

# Nehemiah

Message Notes  
2014

# 1. Introduction to Nehemiah:

## *Living Wise With Faith & Determination*

- Nehemiah is a book about getting down to the business of living by faith

- It is about vision, wisdom and determination, which is the bedrock for those who sense the call of God upon them.

- To hear and understand the God of Scriptures we need to first prepare our minds and hearts to do so.

Remember: - The lives of O.T. Saints serve to illustrate eternal truths to us and to give us much needed encouragement.

*"For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that through endurance and through the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope." (Romans 15:4, ESV)*

### **I. Historical Setting (A brief chronology of events)**

- Conceived with Abraham

- An embryo during the time of the patriarchs

- As a fetus during their 400 years in Egypt

- As a newborn at the giving of the law at Sinai

- As a growing young man in the wilderness for 40 years

- As an adult living in the land of Israel

- Soon they fall away from the simplicity of following God and desire a king.

- King David becomes the high point of their nation

- The nation is divided into two with Solomon's foolish son, Rehoboam.

- The northern kingdom falls to the Assyrians in 722 B.C.

- Judea or the southern kingdom is deported to Babylon in 586 B.C.

- The captivity will last 70 years as prophesied by Daniel

- During the reign of Cyrus of Persia the Jews are permitted to begin re-entering the land with

Zerubbabel who finished the temple in 516 B.C. after the 70 years as prophesied.

- Ezra leads a group back in 458 B.C.

The events in Nehemiah takes place fourteen years after Ezra had brought the second wave of returning refugees .

- The story of Israel is one of failure more than victory and consequently becomes a revelation of the faithfulness and mercy of God to us.

- Nehemiah reminds us that anything begun with righteous intentions will be met with hostile opposition.

About Nehemiah

- He was king's cup bearer

- He was a man of integrity

- He had a heart toward the needs of the people

## **II. Nehemiah's purposes**

1. - The first purpose was to re-build the broken walls of the city and to restore its gates....  
Chps 1-6
2. The second purpose was the restoration of the people. Chps 7-13  
- When God is at work He does so in both our internal worlds and our external worlds.

## **III. Themes**

1. His dedication to sound doctrine
2. His dedication to God's word
3. His dedication to prayer
4. His dedication to leadership

## **Conclusion:**

- We need a model that leads us again to the foundations of truth so that we might be reminded of the anchor we have in the one true God.
- We need a model of wisdom rather than what merely tests the winds etc.
- We need a model of prayer that pauses in the midst of business and duty that truly relies upon God.
- We need a model of leadership that is both courageous and visionary.

Question: What are the "walls" that are broken among God's people today?

- Principles discarded, forgotten or unlearned have fostered, spiritual lethargy, laziness, failure, the loss of purpose, or the bondage of sinful habits.....

## **Applications:**

- You need to present a sober mind and heart toward the things of God. Chp 1:4-6
- You need to pray knowing that prayer is your vital link for guidance, protection and wisdom. Chp 1:4-11
- You need to stick with God's project of bringing change to your lives until God say's your finished.

## 2. The Heart of a Leader—Nehemiah 1:1-11

### 1. Looking upwards in praise – vs 5

- Any real prayer begins with the overarching awareness of the presence of a sovereign God!

*“I prayed to the Lord my God and made confession, saying, “O Lord, the great and awesome God, who keeps covenant and steadfast love with those who love him and keep his commandments,” Daniel 9:4*

### II. Looking inward in confession

- It is the awesomeness of God that goes directly to the joints and marrow of the soul and exposes sin...

- Nehemiah understands that sin is not merely failing God’s standard it is the treason of breaking fellowship with God!

- To merely mouth the words of confession is to mock God.

### III. Looking back in reflection

- Un-confessed sin over time obscures your spiritual sensitivity. It causes the things of God to lose their impact.

- Nehemiah expresses two facts recalling that God has not only spoken but acted decisively.

#### 1. God is faithful to His Word

#### 2. God has redeemed them as He had promised!

*“I am the Lord who practices steadfast love, justice, and righteousness in the earth.” Jer 9:24*

### IV. Looking forward in petition

#### 1. He receives a burden....

#### 2. He turns upward looking at who God truly is.

3. He is moved to look inward toward his and his countryman’s rebellion the very weight of His glory crushes him into humble repentance!

