

Ezra & Nehemiah

by

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Your Church Can Grow

(Principles for building and growth from the book of Ezra)

Seven hindrances to building up the work of the Lord

1. comparing the past with the present - Ezra 3:12-13
2. cooperation with those who do not have the same purpose - Ezra 4:1-3
3. discouragement - Ezra 4:4a
4. fear - Ezra 4:4b
5. frustration - Ezra 4:5
6. outward opposition - Ezra 4:6-24
7. self-centered materialism - Haggai 1:2-4

Two principles for overcoming hindrances to the work of the Lord

1. take the focus off of the problems and place the focus on what God is going to do - Ezra 5:1 (the primary focus of the prophecies of both Haggai and Zechariah was repentance and the future work of the Lord for His people)
2. provide continuous encouragement from the Word as the people do the work - Ezra 5:2

The kind of people needed to do the work of the Lord

1. willing people - Ezra 1:1-4
2. committed people - Ezra 1:5
3. giving people - Ezra 2:64-70
4. joyful people - Ezra 3:10-11, 6:16-18, 22
5. growing people - Ezra 6:13-15
6. separated people - Ezra 6:19-22, 10:6-44
7. repentant people - Ezra 10:1-5

The kinds of leaders needed to lead in the work of the Lord

1. leaders who are unified in their oversight - Ezra 3:8-9
2. leaders who do not become discouraged when opposition comes - Ezra 5:3-5
3. leaders who are men of God - Ezra 7:1-10
 - a. Ezra prepared his heart to seek the law of the Lord - Ezra 7:10
 - b. Ezra obeyed the law of the Lord - Ezra 7:10
 - c. Ezra taught the law of the Lord - Ezra 7:10
4. leaders who expect God to answer prayer - Ezra 8:21-23

The principles of leadership needed to cause growth in the work of the Lord

1. realize that every person has a contribution to make to the work (people are important) - Ezra 2
2. remove those unqualified for spiritual leadership with tact - Ezra 2:61-63
3. make sure that spiritual ministry takes first priority - Ezra 3:1-7
4. build a spiritual leadership team - Ezra 8:15-20
5. learn to delegate responsibility - Ezra 8:24-30 (there are others who can do most jobs as well or better than you) - Ezra 8:31-35
6. learn to hate sin - Ezra 9:1-4 - but love and accept the sinner - Ezra 9:5-15

The People God Wants

Ezra 1:1-11

God wants willing people - verses 1-4
God wants committed people - verse 5
God wants giving people - verse 6

God wants willing people

people who are willing to hear God
people who are willing to go
people who are willing to build
people who are willing to be the support team

God wants committed people

God uses community leaders
God uses spiritual leaders
God uses people who are led by God
God uses people who have a vision of what God can do

God uses giving people Ezra 1:6, 2:64-70

giving people strengthen the hands of others - 1:6
giving people give things of value - 1:6
giving people give willingly - 1:6
giving people give freely - 2:68
giving people give after their ability - 2:69

God uses other people

joyful people - Ezra 3:10-11, 6:16-18, 22
growing people - Ezra 6:13-15
separated people - Ezra 6:19-22, 10:6-44
repentant people - Ezra 10:1-5

People are Important

Ezra 2:1-60

realize that every person has a contribution to make to the work
leaders returned to help build the temple - 2:1-2
families returned to help build the temple - 2:3-20
people from various cities returned to help build the temple - 2:21-35
priests returned to help build the temple - 2:36-39
Levites returned to help build the temple - 2:40-42
the Nethinim returned to help build the temple - 2:43-54
the servants of Solomon returned to help build the temple - 2:55-58
those with uncertain genealogies returned to help build the temple - 2:59-63
the summary of those who returned to help build the temple - 2:64-70

The work of the Lord needs people from every background
Ezra 2:1-70

every Christian is important - I Corinthians 12:21-23
every Christian is a part of the body - I Corinthians 12:12-14
every Christian has been given spiritual gifts - Romans 12:3-8
every Christian needs to grow in maturity - Ephesians 4:11-14
every Christian needs to work effectively in love - Ephesians 4:15-16

The work of the Lord needs people who offer freely for the work of God
Ezra 2:68

giving is based on giving ourselves to the Lord first - II Corinthians 8:5
giving begins as a purpose in our hearts - II Corinthians 9:6-8
giving is an opportunity to meet the needs of others - II Corinthians 8:13-15

