

Nehemiah: *Building the Church One Person at a time*

(Nehemiah 10:28-39)

“God’s WORD Brings Life Change”

Ch. 8 Reading of the Law, and **preaching** (explaining/translating) to the people what the Law of the Lord meant.

-God’s leaders lead by the Word *[What happens when we get serious about reading God’s Word??](#)

- 1) Word of God (read and understood)
- 2) Conviction (Holy Spirit illumination & catalyst for action),
- 3) Confession (agreement with God about your sin = you are guilty & need cleansing)
- 4) Repentance (contrition/humility & yields different action)
- 5) Gratitude (Worship)
- 6) Sanctification (being changed/conformed to Son’s likeness)
- 7) Life change (a life of usefulness to the Lord)

Ch. 9 The Israelites remembered what got them into trouble & praised the Lord for His discipline & provision

-God’s leaders lead a life of worship, a life committed to worship of Jesus, NO Matter what!!!!

****Ch. 10 – God’s leaders give the Lord their whole heart for His presence & His cause**

READ Nehemiah 10:28-39 - The people are taking serious their commitment to God & His WORD =OATH

²⁸ Now the rest of the people, the priests, the Levites, the gatekeepers, the singers, the temple servants, and all those who had separated themselves from the peoples of the lands *to* the Law of God, their wives, their sons, and their daughters, all those who had knowledge and understanding, ²⁹ are joining with their kinsmen, their nobles, and are taking on themselves [a curse](#) and [an oath](#) to walk in God’s Law, which was given through Moses, God’s servant, and to keep and to comply with all the [commandments](#) of God our Lord [YHWH], and His [ordinances](#) and [statutes](#); God’s leaders

1. Stop intermarrying with foreign peoples and bring in their foreign Gods and Idols into our homes

³⁰ and that we will not give our daughters to the peoples of the land or take their daughters for our sons.

2. Keep the Sabbath day Holy as unto the Lord

³¹ As for the peoples of the land who bring wares or any grain on the Sabbath day to sell, we will not ^[f]buy from them on the Sabbath or on *any* holy day; and we will forgo *the crops* of the seventh year and every debt.

3. Be Faithful to tithe to the Lord and take care of His household (=sacrificial obedience =WORSHIP)

³² We also imposed ^[h]on ourselves the obligation to contribute yearly a third of a shekel for the service of the house of our God: ³³ for the showbread, for the continual grain offering, for the continual burnt offering, the Sabbaths, the new moons, for the appointed times, for the holy things, and for the sin offerings to make atonement for Israel, and all the work of the house of our God.

³⁴ Likewise we cast lots for the supply of wood *among* the priests, the Levites, and the people so that they could bring it to the house of our God, according to our fathers’ households, at set times annually, to burn on the altar of the Lord our God, as it is written in the Law; ³⁵ and so that they could bring the first fruits of our ground and the first fruits of all the fruit of every tree to the house of the Lord annually, ³⁶ and bring to the house of our God the firstborn of our sons and of our cattle, and the firstborn of our herds and our flocks as it is written in the Law, for the priests who are ministering in the house of our God. ³⁷ We will also bring the first of our dough, our contributions, the fruit of every tree, the new wine, and the oil to the priests at the chambers of the house of our God, and the tithe of our ground to the Levites, for the Levites are they who receive the tithes in all the rural towns. ³⁸ And the priest, the son of Aaron, shall be with the Levites when the Levites receive tithes, and the Levites shall bring up the tenth of the tithes to the house of our God, to the chambers of the storehouse. ³⁹ For the sons of Israel and the sons of Levi shall bring the contribution of the grain, the new wine, and the oil to the chambers; the utensils of the sanctuary, the priests who are ministering, the gatekeepers, and the singers are there. **So we will not neglect (abandon) the house of our God.** = Both a duty and delight *i.e. providing 4 children*

So what do the rejection of Idols, the keeping of Sabbath, & the sacrificial giving of Tithes **all have in common?**
=These are God’s ways to *lovingly* remind us daily & weekly to put HIM **first** above all else in our lives.