4. Because of the clarity that comes from his soul being put right he then considers the great Words of God and His faithfulness in fulfilling them...

#### 5. The result is that now he is supercharged with faith!

Conclusion:

- God can restore that vision that He has put within you but first He must restore the walls of your own life....

- If God has burdened you with an awareness of sin and failure then agree with Him about what He has revealed to you.

- Remember His faithfulness to you in the past.

- Ask with confidence to renew your desires to serve Him!

- *“The steps of a man are established by the Lord, when he delights in his way; though he fall, he shall not be cast headlong, for the Lord upholds his hand.” Psalm 37:24*



### **3. Putting Feet to our Ambition—Nehemiah 2:1-10**

We often find ourselves compelled to make difficult decisions where our wisdom simply falls short and the consequences of those decisions have long reaching effects.

The Scriptures give us all that we need to put feet to our ambitions.

*“The king’s heart is a stream of water in the hand of the Lord; he turns it wherever he will.”* Proverbs 21:1

#### **I. Nehemiah Waits Strategically**

Circumstances may seem compelling enough to act but to act in such a way that violates moral precepts or disregards Scriptural principles will never succeed.

*“There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way to death.”* Proverbs 14:12

Most of your decisions in life must operate on the basis of wisdom or living skill.

To ask God for guidance is to ask Him for living skills and for Him to work behind the scenes to make it happen!

Living skills are acquired through the understanding of His principles and practice

You are often not given great reserves of strength and resources until the time you need it.

#### **II. Nehemiah Prays Instinctively**

- He models the absolute necessity of prayer
- He models the immediacy prayer
- He models the “naturalness” of prayer
- He models the intimacy of prayer
- God is never more close to you than He is right now

#### **III. Nehemiah Acts Decisively**

Nehemiah demonstrates the need to have a plan to support our vision.

People with ambition, proven initiative and the skills to make it happen, make favorably good impressions.

*“Do you see a man skillful in his work? He will stand before kings; he will not stand before obscure men.”*  
Proverbs 22:29

In matters of guidance and wisdom we need to recognize that people approach things in different ways.

#### **IV. Nehemiah Faces Opposition Confidently**

Your enemy strategically places discouragements and oppositions alongside the roads of accomplishment.

*“And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.”* James 1:4

*“What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us?”* Romans 8:31

**In Conclusion Consider These Truths**

1. When it comes to moving mountains in your life it is still God who must change the circumstances.
2. Waiting on God, preparing, planning and praying go hand in hand.
3. Having faith does not mean that we rush into things. Chaos is never God’s desire.
4. Learn to see that opposition reinforces God’s will and His promises to you.

*“The heart of man plans his way, but the Lord establishes his steps.”* Proverbs 16:9

## 4. Nehemiah's Wise Strategy—Nehemiah 2:11-20

*“for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.”* Philippians 2:13

*“But thanks be to God, who in Christ always leads us in triumphal procession, and through us spreads the fragrance of the knowledge of him everywhere.”* 2 Cor 2:14

1 - “If you set out to change something in your life (or community etc.) for the better, and:

2 - you have the full authority of the throne of God behind you then:

3 - You may proceed with full confidence that the unseen, but very real, power of God is backing you up! *“If God is for us WHO can be against us?”* Rom 8:31

### I. Honest Assessment

- It is foolish to tackle projects when your tired and worn out
- Remember that God works within the limitations of the human frame...
- It is important to exercise discretion when handling information.
- God's work must be done with a true accounting of what needs to be done.

### II. Inspiring Presentation

- An honest and clear presentation of a challenge along with confident faith will inspire others.
- Nothing so discourages cooperation or shuts people down like mixed motives...
- It's important to have an honest appraisal of your vision along with a God sized reason for its implementation.

### III. Unflinching Focus

- When opposition threatens to thwart your vision or the accomplishment of a task affirm God's will be done.
- Confident people don't need to argue or debate!

### Conclusion:

- 1 - God expects and has given us the ability to be realistic and honest before others in assessing our challenges.
- 2 - We should be transparent with our motives and humble in our posture before others we desire to inspire.
- 3 - When challenged by inevitable opposition, we will find stability in affirming our confidence in what God has said.

