. His boldness and uncompromising position in the Lord, left his enemies, confounded, stammering, and in awe of the God who protected and upheld this faithful man. A leader cannot be timid, and when it is clear what the Lord wants you to do, you must have the courage to do it.
- 5. Nehemiah was Alert to the Enemy** – Undoubtedly every leader, and individual believers need to be aware of the dangers that the enemy brings. We must always be vigilant, and Nehemiah was alert and able to identify the agents of evil. He would have been able to say with the Apostle Paul, *'we are not ignorant of his devices'* (2 Corinthians 2:11).
- 6. Nehemiah Respected Authority** – Some religious leaders believe that their position means that they are independent and answer to no authority. Throughout, Nehemiah worked in a manner that was exemplary in the eyes of the authorities. He submitted his plans to the king and gained his approval before setting out for Jerusalem.
- 7. Nehemiah Worked Hard** – One of the secrets of Nehemiah's success was that he was not afraid of working hard. He could have chosen to stay in comfort at the palace to be a cupbearer, but he sacrificed. He went to work at Jerusalem and saw it through to the end.
- 8. Nehemiah lived as an Example** – Nehemiah always sought to honour the Lord in the way that he lived. He identified with the people and stood with them as they laboured together to build the walls.
- 9. Nehemiah Inspired and Enabled Others** – True leaders are not in the business of doing everything themselves. They inspire others to come alongside, and enable others to fulfil their potential. Nehemiah was a man who whilst maintaining control and an example also freed other men with ability to lead with him.
- 10. Nehemiah was motivated to glorify God** – Nehemiah was not interested in promoting himself, as was seen time and again. He did not look lord it over them, or build himself up, rather he served, identified with the people, and entered into their trials, difficulties and burdens. He was concerned for the glory of God, and this was his motivation in looking to restore Jerusalem. He wanted the people and the city to glorify God once again, so that all the world around could see the wonder and power of the great God. In all aspects of the work God was glorified, in the building, the defending, in the dedicating, he was glorified and magnified. The whole manner of the work brought glory to God.



Penzance Baptist Church
'Upholding the Ordinary Means of Grace'

Pastor Jonathan Stobbs