The work of the Lord needs people who give after their ability
Ezra 2:69

giving is not related to the amount of money we have - Luke 21:1-4
giving is dependent on what kind of sowing we want to do - Galatians 6:6-10
giving is an indication of what is in our hearts - Matthew 6:19-21

Spiritual Ministry Comes First

Ezra 3:1-7

the people built the altar first - verses 1-2
the people offered sacrifices - verse 3
the people kept the feast of tabernacles - verse 4
the people willingly offered to the Lord - verse 5
the people put obedience before building - verse 6
the people gave to the Lord - verse 7

Relationship to the Lord comes before work for the Lord

the people gathered together for worship
the people built an altar
the people obeyed the Word of God

Relationship to the Lord causes worship of the Lord

fear caused people to realize the need to trust the Lord
worship resulted as the people offered sacrifices to the Lord
worship resulted as the people kept the feast of the Lord
worship became something they continually practiced

Relationship to the Lord causes willing work for the Lord

the people willingly gave offerings to the Lord
the people continued to offer burnt offerings to the Lord
the people put a right relationship to the Lord before a building
the people then worked together for the Lord



Ministry is Teamwork

Ezra 3:8-13

the people appointed leaders for the work - verses 8-9
the people praised God as they began the work - verses 10-11
the people had different reactions - verses 12-13

The work of the Lord needs leaders who are unified in their oversight

the leadership team decided who should do what work
the leadership of the work was delegated to the Levites
the leadership of the Levites guided the workers in their work

The work of the Lord should be accompanied by joy

the builders laid the foundation
the priests praised the Lord with trumpets
the Levites praised the Lord with cymbals
the people sang praise to God responsively
the people shouted with a great shout

The work of the Lord produced different reactions

the older people looked at the past and wept
the younger people looked at the future and shouted for joy

Seven hindrances to the work of the Lord

comparing the past to the present - 3:12-13
cooperation with those who do not have the same purpose - 4:1-3
discouragement - 4:4a
fear - 4:4b
frustration - 4:5
outward opposition - 4:6-24
self-centered materialism - Haggai 1:2-4

Facing Obstacles

Ezra 4:1-24

the obstacle of those who do not have the same purpose - verses 1-3
the obstacle of discouragement - verse 4a
the obstacle of fear - verse 4b
the obstacle of frustration - verse 5
the obstacle of outward opposition - verses 6-24

The obstacle of different purposes

the adversaries heard about the temple being built
the adversaries came and offered to help
the adversaries claimed to follow the same God
the adversaries had mixed their own religion
the adversaries were not allowed to become a part of the work

The obstacles from within

discouragement
we need to encourage ourselves in the Lord - I Samuel 30:6
fear
we need to let fear be overcome by love - I John 4:18
frustration of purpose
we need to keep our eyes fixed on the goal - I Corinthians 9:24-27

The obstacles from without

the enemies wrote a letter - verses 6-10
the enemies called the people rebellious and wicked - verses 11-12
the enemies made false accusations - verse 13
the enemies claimed to be helping the king - verse 14
the enemies suggested a way to stop the people - verses 15-16
the enemies got the king to suspend the work - verses 17-22
the enemies forced the people to stop the work - verse 23
the enemies caused the work to stop for nearly fifteen years - verse 24

Overcoming Obstacles

Ezra 5:1-6:12

- obstacles are overcome through focusing on the Word of God - verse 1
- obstacles are overcome through continuous encouragement from the Word - verse 2
- obstacles are overcome through effective leadership - verses 3-5
- obstacles are overcome by the work of God - verses 5:6-6:12

Effective leaders teach the Word of God

the Word takes the focus off the problems
 the Word puts the focus on what God promises to do
 Haggai and Zechariah had two main messages

1. repentance
2. the future work of the Lord for His people

Effective leaders provide continuous encouragement from the Word of God

the leaders provide the example
 the prophets helped by teaching the Word of God

Effective leaders look to God instead of men

Godly leaders know that God is in control
 Godly leaders seek the counsel of God rather than being discouraged by men

Effective leaders see God work

- the enemies wrote a letter to the king - verses 5:6-17
- the enemies caused the king to check the records - verse 6:1
- the enemies received word what the records showed - verses 6:2-5
- the enemies were ordered to let the work of God alone - verse 6:6-10
- the enemies were promised judgment if they interfered - verse 6:11-12

teach the Word of God	encourage from the Word of God	look to God to work	see God work
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Completing the Work of the Lord