### Remember:

- What we glean is that you can be honest with yourselves before God.

- Dealing honestly with yourself leaves you able to respond positively to God and to others.
- Honesty and transparency before God best conveys the hope of His calling, inspires others and enables you to accomplish your goals.

**Nehemiah's testimony captures two important elements.**

- 1 - Transcendence guards us against irreverence by maintaining distance.
- 2- Imminence guards us against despair through God's activity of grace and mercy toward us.

If God's glory captures your attention then you can trust that God's faithfulness will give you courage.

## **5. Dealing with Discouragements** Nehemiah 4:1-23

### **I. Discouragements are Inevitable**

A church living the kingdom out in the community finds with its ever increasing reach a backlash of opposition.

### **II. Prayer is Critical**

- Nehemiah demonstrates that honest prayer is a first offensive in confronting discouragement.

### **III. Discouragement is Understandable**

Reasons for discouragement:

1. Loss of strength - vs 10
2. Loss of vision
3. Loss of security – vs 11,12

### **IV. Positive Response is Essential**

1. He unified the people toward a common goal - Vs 13
2. He directed their attention to the Lord – vs 14
3. He worked out a wise balance – vs 14b-18
4. He provided a rally point - vs 19,20

### **V. Risk is Unavoidable**

- It's the attitude that refuses any risk that risks the loss of its hope.

#### **Conclusion:**

1. Be focused you on the goal.
2. Direct your attention to the Word of God.
3. Apply wisdom in your response to the discouragements or setbacks.
4. Reckon that any real solution to discouragement demands that you move forwards while assuming the risks.



## 6. Love, Loans and Money Woes—Nehemiah 5

*“For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evils. It is through this craving that some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pangs.”* Timothy 6:10 ESV

### I. The Complaint

- The people who although were serving a righteous cause were running out of money to buy necessities!

- God promises to meet your needs but there may be issues that frustrate resources from reaching their target.

- There are times we need to step back and re-access, reorganize, adjust our goals, possibly to wait, and times that God reveals wrong doing.

### II. Nehemiah’s Response

- Righteous anger is that which displays outrage over violations of God’s holy standards.

- Sin ought to make us angry make us grieve and sin ought to make us take action.

- When anger rides alone it leads foolishness just behind it.

- Confrontation is necessary to hold those responsible for wrongdoing as accountable.

### III. Nehemiah’s Solution

- Every solution to wrongdoing must begin with its recognition as sin before a holy God.

- When you fear God you fear nothing else.

*“do not fear them that can kill the body but Him who can cast both soul and body in hell”*

- The practical side to the solution of wrongdoing is loving confrontation.

### IV. The People Responded

- When sin is acknowledged before God and wrongdoing is confronted God’s blessings can continue.

### V. Nehemiah’s Testimony

- He feared God

- He had compassion on others

### Conclusion

- Why doesn’t God always come to the aid of those who are faithful to Him?

- Sometimes we don’t know.

- It may be dependent upon taking the initiative in dealing wisely with wrongdoing.

- It may be dependent upon the compassion of God’s people.

- The statement, “He has provided all things for life and godliness” is a statement made to the church.

- God is well pleased when believers use their money wisely and compassionately.

- The sinful hoarding of resources and selfish consumption of them brings disgrace to a church and removes God’s blessings.

- It is impossible to cultivate a relationship with God and ignore the physical needs of the brethren!
  - **Final Word:** There are two things that every man women and child need to take with them concerning money.
  - One – It does not satisfy.
  - Two – It does not last.
- “Keep your life free from love of money, and be content with what you have, for he has said, “I will never leave you nor forsake you.” So we can confidently say, “The Lord is my helper; I will not fear; what can man do to me?””* Hebrews 13:5–6, ESV

## 7. Defeating Intimidation

*“Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted,”* 2 Timothy 3:12

*“Remember the word that I said to you: ‘A servant is not greater than his master.’ If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you. If they kept my word, they will also keep yours.”* John 15:20

- When you live righteously in an evil world you are at odds with all else.

