



The Oaks
Baptist Church
Grand Prairie, Texas

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Restoration
A Study in Nehemiah

Date	Lesson	Text
03/03	Introduction to Nehemiah	
03/10	Cried About a Wall	1:1-11
03/17	Serving God	2:1-20
03/24	We Won!	3:1-32
03/31	The Lord Lives	Luke 24:13-35
04/07	Bro Cisneros Special Lesson	
04/14	Opposition	4:1-23
04/21	Conflicts Within	5:1-19
04/28	Resisting Satan	6:1-19
05/05	Counting for God	7:1-73
05/12	Spiritual Renewal	8:1-18
05/19	Repentance	9:1-38
05/26	Truth into Practice	10:1-39
06/02	Ministry	11 & 12
06/09	Permissiveness	13:1-31
06/16	Review and Summary	

Food for Thought

Open Doors

Jesus said to one and all: "Take your cross and follow Me."
When you sense the Spirit's call, Seize the opportunity! God writes opportunity on one side of the door and responsibility on the other.

For a wide door for effective service has opened to me

(1 Cor 16:9 NASB)

"Our Daily Bread", Apr 11, 2012)

You're In The Ministry Now
Nehemiah 11:1-12:47

How does a person go into the ministry?" The correct answer is He or she trusts in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. At the moment a person trusts Christ as Savior, the Holy Spirit baptizes him (or her) into the body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:13). As members of His body, each one has a spiritual gift which he is to exercise for the building up of the body. All of God's people should be ministry oriented. These people had willing hearts to do whatever God wanted them to do, and each functioned in their own unique capacity.

As we examine the section that lists the names of the Jewish citizens, four factors emerge that help us define what ministry involves. **Ministry involves a willingness to live where God wants you to live.** Nehemiah knew that if the city was to be strong and prosperous and if the worship in the temple was to thrive, the city had to be well populated with citizens who could defend it in case of attack. As 11:1 notes, the leaders lived in Jerusalem, but most of the people did not. So they cast lots to pick one out of ten who would move to Jerusalem. It seems that some who were not chosen volunteered to move, either in place of or in addition to those who drew the lot (11:2). The ones who stayed in the villages blessed those who were willing to move to Jerusalem. **Ministry involves serving in the sphere in which God calls you to serve.** Chapter 11 lists the heads of families in Jerusalem. Each served in his respective sphere for the effective operation of the city and the nation. Those who lived outside of the city had to farm the land to provide food for those in the city. Each had a different role, but each role was vital to the entire cause. In the body of Christ, God has gifted us in different ways, but every part is vital for the overall functioning and health of the body (1 Cor. 12:12-30). **Ministry involves a willingness to serve without acclaim.** Zabdiel is named (11:14), although he means nothing to us, but 128 of his kinsmen go unnamed, except to say that they were valiant warriors. But 128 valiant warriors were no small part of a secure, safe city! The church needs many people like that in order to function well. **Ministry involves people first and programs second.** These long lists underscore the importance of people to God. Programs should always be the vehicle through which we minister to people. Apart from programs, if you have the proper ministry mindset, you will seek to relate to people. Ministry takes place through relationships.

In the section describing the dedication of the wall (12:27-43) and the organization of temple support (12:44-47), there are four aspects of a heart that is right before God. **A servant or minister needs a pure heart** (12:30). Before they dedicated the wall, the priests and Levites purified themselves, the people, the gates, and the wall. Purity on the heart level is an essential requirement for Christian service. **A servant needs a worshipful heart** (12:27, 31-43). The dedication of the wall was a time, not to praise Nehemiah, but to praise the Lord. God doesn't want your work if He doesn't have your worship. To worship God is to rejoice in and extol His great attributes and actions. It is to reverence God above all else. True worship is not just outward, but inward. **A servant needs a joyful heart** (12:43). As you read the account of this dedication service, you get the distinct impression that these people were enjoying themselves! We need to so caught up with what God has done that His great joy radiates from our place of worship. **A servant needs a giving heart** (12:44-47). These people gave joyfully so that God's work could go forward. They saw the importance of worship at the temple and they were willing to give the necessary offerings to support the many priests, Levites, gatekeepers, and singers who served there. If God is going to use you to minister to others, you need to have a generous heart.