-It is a mercy to us. – B/C we are easily distracted. We easily forget. We are too easily preoccupied by temporal matters vs. eternal ones!

The Lord God is after our **heart**. He wants **all** of us. (Not just a part of us, not just on Sundays, not just part-time) =He wants ALL of our HEART. (Does He have yours?)

- After the cross, Jesus paid with His very life that He gets to have Lordship over your life IF you are truly His!
1 Cor. 6:19-20 "Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God, and *that you are not your own*?²⁰ For you have been bought for a price: therefore glorify God in your body." – God not only wants, but deserves ALL of your heart (love God w/ heart, soul, mind, & body) Mt. 22:37

***Idols** are anything that we love more than God. Idols take up space in our heart and rob God of the glory due Him.

Anything that we have a relationship with greater than God is an idol to us. Money, sex, power, comfort, pleasure, food, work, or leisure, education, anything can be idols in our lives as it takes the place of God=**worship**☹

- Even our personal **Relationships can be idols**. And the unequal yoking of our lives with others introduces idols into our lives and great distractions from God as the first priority of your life. = **Toxic relationships**

VS. 30: and that we will not give our daughters to the peoples of the land or take their daughters for our sons.

=The unhealthy & unfaithful relationships with Unbelievers tainted God's people; invited dysfunction, unholy unions, and idol worships into the relationship = turned the loyalty & hearts of God's people against God. =IDOLS

-2Corinthians 6:14-16 "Do not be unequally yoked/mismatched with unbelievers; for what do righteousness and lawlessness share together, or what does light have in common with darkness?¹⁵ Or what harmony does Christ have with Satan, or what does a believer share with an unbeliever?¹⁶ Or what agreement does the temple of God have with idols? For we are the temple of the living God;" – In who we date, engage, & marry = only believers!

What is the lesson for us today?

1. We are called to honor God with our relationships. = To put our rel. with God above every other rel.

-God wants to be the **dominate** relationship with us. **More than our spouse, kids, boyfriends**, etc. God wants to have **FIRST** place in our heart. When we are in right relationship with Him, then every other relationship will take on its rightful place & in healthy measure. Otherwise, every relationship we have outside of Christ is doomed to either fail or become an idol in our lives. – **What relationships in your life push you to Christ? Pull you from Him?**

2. We are called to make space (daily & weekly) to honor God with our time. We honor Him daily in private & corporately every week as we gather together in worship, praise, and the service to His Church. (Heb. 10:25)

Vs. 31: As for the peoples of the land who bring wares or any grain on the Sabbath day to sell, we will not buy from them on the Sabbath or on *any* holy day; and we will forgo *the crops* of the seventh year and every debt.

=The **Sabbath** – reminds us that we are to give God **TIME**. We are to make time and space to **enjoy** His presence with unhurried worship and rest. To learn to REST in Him alone. REST means ceasing from our normal jobs/work or any distraction that takes away dedicated time to enjoy & focus on God first.

A. The Sabbath was created for man (Mk. 2:27).It is God's Mercy to force us to slow down, rest, be thankful for His provision, enjoy the beauty of His creation, & prioritize our hearts toward Him.

B. The Sabbath should include our entire family. Rest together. Worship together. Be Thankful together.

C. Today, sports, games, are a huge and intentional intrusion on our rest unhurried worship of GOD.

When I eat steak, my dogs always beg. I give them the scraps. = Most of us give God the scraps of our leftover & unwanted time. We are lousy at resting. We are unlearned in unhurriedness. We have robbed ourselves of dedicated time to enjoy God undistracted.

D. Jesus said He is the Lord of the Sabbath (Mk. 2:28) = Jesus Himself IS our REST. He is our spiritual rest. Why? He accomplished all the work of the Law & perfectly fulfilled it (Cf. Heb. 4; Mt. 5:17; Rom. 10:4); He secured our salvation on the cross & perfectly accomplished the atonement for us; He does the work of intercession for us even as we live day to day. WE have our rest in Jesus. We worship Jesus on the sabbath because He is our very sabbath rest.