### I. Subtle Deceptions

- The ‘roaring lion’ – 1 Peter 5:8

- The ‘angel of light’ – 2 Cor 11:14b

#### 1. Deception – vs 1,2

- When you are fully engaged in what is truly meaningful you are less likely to get side-tracked.

- It’s when you are focused and engaged doing the will of God that wisdom and discernment are at its peak performance.

#### 2. Maligning – vs 5-7

- Those who trust God in the midst of withering accusations can leave Him alone to do the work of defending you.

#### 3. Conspiracy – vs 10

*“The wicked flee when no one pursues, but the righteous are bold as a lion.”* Proverbs 28:1

- When oppression finds itself suggesting to you that you do what is not ethically right to protect yourself then you can be sure it isn’t of God.

#### 4. Intimidation from family – vs 14

- Intimidation is the result of failing to learn the fear of God and out of the fear of man rally around friendships and family.

## II. Nehemiah’s response to the attack

### 1. Turns to the resource of prayer

### 2. Leaves daunting frustration and disappointments in God’s hands.

### 3. Trusts God for both strength and wisdom

## III. The Result of Nehemiah’s trust

*“So the wall was finished on the twenty-fifth day of the month Elul, in fifty-two days.”* Nehemiah 6:15

- When you faithfully carry out God’s work in God’s way, your integrity will become evident to others.

*“Wait for the LORD and keep his way, and he will exalt you to inherit the land; you will look on when the wicked are cut off.”* Psalm 37:34

## Conclusion:

- It is impossible to do the will of God without encountering hostility from the outside and the inside of your world.

- God gives wisdom and strength when you ask Him and you will be victorious if you remain faithful!

- We learn from this that it is God who fights your battles.
- To remain faithful you must be involved with God's work.

## 8. In Honor of All

- Genealogies are important because they frame these events as having actually occurred with real people.
- In this genealogy we have names that mean nothing to us except that they names not forgotten by our God.
- Psalm 112 is an affirmation that God does not forget you nor will He forget what you have done.
- Every child of God has a significant role in the ministry of a local church.
- It is Christ who provides and arranges the makeup of the gifts and abilities in every church.
- Therefore it is absurd to seek spiritual life without the means of grace given through the local body of Christ.
- Because it is God's grace that provides for all that is done for Him, joy becomes the only true motivation for serving others..

### Conclusion:

- Your significance to the body of Christ is brought by your unique talents God has given you and are mandatory for the proper operation of this assembly.
- What you do by faith is NEVER forgotten by God and when done through His strength for His glory will remain forever.
- Your final rewards will never be determined by their popularity or magnitude but by your faithfulness to what God has given you to do.
- God will remember you and will weave your works into a great and holy tapestry of both your big achievements and the unseen little things that go on unnoticed.

*“Then those who feared the LORD spoke with one another. The LORD paid attention and heard them, and a book of remembrance was written before him of those who feared the LORD and esteemed his name.”*  
Malachi 3:16, ESV



## 9. Reformation Begins

- “Unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labor in vain. Unless the Lord watches over the city, the watchman stays awake in vain.” Psalm 127:1

- “Where there is no “prophetic vision” the people cast off restraint, but blessed is he who keeps the law.” Prov 29:18

- Hearing God’s Word brings conviction, responding to that Word comes humility and with humility comes joy!

### I. The People desired the Word

- No one desires the Word of God unless God Himself prepares the heart to receive it.

### II. The People applied the Word

- The proper response to the conviction from Scripture is repentance and joy.

### III. God’s People shared the Word

- When God does a work in a heart there is an excitement concerning doing the will of God.

- God provides pleasant experiences along with enjoyments but they can only point to what you really are made to long for, God Himself!

- The feast of booths reinforced three aspects of their salvation.

- 1. It visually reminded them of their past

- 2. It was a present witness to others

- 3. It reminded them of the certainty or their hope of the future.

- When the church confesses its true identity it is reminded of its estrangement from this world and it demonstrates a clear and steadfast hope.

Conclusion: In this feast we find three great aspects of our life with Christ.

1 – You find your worship centered on His Word of God.

2 – Your Commitment to His Word results in joy.

3 – You develop an eagerness to share His Word to others.