Ezra 6:13-22

the people finished the building of the temple - verses 13-15
the people dedicated the temple - verses 16-18
the people restored the Passover - verses 19-22

God works through people

God caused the enemies to be filled with fear - verse 13
God used the people to build as they worked together - verse 14
God gave strength to complete the work - verse 15

God is worshiped by people

the people dedicated the temple - verse 16
the people offered sacrifices at the dedication - verse 17
the people continued to serve the Lord - verse 18

God desires obedient people

the people kept the Passover - verse 19
the people purified themselves - verse 20
the people separated themselves from sin - verse 21
the people served the Lord with joy - verse 22

God's Choice

God Chose to Work Through People

Our Responses

Worship

Obedience

Are you responding to God's choice of you by worship and obedience?

Ezra Prepared His Heart

Ezra 7:1-10

Ezra went from Babylon to Jerusalem - verses 1-6

Ezra took others with him - verse 7

Ezra experienced the good hand of God - verses 8-9

Ezra prepared his heart for spiritual leadership - verse 10

Ezra Prepared His Heart To:

Seek the Word of God

Obey the Word of God

Teach the Word of God

Preparing Our Hearts

To seek the Word of God

(five ways we learn the Word of God)

We need to hear the Word of God - Romans 10:17

We need to read the Word of God - Revelation 1:3

We need to study the Word of God - II Timothy 2:15

We need to memorize the Word of God - Psalm 119:11

We need to meditate on the Word of God - Joshua 1:8, Psalm 1:1-3

To obey the Word of God

(the difference between just hearing and also doing)

Matthew 7:24-27

Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock: ²⁵ "and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock. ²⁶ "But everyone who hears these sayings of Mine, and does not do them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand: ²⁷ "and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it fell. And great was its fall." (NKJV)

To teach the Word of God

(teaching through example and word)

Acts 20:20

And how I kept back nothing that was profitable *unto you*, but have shown you, and have taught you publicly, and from house to house, (KJV)

Ezra Saw The Lord Prepare the King

Ezra 7:11-28

Ezra received a letter from the king - verses 11-26
Ezra gave thanksgiving for the Lord's blessing - verses 27-28

Five Ways God Worked Through the the King

The king encouraged others to go with Ezra - verses 11-13

The king sent gifts for the temple in Jerusalem - verses 14-15

The king encouraged others to send gifts for the temple - verses 16-19

The king gave instructions to the treasurers - verses 20-24

The king instructed Ezra to teach the people - verses 25-26

The Thanksgiving of Ezra for the Blessing of the Lord

Ezra thanked God for working in the heart of the king

Ezra thanked God for the gifts of the king

Ezra thanked God for extending mercy through the king

Ezra thanked God for the strengthening of the Lord

The Leadership Team that Went with Ezra

the Lord brought Ezra to chief men

the Lord led those chief men to go with Ezra

Building a Spiritual Leadership Team

Ezra 8:1-20

the return included others who went with Ezra - verses 1-14
the return came after Ezra requested additional leaders - verse 15-20

Principles for building a spiritual leadership team

Accept and work with those who are already recognized leaders - verses 1-14

Recognize the need for both leadership gifts and serving gifts - verse 15

Select men who are men of understanding - verse 16

Recruit godly men to serve - verse 17

Look to God to provide men of understanding - verses 18-20

Principles Christ used in building a leadership team

Mark 3:13-14

Christ chose men who had a learner's attitude - John 1:37-39

Christ chose men who were responders - John 1:37-39
John 1:43, Matthew 4:18-22, Matthew 9:9

Christ chose men who were workers - (in the book of Mark, all were chosen while they were working) - Mark 1:16-20, Mark 2:13-14

Christ chose men who had a servant's heart - Mark 10:42-45

Christ took time and prayed before selecting the team - Luke 6:12

Christ chose men who wanted to grow in understanding - Matthew 15:15-20

Developing the Leadership Team

Ezra 8:21-36

the return included spiritual preparation - verses 21-23
the return included taking the temple treasures - verse 24-30
the return included protection from God - verse 31-32
the return was completed with the treasures being placed in the temple - verses 33-36

Developing a Spiritual Leadership Team Ministry Includes:

