Out of Our Comfort Zone

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Gray

Introduction

1. Nehemiah 1:2-3

2. Nehemiah was cupbearer to King Artaxerxes of the Persian Empire Nehemiah 1:11

3.   Nehemiah was a Jew born in captivity. He never knew life in Judah or Jerusalem as a youth.

4. As cupbearer, he served the king personally and apparently had an amiable relationship with him and the queen Nehemiah 2:1-8.

5. He had access to the finest things in life. His was a life of luxury and ease. Of course, his life was constantly in danger because his job was to taste the king's wine to determine whether or not it was poisoned, but despite this, he enjoyed life in the court of one of the greatest kings of history.

6. Nehemiah led the Jews in their third return to Jerusalem to rebuild the walls of the city. The Temple had already been rebuilt and worship according to the law restored, but the city was defenseless. Ezra

7. When Nehemiah learned of the condition of the city of Jerusalem, he was deeply concerned, even to the point of taking it upon himself to oversee the building of the walls.

8. Consider what a departure from comfortability this must have been for Nehemiah.

    1. He had no personal memory of the glory of Jerusalem before its destruction.

    2. It would have been easy for him to sit back and enjoy palace life in Susa while blaming the Jewish elders for the plight of their people.

    3. It would have been easy for him to talk big without doing anything personally to restore his nation to God's favor.

    4. Notice what Nehemiah did in getting out of his own comfort zone to put the needs of God's people first.

II Discussion

1. Nehemiah first **inquired** about the condition of the city Nehemiah 1:2.

    1. When refugees arrived from Jerusalem, he asked them how the city fared. The remnant was being afflicted.

    2.   In response, Nehemiah mourned, wept, and changed his countenance in the presence of the king. Nehemiah showed more than just superficial concern for the plight of his people. He

proved that he cared more for doing what was best for them and for God than he was for maintaining his comfortable manner of life.

    3.   When the king noticed Nehemiah's sadness, he arranged for Nehemiah to have everything he needed to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem.

    4.   When some of our brethren have problems do we inquire about them James 2:14-15; 1 John 3:17

    5.   When we inquire from God about our life and it is out of sequences with His Word, it can make us uncomfortable. We need to get in sequences with God

2.   Then Nehemiah **inspected** the defenses of Jerusalem himself (Nehemiah 2:12-16).

    1.   He did not just take someone else's word for it. Matthew 18:15-17; 5:22-24

    2.   Too many times members take problems to everyone else rather than the person.

    3.   The first letter was written on what someone said 1 Corinthians 1:11; 2 Corinthians 13:1

3.   Thirdly in order to help ensure that the walls would be rebuilt, Nehemiah personally **inspired** his brethren to the work (Nehemiah 2:17-18).

    1.   He didn't lead from behind a desk, making decisions without personal knowledge of the situation. He was working side by side with the people, inspiring them to have "a mind to work" (Nehemiah 4:6).

    2.   They had to labor with a hammer in one hand a sword in the other (Nehemiah 4:18), but they would not have had the courage to do so without Nehemiah's direct influence.

    3.   They built the wall if 52 days Nehemiah 6:15

    4.   What do we inspire others to do? Matthew 5:13-16; Acts 9:36-43

III. Conclusion

1.   In rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem, Nehemiah was far removed from his normal manner of life.

2.   He got well outside his comfort zone when he learned of the afflictions of God's people. How do you deal with the what the church needs to have done?

3. When your brothers and sisters are hurting and languishing, do you wish them Godspeed without getting involved? Then your faith is dead (Jam. 2:14-17).

4. Loving God, His Church, and His truth means getting involved. We have an influence; let us intentionally use it for right.

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