

Nehemiah 3

4-1-15

God's Work Done God's Way

I. Slide1 Announce:

- A. Slide2 Dedication: Jason & Jessa Stoneburner. Alden (*Aniela big sis*)
- B. Slide3 Easter:
- C. Set up for Easter: after Good Friday communion service in the Gym.
 1. Tony needs lots of help setting up **chairs**, plus **pipe & drape**.
- D. Slide4 Women's Retreat: 16 days away. *Sign up's Cindy/foyer.*

I. Slide5 Intro: God's Work Done God's Way

- A. What is the largest project you have worked on? Build your own home? Remodel? Put in your yard? 3-tier wedding cake?
 1. Re-read 2:17,18 - & the people responded incredibly.
- B. What positive experiences do you have in working w/others to accomplish a task?
- C. What was your worst experience with Team-Work?
- D. We all need our leadership skills honed.
 1. Whether we are administrating a building project; organizing family chores; running a business; managing a church, or fellowship group; coaching a soccer team, **or** are the President of the U.S. trying to pull together National unity...**we all need leadership skills.**
- E. Slide6 Nehemiah touches on at least **4 dynamics of effective leadership**:
 1. The relationship of the leader to **God** (Ch.1)
 2. The relationship of the leader to his **Earthly Superiors** (Ch.2:1-8)
 3. The relationship of the leader to his **Workers under him/her** (Ch.2:9-20)
 4. The relationship of the leader to the **Work itself** (Ch.3)
 - a) We will see in this chapter an incredible feat of **organization** on Nehemiah's part.
- F. **The lists** are not a dull recital of forgotten names(like yellow pages); they preserve the story of heroic people played who played their part in the continuity of the people of God.

II. GOD'S WORK DONE GOD'S WAY

- A. Slide7 Jerusalem in time of Christ [temple mnt, pool of Siloam, Herod's palace]

B. **Slide8 Map**: Start at the top (north wall) Sheep Gate, he moves **counter clock-wise**, ends up where he started (**see** vs.1,32). [**10 gates** (repair 6), **4 towers**] [North Wall vs.1-5. W 6-12. So 13,14. S/E 15-27]

C. **Also**, (1b) Tower of the 100 & of Hananael was important because it was the **most vulnerable to attack**. *explain Valleys...*

1. **Slide9** The rest was protected by **3 Valleys**: Kidron, Hinnom, & Tyropoeon.

D. **Slide10 PRIORITIZING THE TASK**

E. This was well **prayed** through (ch.1) & well **thought** through (ch.2).

F. **Slide11 Ask**. **Why start here?** (sheep/sacrifices came in here)

1. **So what does Nehemiah do first?** Making sure the important part of the temple worship, sacrifice for the sins of the people, is taken care of first. Making sure priorities are in order.

2. **Slide12** 400yrs later **Jesus** would walk through this gate in Jn.5, **Pool of Bethesda**
a) **And as the Passover Lamb going to the cross.**

3. **Prioritize, put God first** - We can do this today by lifting up the person of **JC**.

a) As Paul said, **HIM we proclaim** (Col.1:28). *One may disassociate **Buddha** from his teaching, **Confucius** and others from theirs, but **Christ was His teaching.***

G. **Slide13 MANAGEABLE SECTIONS**

H. Don't underestimate the task.

1. This wall was about 2 ½ miles long.

2. A good leader **assesses** the situation, **then** breaks it down into **doable chunks** (whether it's cleaning your child's room, or the garage)

I. **This also affixes responsibility** for each part of the task.

J. **Slide14 GETTING EVERYONE INVOLVED**

K. Everyone took a piece of the wall. Team-work w/41 groups.

1. *When it comes to the work of the Lord, there's **no place for spectators or self-appointed advisers and critics; there's always room for workers.***

L. **Slide15** (10) **Assigned to work in front of your house. Why?**

1. **Be more personally involved. More highly motivated** (protection for your family). **Not have to waste travel time.** In case of attack, wouldn't leave your

post, stay & protect your family. **It was a real family affair, utilizing all available talents.** Convenience & motivation.

2. If **your** section doesn't get done in front of your house...**it's like** the neighbor in your track whose grass is not mowed, weeds are a foot high, shrubs all grown over. **It is noticed by all the neighbors** (positive peer pressure) [**buy in here**]
 - a) **So Priests** by the Temple (1) & by their houses (28); the **temple servants** by their work (26); **Jedaiah** in front of his house (10); Benjamin & Hasshub (23).
3. No long commute to work. Home for lunch? This would ensure good work... **why?** How good would you build the wall of defense to your city, in front of your house, where your kids play?