Developing leaders who expect God to answer prayer - verses 21-23

helping each person examine his life before God - verse 21
seeking God to know the right way for each person - verse 21
teaching trust in God by example - verse 22
helping each person to recognize the power of God - verse 22
helping each person to learn to really pray - verse 23

Developing leaders through effective delegation - verses 24-30

give each leader part of the responsibility - verse 24
help each leader to realize they are serving others - verses 25-27
help each leader to realize he is chosen by God - verse 28
help each leader realize that leadership requires alertness (watch) - verse 29
help each leader realize that leadership means being dependable - verse 29
let each leader fulfill their responsibility - verse 30

Develop leaders who function as a team - verses 31-36

they traveled together - verse 31
they prayed together - verse 31
they reached their goal together - verse 32
they worked together to fulfill their responsibilities - verses 33-34
they worshiped God together - verse 35
they helped the people and served God together - verse 36

Confronting Sin Among the People

Ezra 9:1-15

the people had intermarried with sinful nations - verses 1-2
the people heard the prayer of Ezra - verses 3-15
Ezra showed his sorrow for sin - verses 3-4
Ezra confessed the sins of the people - verses 5-7
Ezra recognized the faithfulness of God - verses 8-9
Ezra recognized the unfaithfulness of Israel - verses 10-15

The sin of the people

the people had not separated from the abominations of the land - verse 1
the people were guilty
the priests were guilty
the Levites were guilty
the people had intermarried with the people of the land - verse 2
the people had married partners who worshiped idols - verse 2
the people had followed the example of the princes and rulers - verse 2

The response of Ezra

Ezra showed his sorrow for sin - verses 3-4
Ezra ripped his clothes
Ezra pulled out his hair
Ezra sat down in amazement
Ezra was joined by all who feared God
Ezra sat in amazement for hours
Ezra confessed the sins of the people - verses 5-7
Ezra fell on his knees before God
Ezra confessed his shame
Ezra identified with those who sinned
Ezra confessed the sins of the people
Ezra recognized the faithfulness of God - verses 8-9
Ezra recognized the unfaithfulness of Israel - verses 10-15

Restoring the Relationship to God

Ezra 10:1-44

the people joined in confessing their sin - verses 1-2
the people decided to make a covenant with God - verses 3-5
the people found a solution for their sin of intermarriage - verses 6-44

Attitudes which produce true repentance - verse 1

Ezra prayed
Ezra confessed the sins of the people
Ezra showed true repentance by mourning
the people showed true repentance by mourning

A Biblical pattern of true repentance - verse 2

the people confessed that they had sinned against God
the people confessed the specific sin that they had committed
the people looked to God in hope

The people made a covenant with God - verses 3-5

the people agreed to put away sin in agreement with the law
the people said they would follow the leadership of Ezra and make a covenant
the chief priests, the Levites and all the people made a covenant with God

The people carried out their covenant with God

Ezra fasted and mourned for the people - verse 6
the people were instructed to gather together at Jerusalem - verse 7
the people were warned of the consequences of disobedience - verse 8
the people joined together in confessing their sin - verses 9-14
the guilty had their cases judged individually - verses 15-17
the priests led the people in obeying God - verses 18-22
the Levites followed in obeying the Lord - verses 23-24
the people followed in obeying the Lord - verses 25-44

God Uses Prepared People

Nehemiah 1:1-11

preparation started with a concern - verses 1-3
preparation included a prayer of confession - verses 4-10
preparation included a prayer of request - verse 11

Concern prepares our hearts to serve the Lord

The concern

concern for the people came first
concern for the city came second

The report

the people are suffering great evil
the people are experiencing great shame
the wall of the city is broken down
the gates of the city are burned with fire

Concern produces repentance and prayer

Nehemiah spent many days in mourning, fasting and prayer

The prayer

this prayer recognizes who God is
this prayer asks for God to hear
this prayer confesses the sins of the people
the prayer confesses personal sin
this prayer reminds God of His promises
this prayer asks for God to help His people
this prayer asks God to open the door for Nehemiah to help

What kind of a concern do we have?

Does that concern cause us to ask about the needs of others?
Does that concern cause us to repent of sin?
Does that concern cause us to pray for others?
Does that concern cause us to become available for God to use?