- *“Your words were found, and I ate them, and your words became to me a joy and the delight of my heart, for I am called by your name, O Lord, God of hosts.”* Jeremiah 15:16

“When God revives our hearts we discover that the joy of the Lord is our strength”



## 10. A Prayer of Remembrance

- This prayer of confession remembers God's kindness and mercy toward His people in spite of their rebellious ways.

- *"Or do you presume on the riches of his kindness and forbearance and patience, not knowing that God's kindness is meant to lead you to repentance?"* Romans 2:4

A Word about Confession:

- Confession is to agree with what God say's concerning your sin.

- Because of the pervasiveness of sin in our world and in our own lives the confession of sin ought to be a significant regular exercise.

I. Looking Upwards

- It is our acknowledgment of God that precedes all other conditions, concerns or issues.

- It is our attitude of continual praise that keeps everything in it's place.

*"Our Father in heaven, hallowed is Thy name"* Mt 6:9

II. Looking Behind

- Not one of you would be here if it were not for the saving grace of God drawing you into salvation.

*"... I have loved you with an everlasting love; therefore I have continued my faithfulness to you."* Jeremiah 31:3

-Sin leads you back to the misery you were first rescued from.

*"...He is gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love..."* Joel 2:13

- Remember that it is the "kindness of God that leads you to repentance!"

- Personal misery is often the result of your going your own way an doing your own thing.

- *"... the way of the treacherous is their ruin."* Proverbs 13:15

III. Looking at Themselves:

- It's out of this humility that you see clearly to ask for mercy...

- Grace tells you that what God wants you to do is ask Him to bless, ask Him to give mercy ONLY and for no other reason than you have asked him.

IV. Looking at the Future:

- The humility that results in genuine confession expecting nothing but asks for mercy and blessing is the humility that results in commitment.

Lets summarize the content of this prayer:

[ Confession is regularly coming to God's terms with our sin - Jn 1:9]

- 1- Looking up we first begin with who and what God is.
- 2 - Looking back we are made aware of God's goodness and faithfulness in our lives.
- 3 - Looking inward through humility we recognize that it is only God's grace and mercy that we are in need of.
- 4 - Looking forward we are left with the only response that grace affords, commitment.

Conclusion:

- 1 – The passage reminds us of our sheer irreverence and presumption toward God's kindness in our lives.
- 2 – The passage reminds us that remembering God's faithfulness to us is instrumental in removing a sense of hopelessness.
- 3 – This prayer reminds us that God will always help us with future challenges.

## 11. Committed to Change

*“Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from your presence, and take not your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and uphold me with a willing spirit. Then I will teach transgressors your ways, and sinners will return to you.”* Psalm 51:10–13, ESV

- The humility that confesses is the humility that fastens itself to a common commitment to authority and the redeemed community.

- A Covenant is simply a binding agreement between two parties.

- *“If you make a vow to the Lord your God, you shall not delay fulfilling it, for the Lord your God will surely require it of you, and you will be guilty of sin.”* Deut 23:21

- In regards to commitment, You always set out to do what you really believe in.

### I. Their Personal Lives – 10:28,29

- Genuine confession and repentance never carries with it halfhearted commitment...

- True repentance releases you from the small prison of yourself to be subject to the King of kings and His laws so as to be truly free.

- *“...In returning and rest you shall be saved; in quietness and in trust shall be your strength.”* Isaiah 30:15

### II. Family Life

- God clearly shows us that marriage and family are to be initiated, protected and nurtured in the Lord.

### III. Their Society

- You are to recognize and understand that while we have opportunities to work we are to trust God Who provides.

*“It is in vain that you rise up early and go late to rest, eating the bread of anxious toil; for he gives to his beloved sleep.”* Psalm 127:2

### IV. Their Religious Life

#### A. Sacrificial Offerings

- The focus on the atonement of Christ is what brings us into alignment with the true purposes of God.

#### B. First fruits

- The first fruits remind us that God has the rights over your lives.

- *“You are not your own you were bought with a price therefore glorify God with your bodies”* I Cor 6:19,20

#### C. Tithes

- In the N.T. there is no such precise law concerning what the O.T. called tithing, but rather an obligation of the believer toward his or her family, the church.

- Offerings are to be given on the basis of personal determination...