(Adapted from Sermon series on Nehemiah by Steven J. Cole)

NOTES AND CROSS-REFERENCES

WHAT DOES MINISTRY INVOLVE?

Ministry involves a willingness to live where God wants you to live

(**Gen 12:1-4**) The Lord had said to Abram, "Leave your country, your people and your father's household and go to the land I will show you. 2 "I will make you into a great nation and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. 3 I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you." 4 So Abram left, as the Lord had told him; and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he set out from Haran.

Ministry involves serving in the sphere in which God calls you to serve

(**Acts 16:6-10**) Paul and his companions traveled throughout the region of Phrygia and Galatia, having been kept by the Holy Spirit from preaching the word in the province of Asia. 7 When they came to the border of Mysia, they tried to enter Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus would not allow them to. 8 So they passed by Mysia and went down to Troas. 9 During the night Paul had a vision of a man of Macedonia standing and begging him, "Come over to Macedonia and help us." 10 After Paul had seen the vision, we got ready at once to leave for Macedonia, concluding that God had called us to preach the gospel to them.

Ministry involves a willingness to serve without acclaim

(**1 Thess 2:3-12**) 3 For the appeal we make does not spring from error or impure motives, nor are we trying to trick you. 4 On the contrary, we speak as men approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel. We are not trying to please men but God, who tests our hearts. 5 You know we never used flattery, nor did we put on a mask to cover up greed — God is our witness. 6 We were not looking for praise from men, not from you or anyone else. As apostles of Christ we could have been a burden to you, 7 but we were gentle among you, like a mother caring for her little children. 8 We loved you so much that we were delighted to share with you not only the gospel of God but our lives as well, because you had become so dear to us. 9 Surely you remember, brothers, our toil and hardship; we worked night and day in order not to be a burden to anyone while we preached the gospel of God to you. 10 You are witnesses, and so is God, of how holy, righteous and blameless we were among you who believed. 11 For you know that we dealt with each of you as a father deals with his own children, 12 encouraging, comforting and urging you to live lives worthy of God, who calls you into his kingdom and glory.

Ministry involves people first and programs second

(**Mark 8:1-4**) During those days another large crowd gathered. Since they had nothing to eat, Jesus called his disciples to him and said, 2 "I have compassion for these people; they have already been with me three days and have nothing to eat. 3 If I send them home hungry, they will collapse on the way, because some of them have come a long distance." 4 His disciples answered, "But where in this remote place can anyone get enough bread to feed them?"

WHAT ARE SOME REQUIREMENTS FOR MINISTRY?

A servant or minister needs a pure heart (12:30)

(**1 Tim 3:2-7**) 2 Now the overseer must be above reproach, the husband of but one wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, 3 not given to drunkenness, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. 4 He must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him with proper respect. 5 (If anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God's church?) 6 He must not be a recent convert, or he may become conceited and fall under the same judgment as the devil. 7 He must also have a good reputation with outsiders, so that he will not fall into disgrace and into the devil's trap.

A servant needs a worshipful heart (12:27, 31-43)

(**2 Sam 6:12-15**) 12 Now King David was told, "The Lord has blessed the household of Obed-Edom and everything he has, because of the ark of God." So David went down and brought up the ark of God from the house of Obed-Edom to the City of David with rejoicing. 13 When those who were carrying the ark of the Lord had taken six steps, he sacrificed a bull and a fattened calf. 14 David, wearing a linen ephod, danced before the Lord with all his might, 15 while he and the entire house of Israel brought up the ark of the Lord with shouts and the sound of trumpets.

A servant needs a joyful heart (12:43)

(**Rom 12:10-15**) 10 Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honor one another above yourselves. 11 Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord. 12 Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. 13 Share with God's people who are in need. Practice hospitality. 14 Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. 15 Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn.

A servant needs a giving heart (12:44-47)

(**2 Cor 9:6-12**) 6 Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. 7 Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. 8 And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work. 9 As it is written: "He has scattered abroad his gifts to the poor; his righteousness endures forever." 10 Now he who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will also supply and increase your store of seed and will enlarge the harvest of your righteousness. 11 You will be made rich in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God. 12 This service that you perform is not only supplying the needs of God's people but is also overflowing in many expressions of thanks to God.