God Provides for Prepared People

Nehemiah 2:1-8

preparation included speaking to the king - verses 1-4
preparation included provision through the king - verses 5-8

God prepares the heart of the king

the king was served by Nehemiah
the king saw the sadness of Nehemiah
the king recognized the sadness as sorrow of heart
the king caused Nehemiah to be filled with fear
the king heard about the need in Jerusalem
the king asked Nehemiah what he wanted
the king waited while Nehemiah prayed
God works as we pray

God provides through the king

Nehemiah asked the king to send him to Judah
Nehemiah said that he wanted to build the wall of Jerusalem
Nehemiah had done his preparation and knew:
the time that was needed
the protection that was needed
the materials that were needed
Nehemiah saw God work in the heart of the king
Nehemiah saw God provide through the king

What are we allowing God to do in and through our lives?

Do we care enough for others that it causes sorrow of heart?
Do we care enough for others to be willing to face fear?
Do we care enough to expect God to answer prayer?
Do we care enough to do careful planning?
Do we care enough to share our plans and needs?
Do we care enough to expect God to work through us?

Prepared People Prepare a Plan

Nehemiah 2:9-16

preparation includes understanding the opposition - verses 9-11
preparation includes surveying the need and preparing a plan - verses 12-16

Understanding our opposition

Nehemiah traveled to the city of Jerusalem

Nehemiah faced immediate opposition

Satan is never happy when we want to do the work of the Lord

Nehemiah spent three days observing what needed to be done

Careful observation before planning is very necessary for effective ministry

Preparing a Plan

planning involves a trusted leadership team

this team may be small

this team observes and learns how we plan

planning involves surveying the need

this involves personal understanding of the need

this involves seeing all that needs to be done

this involves taking the necessary time to plan

this involves doing the necessary preparation to plan

planning involves developing a basic plan to share

people will not realize what we are seeing

people will not realize what we are doing

What kind of planning are you doing for the ministry God has given you?

Are you preparing for opposition that Satan will bring?

Are you taking time to observe as you plan?

Are you preparing your plan as a team or alone?

Have you made a survey to see what needs to be done?

Are you developing a basic plan to share with others?

Developing Godly Vision

Nehemiah 2:17-20

the people were reminded of their condition - verse 17
the people were told of God's provision - verse 18a
the people chose to take action - verses 18b-20

People must see the need

the people were reminded of their distress
the people were reminded of the condition of the city
the people were reminded of the condition of the gates
the people were encouraged to build the wall

People must be reminded of God's provision

the people learned how God had worked with Nehemiah
the people learned how God had provided for them

People respond to God's provision

The response of the people

the people said, "Let us rise up and build"
the people strengthened their hands for this good work

The response of the enemies

the enemies mocked and made fun

The response of Nehemiah

Nehemiah looked to the Lord to prosper them

What are we doing to develop Godly vision?

Are we helping people to see the need?
Are we helping people to see God's provision?
Are we encouraging people to fulfill their vision?

Developing Effective Teamwork

Nehemiah 3:1-32

the people were all given responsibilities - verses 1-32
the people had some who did not fulfill their responsibilities - verse 5
the people involved their families in the work - verse 12
the people were given assignments close to home - verses 10, 23, 28

People all need to serve the Lord

the workers were given an example by the leaders
the work was divided into small units
the work involved volunteer teams from other areas
the work was divided between all the people
the work was assigned to different teams

People may not fulfill their responsibilities

the nobles of Tekoa did not work
the nobles of Tekoa chose not to do the work of the Lord

People should involve their families in the work of the Lord

ministry is an opportunity to train our families to serve the Lord
ministry can involve every member of the family

People should see the area near their homes as a place of ministry

the people living near the wall repaired in front of their houses

Are we developing effective teamwork?

Are we providing an example of ministry?
Are we dividing the work into small units?
Are we making it possible for all to be involved in serving?
Are we encouraging people to work as teams?

Dealing With Ridicule

Nehemiah 4:1-9

Nehemiah heard the opposition of the enemies - verses 1-3

Nehemiah answered by prayer to God - verses 4-5

Nehemiah and the people continued to work - verses 6-9

The ridicule of the enemies

the enemies were angry
the enemies were very upset
the enemies began to mock the Jews
the enemies told others the Jews were feeble
the enemies said a fox could knock over the wall

The prayer of Nehemiah

Nehemiah told God what the enemies were saying
Nehemiah asked God to judge the enemies
Nehemiah asked God to judge their sin
Nehemiah told how the enemies affected God

The progress of the work

the wall was now built half way
the people had a mind to work
the work was making progress
the holes began to be closed
the enemies became very angry
the enemies conspired together
the enemies tried to hinder the work
the people continued to pray
the people set a guard

Do we remember that prayer is our greatest resource?