*“Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. 2 Corinthians 9:7*

- When we make giving a first priority with a grateful heart it establishes all other priorities.

#### D. Worship

- God commands us to be faithful to corporate worship for it is where much of God’s grace is dispensed.

*“And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.” Hebrews 10:24–25*

Conclusion:

1. Commitment is your normal response to God’s grace.
2. Marriage should only be with one who is a committed believer.
3. Maintain a day of rest for both mind and body.
4. Always keep in mind and heart the great truths of your redemption.
5. Remember daily that you are not your own and that you are to put God first in everything.
6. Give generously from your heart which makes real what God has graciously given to you.
7. Commit yourselves to regular fellowship where you place ourselves amidst the grace of God.

- *“I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.” Phil 4:13*

## 12. Worship at the Wall!

- *"For the joy of the Lord is your strength" Neh 8:10*

- There are when times joy is a constant, abiding source of strength that holds you up during the trials of life.

- There are always dark times for the believer but in God's economy they are followed by the light.

- *"Weeping may last for the night, but a shout of joy comes in the morning." Ps 30:5*

### I. Celebration at the Wall

#### A - The Elements vs 27-30

Joy – "Gladness of heart"

– Joy is at the root of a worshipful celebration.

- Joy appreciates the past, sustains the present and eagerly anticipates the future not because the circumstances are pleasing, but because the heart is right with God.

### 2. Purity

- God cannot be served nor enjoyed with dirty hearts.

- *"Who shall ascend the hill of the LORD? And who shall stand in his holy place? He who has clean hands and a pure heart, who does not lift up his soul to what is false and does not swear deceitfully. He will receive blessing from the LORD and righteousness from the God of his salvation. Psalm 24:3–5*

- Confession results in restored fellowship and the capacity to again experience joy.

### 3. Thanksgiving

- True thankfulness is that which humbly and fully recognizes it's benefactor and benefits.

- *"Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you."*

*1 Thess 5:18*

- Genuine thankfulness is the inevitable expression of a surrendered soul that has discovered that in whatever it possesses or condition it finds itself can only and must only express gratitude for what it receives.

#### B – The Event vs 31-42

- Organization is not the death of worship but it is your contribution to worship.

#### C – Praise – vs 41-43

*"Through him then let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that acknowledge his name. Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God." Hebrews 13:15–16*

### II. Dedication of the People

#### A. They contributed joyfully

- Giving cheerfully demonstrates the genuineness of your faith in as much as it declares that God is faithful to provide.

- We are to give as God has given, freely and gladly.

B – They consecrated their lives together

- True worship in its greatest glory is the corporate worship of God's people together as one body embodying and portraying the very fellowship of the Godhead.

- *“that which we have seen and heard we proclaim also to you, so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ.” 1 John 1:3*

Conclusion:

- This event presents to us a picture of each member of the body of Christ finding significance in the sharing of the one common joy.

- *“complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind.”  
Philippians 2:2*

- Worshipping together takes on the glow and fire of a celebration when a body functions together for the common goals of the kingdom.

Points to Ponder

1. A spirit of joy ought to surround and be present through believers when they meet together.
2. Music is a natural by-product of joy.
3. The expression of joy communicates even to faraway places!

## 13. A Few Dead Flies in the Perfume

- The Scriptures taken as a whole showcase for us the great glory of God in His loving kindness, mercy and gracious salvation.

- The story of Nehemiah along with every story in the Bible demonstrates that God's mercy triumphs over man's sinfulness.

- The failures listed at the end of Nehemiah could be easily established in our world proving the ultimate failure of all people at all times.

The Compromise vs 1-3

The Ammonites – Sins of “omission”

- *“So whoever knows the right thing to do and fails to do it, for him it is sin.”* James 4:17

- *“What good is it, my brothers, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can that faith save him? If a brother or sister is poorly clothed and lacking in daily food,”* James 2:14,15

- We grieve God as much by what we don't do as much as what we do.

- Failure to do what is right to another a serious sin in God's eyes.

- We are not called to be casual observers of the needs of mankind as if a choice to get involved but we are obligated and compelled by the love of Christ.

B. The Moabites – Sins of “commission”

- The sin of commission is where the choice is clearly a conscious willful choice to do what is wrong.