M. **Slide16** Let's see who helped...**just construction workers? Nope.**

1. Priests, Levites, temple servants, rulers, common people, men from far away cities/**commuters** (vs.2, + 7 other cities mentioned), gatekeepers (29), guards, farmers, union men (vs.8 goldsmiths & perfumers), merchants (32), women (daughters vs.12), bachelors/singles (23).
2. We see then the **diverse people** God used for this task. **Each one was needed to do their part.**

N. **Slide17a** The greatest **ability** in the kingdom of God, is **availability and dependability.**

O. **Slide17b** Note how many times **next to him, beside him.** God's looking for **Unity not Uniformity**

1. **Slide18a** The huge redwood trees in our state are considered the largest things on earth the tallest trees in the world. Some of them are 300' high and over 2500 years old. One would think that the trees have a tremendous root system reaching down hundreds of feet into the earth. The redwoods actually have a very **shallow** system of routes, **but they all intertwine.** They're **locked** to each other. When storms come or the winds blow, the redwoods stand. **They are locked to each other.** [Good picture of how **the church** should function today]

P. **Slide18b** Unfortunately today the church is like a football game...You have 30,000 spectators who badly need some exercise & 22 men who badly need rest. 80/20 principle.

1. **What is your part? What section of the CM wall is yours to work on?**
 - a) **Run that test on your:** Talents & abilities, availability & finances.
2. **What does your house look like? Is your family protected? Or, is family your only focus?**

- a) Yes 1st serve the Lord at home...but not only at home.
3. If someone wrote a summary (like ch.3) about who was doing what in our church, would you be listed favorably or unfavorably? Why?

Q. Slide19 REMEMBER EVERY FARM HAS ITS TURKEYS

R. So, don't be discouraged...you'll never get 100% cooperation.

1. You notice on all polls that are taken there is always a % *for, against & unsure*.

S. See vs.5 the *nobles* of Tekoah. [little town in Judah]

1. They didn't put their shoulders (necks) to the work.
2. What would keep a ruler from helping out? (Pride. Too low of a job for me to do. My employees can't see me humble myself to this place, they'll lose respect for me)
3. Any areas/jobs that you are too good for?
4. Slide20 Would you stop at the Dung Gate & let someone else do that? (13)
- a) (14) Malchijah steps up to the task & look at the contrast to the next verse.

T. How is your work ethic? Would it be the same answer if I asked your boss?

U. What are you presently doing to build the body of Christ? To show unity?

V. How are you helping around the church? In your community? In your world?

W. Slide21 EVERY FARM ALSO HAS ITS WORKHORSES

X. (5a) Not everyone in Tekoah were Turkeys. The men from Tekoah were very hard workers.

1. See also vs.27. Double duty.

Y. Also it was only said of Baruch that he carefully (or, zealously NIV) repaired his section.

1. Do you do your work zealously to/for the Lord?
- a) Shane Claiborne, who spent a summer in the slums of Calcutta with Mother Teresa, wrote the following about one of his experiences there: "People often ask me what Mother Teresa was like. Sometimes it's like they wonder if she glowed in the dark or had a halo. She was short, wrinkled, and precious, maybe even a little ornery - like a beautiful, wise old granny. But there is one thing I will never forget - her feet. Her feet were deformed. Each morning in Mass, I would stare at them. I wondered if she had contracted leprosy. But I wasn't going to ask, of course. "Hey Mother, what's wrong with your feet?" One day a sister said to us, "Have you noticed her feet?" We nodded, curious. She

said: "Her feet are deformed because we get *just enough* donated shoes for everyone, and Mother does not want anyone to get stuck with the worst pair, so she digs through and finds them. And years of **doing that** have deformed her feet." Years of **loving her neighbor** as herself deformed her feet."¹ [Nike shower shoes/Haiti]

Z. Slide22a In building, in both *construction* & in the *church*, there are:

1. Constructionists (those helping to get the job done) **there are**
2. Destructionists (those tearing things down) **&**
3. Obstructionists (those who get in the way & create problems for those doing the work).
 - a) Slide22b Make sure you're in the right group.

¹ Shane Claiborne, *The Irresistible Revolution*, 167-168 (Zondervan, 2006).