Dealing With Discouragement

Nehemiah 4:10-23

Nehemiah heard the discouragement - verses 10-12
Nehemiah reminded the people of the Lord - verses 13-18
Nehemiah developed a battle plan - verses 19-23

Nehemiah heard the discouragement of the people

the people were getting tired
the people were looking at the garbage
the people were listening to the enemies

Nehemiah reminded the people of the Lord

Nehemiah organized the people for defense
Nehemiah reminded the people of the Lord
Nehemiah reminded the people of their families
Nehemiah saw the people return to the work
Nehemiah assigned half of his servants to work
Nehemiah assigned half of his servants to defense
Nehemiah prepared the people for both construction and conflict
Nehemiah appointed a man to sound the warning

Nehemiah developed a battle plan

the people were working in many different places
the people were reminded that God fights the battles through them
the people worked long hours to finish the work
the people helped guard the city at night
the people saw the example of Nehemiah and his team

What are we doing to encourage discouraged people?

Are we recognizing it when people are discouraged?
Are we reminding people of the Lord and His power?
Are we developing a battle plan?

Dealing With Greed

Nehemiah 5:1-19

Nehemiah heard of the greed of the rich - verses 1-5
Nehemiah confronted the rich with their sin - verses 6-13
Nehemiah set a good example - verses 14-19

Nehemiah heard of the greed of the rich

the people felt the oppression of the rich
the people were becoming hungry
the people had mortgaged their land to buy food
the people had borrowed money to pay taxes
the people were having to sell their children into slavery

Nehemiah confronted the rich with their sin

Nehemiah became angry when he heard what was happening
Nehemiah rebuked those who were guilty
Nehemiah saw that the guilty had nothing to say
Nehemiah encouraged the guilty to walk in the fear of God
Nehemiah gave an example by not charging interest himself
Nehemiah encouraged the guilty to restore what they had taken
Nehemiah had the guilty make an oath that they would repay
Nehemiah warned of judgment if they did not keep their word

Nehemiah set a good example

Nehemiah served as governor without any salary
Nehemiah served the people instead of ruling the people
Nehemiah and his servants worked on the wall
Nehemiah fed 150 workers each day
Nehemiah was concerned not to make the people suffer more
Nehemiah looked to God for reward

What kind of an example are we setting?

Dealing With Deception

Nehemiah 6:1-14

Nehemiah was invited to a meeting - verses 1-4
Nehemiah had rumors spread about him - verses 5-8
Nehemiah was encouraged to flee - verses 9-13
Nehemiah prayed to the Lord - verse 14

Nehemiah was invited to a meeting

the enemies heard that the wall was completed
the enemies tried to get Nehemiah to meet with them
the enemies heard that ministry was more important than meetings
the enemies kept trying to get Nehemiah to come to a meeting

Nehemiah had rumors spread about him

the enemies sent an open letter to Nehemiah
the enemies accused Nehemiah of trying to rebel
the enemies tried again to get Nehemiah to join them
the enemies were inventing these ideas in their minds

Nehemiah was encouraged to flee

the enemies were trying to make the people afraid
the enemies tried to get Nehemiah to disobey God
the enemies had their plan rejected by Nehemiah
the enemies had hired Shemaiah to deceive Nehemiah
the enemies wanted to get Nehemiah to commit sin

Nehemiah answered by praying to God

What are we doing when we face deception?

Are we getting involved with those who deny Christ?
Are we looking to God when people spread rumors about us?
Are we most concerned about avoiding sin?

The Completion of the Wall

Nehemiah 6:15-19

the completion of the wall took 52 days - verses 15-16
the completion of the wall did not stop opposition - verses 17-19

The completion of the wall took 52 days

the completion of the wall had looked impossible for
100 years
when people worked together under godly leadership, they completed the wall in
52 days
the completion of the wall caused the enemies to become
disheartened in their own eyes
the completion of the wall caused the enemies to
realize that the work had been done by God

The completion of the wall did not stop opposition

the nobles of Judah sent letters to Tobiah
the nobles of Judah received letters from Tobiah
the nobles of Judah were loyal to Tobiah because of marriage
the nobles of Judah told about the good deeds of Tobiah
the nobles of Judah told the words of Nehemiah to Tobiah
the nobles of Judah brought letters from Tobiah to frighten Nehemiah

What are we doing to complete the work of the Lord?

