

Pastor Derek Quan
Nehemiah #8
Journey of Faith Church – March 2020

Put It in Writing

Nehemiah 9:1-10:39

Introduction

1 On the twenty-fourth day of the same month, the Israelites gathered together, fasting and wearing sackcloth and having dust on their heads. 2 Those of Israelite descent had separated themselves from all foreigners. They stood in their places and confessed their sins and the wickedness of their fathers. 3 They stood where they were and read from the Book of the Law of the LORD their God for a quarter of the day, and spent another quarter in confession and in worshiping the LORD their God.

In being a promise breaker, we make ourselves out to be liars.

There are two distinct characteristics of those who signed these documents:

- 1) They were committed to separating themselves from the worldly lifestyle.
- 2) They had a clear understanding of what they were doing.

Putting your commitment in writing:

- 1) A commitment to a godly home. Vs. 30

30 "We promise not to give our daughters in marriage to the peoples around us or take their daughters for our sons.

- 2) A commitment to integrity. Vs. 31

31 "When the neighboring peoples bring merchandise or grain to sell on the Sabbath, we will not buy from them on the Sabbath or on any holy day. Every seventh year we will forgo working the land and will cancel all debts.

We need to be careful about keeping the Lord's day as a time for rest and worship.

Integrity is who you are and what you do when no one is looking.

- 3) A commitment to God's work. Vss. 32 – 39

- a. We are called to give financially. Vss. 33 - 34

32 "We assume the responsibility for carrying out the commands to give a third of a shekel each year for the service of the house of our God: 33 for the bread set out on the table; for the regular grain offerings and burnt offerings; for the offerings on the Sabbaths, New Moon festivals and appointed feasts; for the holy offerings; for sin offerings to make atonement for Israel; and for all the duties of the house of our God.

Jesus said, "You cannot serve two masters, for either you will hate one and love the other, or hold to one, but despise the other. You can't love, worship, serve, both God and money." Matt 6:24

- We are called to give through service. Vs. 34

34 "We-- the priests, the Levites and the people-- have cast lots to determine when each of our families is to bring to the house of our God at set times each year a contribution of wood to burn on the altar of the LORD our God, as it is written in the Law.

If more people helped, it would go much easier.

We are called to give our best. Vss. 35 - 37

35 "We also assume responsibility for bringing to the house of the LORD each year the firstfruits of our crops and of every fruit tree. 36 "As it is also written in the Law, we will bring the firstborn of our sons and of our cattle, of our herds and of our flocks to the house of our God, to the priests ministering there. 37 "Moreover, we will bring to the storerooms of the house of our God, to the priests, the first of our ground meal, of our [grain] offerings, of the fruit of all our trees and of our new wine and oil. And we will bring a tithe of our crops to the Levites, for it is the Levites who collect the tithes in all the towns where we work.

Pastors are called to sacrifice as well.

38 A priest descended from Aaron is to accompany the Levites when they receive the tithes, and the Levites are to bring a tenth of the tithes up to the house of our God, to the storerooms of the treasury.

The final principle *"We will not neglect the house of our God."*

Now this can be taken on two levels:

Talking about ministry, the church.

Ourselves 1 Cor. 6:19-20

19 Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; 20 you were bought at a price. Therefore, honor God with your body.

I resolve to:

Sign it.

Questions for Discussion

- Discuss the various legal documents that most people have signed and whether they've been effective or not? (e.g. Marriage license/vows, home mortgage loans, etc.). Should Christians take more seriously the signing of contracts? Why or why not?
- Where have you personally struggled in trying to maintain your faith? Why has it been so difficult?
- Looking at the outline, talk about each of the areas in terms of making a commitment.
- What is more difficult to commit to? Time, money, service? Why?
- Talk over what you have or plan to put down in terms of resolution. Sign the document.