- When we are persistent in sin, God allows for our folly to catch up to us. It's called the consequences of sin.

C. The Cure vs 3

- When people reckon through fear to surrender power and ability allowing others to govern their lives they are reckoning without God!

- The cure for having compromised our lives with sin is to respond in faith obedience to His Word.

- When the Scriptures are no longer read, studied and applied as God's Word, sin abounds and misery increases.

Conclusion: What does all of this have to do with the church?

1. It reminds and warns us of mixing Biblical truths with merely cultural ideas.

2. It underscores the need for bold proclamation and faithful receiving of God's Word.

- *“Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.”*

Romans 12:2

The slippery slope of compromise (Os Guinness)

- Assumption – At some point a thought is entertained as being significant or superior to what you already believe and therefore presumed to be true.

- Abandonment – when something new is presumed to be true something previously believed is quietly abandoned.

- Adaptation – whatever remains of one’s traditional beliefs are now adapted to accommodate this new assumption.

- Assimilation – the gospel now has been changed or molded to fit the sensibilities of the culture around us.

3. When you no longer hear God’s word through compromise you no longer have access to His truth.

4. God’s grace and mercy are always extended to you in kindness toward initiating repentance and subsequent blessings.

*“Where sin abounded grace did much more abound” Ro 5:20*

5. It is reading and responding to the Word of God that conveys the truth leading to and bringing about repentance.

*“I have stored up your Word in my heart that I might not sin against You. Psalm 119:11*

## 14. “Final Corrections” Nehemiah 13:4-14

*“Therefore we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, lest we drift away from it. For since the message declared by angels proved to be reliable, and every transgression or disobedience received a just retribution, how shall we escape if we neglect such a great salvation?” Hebrews 2:1–3a*

- In spite of our new position in Christ we have a natural disposition to simply drift away from faithfulness.

“All too easily, an ugly thing becomes tolerated, even viewed as the possibly useful thing, then the permissible thing, and finally the attractive thing. It does not happen in a moment. Standards are lowered gradually and imperceptibly. Sin becomes known by another name. We accommodate at one stage of life things which earlier would have been totally unacceptable.” Ray Brown

### I. The Temple was Defiled vs 4-9

- *“for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body.”*

1 Corinthians 6:20

- *“Keep your heart with all vigilance, for from it flow the springs of life.”* Proverbs 4:23

- You are to guard your heart against all that would turn it aside because from your heart comes all that affects your life.

### II. His Servants were Neglected vs 10-14

- When your spiritual lives are ignored one principle or discipline will collapse after another creating a spiritual vacuum.

*“No one can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money.”* Matthew 6:24

- The one who can freely give is truly free and the one who cannot freely give is bound and impoverished by choice!

### III. The Sabbath was Abused vs 15,16

- When we fail to rest as they also did we become vulnerable to the invisible gods of contemporary culture such as humanism, secularism, materialism and hedonism etc.

- When your hearts are cluttered with everything else worship becomes a chore rather than a delight!

### IV. They were unfaithful in marriage vs 23-30

- Just as there is more than one way to take a city there is similarly more than one way to destroy the effectiveness of the believer and the church.

- The Scriptures not only warn you of marrying unbelievers but also against unequally yoked alliances whereby you might be tempted or coerced to compromise your values.

- *“Do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers. For what partnership has righteousness with lawlessness? Or what fellowship has light with darkness?”* 2

Corinthians 6:14

Conclusions:

1 - Just as nature abhors a vacuum so do ones lives with a spiritual vacuum. Something WILL take its place.

2 – When God no longer is the focus of your praise and worship the entirety of your lives will fall to the perils of sin and its consequences.

3 – Any realistic view of your lives need to include inevitable failure and that you are in need of daily revival.

To keep from drifting

- Pay attention Heb 2:1-3a

- Strive in faith, unity and love of the brethren Eph 4:3 Col 3:14

- Strain in your following after Christ Phil 3:13,14

- Constantly encourage one-another in the body because you are so vulnerable to failure 1 Thess 5:11

- When anyone does fail it tells you to restore such a one in patience and love. Gal 6:1

God is looking for leaders!

- Faithful men and women who even though they fail at times stay tracking heavenward!

*“I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.”* Philippians 3:14