Are we saying that the work of God cannot be done?
Are we working together under godly leadership?
Are we seeing God overcome the enemies?
Are we causing people to realize that God is working?

How are we dealing with opposition?

Are we trusting God or are we listening to the enemies?

Leadership Through Delegation

Nehemiah 7:1-73

the leaders were appointed by Nehemiah - verses 1-2
the leaders were given responsibilities by Nehemiah - verses 3-4
the leaders and the people were listed by genealogy - verses 5-73

Principles for selecting leadership

Nehemiah selected men who were qualified
Nehemiah selected men to have various levels of responsibility
Nehemiah selected men who were faithful
Nehemiah selected men who feared God

Principles for developing leadership

Nehemiah gave them training so they would know their work
Nehemiah gave every qualified person responsibility
Nehemiah gave them responsibilities in which they have a personal interest
Nehemiah gave them an understanding of the entire task
Nehemiah gave them an understanding of the available resources

Principles for developing resources

Nehemiah looked to God for direction
Nehemiah called together the leaders for consultation
Nehemiah found out what resources were available
Nehemiah viewed people as his most important resource
Nehemiah found out what other resources were available

What are you doing to develop leadership?

Are you making it a priority to select qualified leadership?
Are you selecting faithful men who fear God?
Are you providing training for those who are selected for leadership?
Are you developing adequate resources for effective ministry?

The Rebuilding of Spiritual Life

Nehemiah 8:1-12

the law was read and explained - verses 1-8
the law brought conviction of sin - verses 9-12

The law was read and explained

the people gathered together
the people asked Ezra to read the law
the people were attentive to the reading of the law
the people had prepared to hear the law
the people showed respect for the law by standing up
the people worshipped God
the people had the law explained to them by the Levites

the Levites read the Word of God clearly
the Levites explained the meaning
the Levites caused the people to understand

The law brought conviction of sin

the people wept because of conviction of sin
the people were told the joy of the Lord is our strength
the people were told how to have peace
the people were told to celebrate
conviction then cleansing of sin brings great joy
the people were changed because they understood the Word

What are we doing to rebuild the spiritual lives of people?

Do we place a high priority on the reading of the Word of God?
Do we place a high priority on explaining the Word of God?
Do we provide opportunity for the Word of God to bring conviction?
Do we help people to experience cleansing and forgiveness?
Do we encourage people to celebrate cleansing and forgiveness?

Celebrating Past Blessings of the Lord

Nehemiah 8:13-18

the people learned about the Feast of Tabernacles - verses 13-15
the people celebrated the Feast of Tabernacles - verses 16-18

Learning about the past blessings of the Lord

the leaders gathered together to understand the law

the difference between hearing and understanding	
hearing	understanding
words enter the head and may be forgotten	words enter the heart and produce obedience

the leaders studied the Word of God
the leaders learned about the Feast of Tabernacles
the leaders told the people about the Feast of Tabernacles
the leaders instructed the people how to prepare for the Feast

Celebrating the past blessings of the Lord

the people made booths for the feast
the people lived in booths during the feast
the people had not celebrated the feast from the time of Joshua
the people heard Ezra read the Word each day of the feast
the people obeyed the instructions of the Word

Do we understand the importance of the past?

Are we learning about the past blessings of the Lord?
Are we teaching others about the past blessings of the Lord?
Are we celebrating the past blessings of the Lord?

The People Fast and Repent

Nehemiah 9:1-10:27

the people repented of their sins - verses 1-3
the people were led in praise and confession by the Levites - verses 4-37
the people made a covenant to obey the law - verse - 38
the people who signed the covenant - 10:1-27