E. The sabbath does not have to be on Saturday (the Jewish Sabbath). It does not have to be on Sunday either.

-Col. 2:16 "Therefore, no one is to act as your judge in regard to food and drink, or in respect to a festival or a new moon, or a Sabbath day." – The point is that we need to take a sabbath rest each week. **Every** week. That sabbath rest needs to be filled with worship of Jesus, true rest from work, family communion, & corporate worship. = We take the pattern of worship on the 1st day of the week Sunday – so join us!

Not only are we called to honor God with our Relationships, and with our time, but . . .

3. We are called to give back to God our very best of all that we have, of all that He has given to us

- this includes our wealth, our money, our resources, our belongings, our homes, our future, & our lives!!

The Lord wants to make sure that nothing we own on this earth becomes an Idol to us; He wants us to live open-handed with all that we have. He reminds us that we are simply stewards of all that we have – since He gave it to us in the first place. **To tithe is to simply give back to God what is already His.** How can we pride ourselves in giving back what we borrowed from someone else? Borrowing my truck...

- **IF God has our heart, then all the rest will follow.** We won't begrudge God anything in our lives. = JOY
- It's ALL already His anyway. We are only stewards of what is HIS. We give back to Him w/ grateful hearts.
- How does the Lord practically want us to give back to HIM? By supporting His local Church:

Vs. 39: So we will not neglect (abandon) the house of our God.

- A. If you have not been a tither or giver to the Lord, = **this is disobedience to God.** This means that money/security is an idol in your life! (Mal. 3:8-10 "But you ask, 'How are we robbing you?' "In tithes and offerings. ⁹ You are under a curse your whole nation because you are robbing me. ¹⁰ Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. **Test me in this,**" says the Lord Almighty, "and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that there will not be room enough to store it." Cf. Lk 6:38
- The Lord loves you enough to ask you to worship Him by living open-handed with all that you have. He wants all of your heart (not just the easy parts). = **Show me your wallet & I will show you what you think about God.**
- B. God is looking for worship in your giving, NOT duty but delight (2 Cor. 9:7 "God loves a cheerful giver")
- C. God has called us to **sacrifice** for what brings Him glory; If it is not a sacrifice, if it does not cost you or hurt your bottom line = then it is not what God wants. (2 Sam. 24:24 King David "I will not offer to the Lord my God what does not cost me something")
- = It is NOT self-serving of me to preach on tithing; I am showing you a mercy, and it is the most loving thing I could do for you today to preach against Idols and encourage you to give your whole heart to the Lord.
- If I don't preach on tithing, on sacrificial giving – then I am robbing you of your chance to be fully obedient to the Lord.

APPLICATION:

- Does God have your whole heart? Are you holding a portion back from HIM?
- What are the Idols of your heart that are robbing God is due glory? What do you love more than God?
- What is God asking you to rid from your life which is distracting your heart, your worship from God?
- What relationships in your life are hindering you from your walk with God?
- How is your investment in your personal relationships helping others to know & love God more?
- What adjustments do you need to make in your life to honor the Lord on the Sabbath?
- What do you need to spend less on in order to give sacrificially to the Lord and His Church?

Community Group Discussion Questions:

1. What does it mean practically to worship the Lord (be grateful) no matter what your circumstances?
2. At the beginning of the sermon, the six spiritual results of reading God's Word are explained: What struck you as helpful in that list? Do you think that happens in your life easily or does it take work?
3. Which of those areas of your life are you currently experiencing as you read God's Word?
4. What Idols do you think are most prevalent in our culture today? In the Church? Which Idol is the Lord convicting you of in your life – that which takes you away from Him?
5. Which subtle Idols exist that most of us ignore? Do you agree with the statement that an "Idol is anything that you love more than God?" Why or why not?
6. Where do you think you are getting the Sabbath wrong? In what ways do you think our church culture may be missing the point of the Sabbath as God created for mankind?
7. No one likes to talk about tithing: Do you think there is a practical difference today between the idea of "tithing" vs. offering? Did the Holy Spirit convict you or reveal anything new about tithing in this message?