The people repented of their sins

repentance was shown by fasting and sackcloth
repentance caused separation from foreigners
repentance caused confession of their own sins
repentance caused confession of the sins of their fathers
repentance happened in a certain progression

they read the Word of God

they confessed their sin

they worshiped the Lord

The people were led in praise and confession

The Levites led the people in praise

this praise recognized the righteousness of God - verses 4-8

this praise spoke of the protection of God - verses 9-12

this praise spoke of the provision of God - verses 13-15

The Levites led the people in confession

the people had rebelled in the wilderness - verses 16-18

the people had seen God show great mercy in the wilderness - verses 19-25

the people had seen God show mercy by sending deliverers - verses 26-27

the people had seen God that God did not forsake them - verses 28-31

the people had seen that God is faithful - verses 32-35

the people confessed their sins and their neediness - verses 36-37

The people made a covenant to obey the Law

the covenant was made by the people
the covenant was signed by the leaders

The Responsibilities of the Covenant

Nehemiah 10:28-39

the people promised to obey the law of God - verses 28-31
the people promised to bring their offerings to the Lord - verses 32-39

The people promised to obey the Law of God

the people had separated themselves from the peoples of the land
the people had separated themselves to the Law of God
the people promised to obey all of the commandments
the people promised not to intermarry with the people of the land
the people promised not to buy or sell on the Sabbath
the people promised to make the Sabbath a holy day
the people promised to observe the sabbatical year

The people promised to bring their offerings to the Lord

the people were going to give for the service of the Lord
the people were going to give for the sacrifices of the Lord
the people were going to give for the work of the house of the Lord
the people were going to provide wood to burn the sacrifices to the Lord
the people were going to bring the firstfruits of their crops
the people were going to bring an offering for their firstborn sons
the people were going to bring the firstborn of their cattle
the people were going to bring the firstfruits of all their things
the people were going to bring their tithes to the Levites
the people said the Levites would bring a tenth to the house of the Lord
the people promised not to neglect the house of the Lord

Understanding the responsibilities of the covenant

The people promised to

show obedience by
obeying the Word of God

show thanksgiving by
bringing their offerings to the Lord

The Renewing of the Nation

Nehemiah 11:1-12:47

the people repopulated the cities - 11:1-12:26
the people dedicated the wall - 12:27-47

The people repopulated the cities

God led some people to move to Jerusalem - 11:1-19

the leaders lived in Jerusalem
the people cast lots to bring one tenth of the people to Jerusalem
the people blessed those who willing offered themselves to go to Jerusalem
the summary of the people who lived in Jerusalem

God left most of the people in other cities - 11:20-36

God recognized the priests and the Levites - 12:1-26

The people dedicated the wall

the dedication was a time of thanksgiving - 27-30

the Levites gathered from all the cities to lead the dedication
the singers gathered from their villages around Jerusalem
the priests and Levites purified themselves
the priests and Levites purified the people
the priests and Levites purified the gates and the wall

the dedication was a time of great joy - 31-43

the leaders were gathered on the wall
the singers were divided into two large thanksgiving choirs
the two choirs went in opposite directions around the wall
the two choirs joined together in the temple
the people offered great sacrifices
the people rejoiced with great joy

the dedication marked the renewal of temple service - 44-47

some were appointed to gather and store the tithes
some were appointed as singers and gatekeepers
the singers led songs of praise and thanksgiving to God
the singers and gatekeepers had provisions given to them

The Separation from Sin

Nehemiah 13:1-31

this separation included separating from the mixed multitude - verses 1-3

 this separation included cleansing the temple - verses 4-9

 this separation included providing for the Levites - verses 10-14

 this separation included restoring the Sabbath - verses 15-22

this separation included enforcing laws against intermarriage - verses 23-31

Separating from the mixed multitude

the reasons Scripture called for separation from the mixed multitude
the obedience to the Scripture in separating

Cleansing the temple

the priest had given a large storage room to Tobiah, the Ammonite
the priest had done this while Nehemiah returned to the king
the priest had his evil discovered by Nehemiah
the priest saw Nehemiah throw out the goods of Tobiah
the priest saw the storeroom cleansed and restored to its true purpose

Providing for the Levites

Nehemiah saw that the Levites had not been provided for while he was gone
Nehemiah rebuked the leaders for their failure and restored the Levites
Nehemiah provided for the needs of the Levites
Nehemiah appointed faithful men as treasurers
Nehemiah asked God to remember his faithful service

Restoring the Sabbath

the people were buying and selling on the Sabbath
the people were warned about profaning the Sabbath
the gates began to be shut before the Sabbath
the sellers were warned not to come on the Sabbath
the Levites were commanded to guard the gates

Enforcing laws against intermarriage

the people were marrying pagan women
the people who were guilty were rebuked
the people were reminded of Solomon's sin
the people saw Nehemiah rebuke the son of the priest
the people were cleansed of every pagan influence