

Nehemiah – A Man Who Cared

When the book of Nehemiah opens, the year is 445 B.C. Around 90 years have passed following the Babylonian captivity. Nehemiah is the cupbearer for the King of Persia. He is living in the capitol of Susa, and he hears of the plight of God's people in Jerusalem (Nehemiah 1:1-3).

Even though Nehemiah had probably never been to Jerusalem in his life, he does four things to demonstrate his care for God's work in the city.

He cared enough to ask about it (Nehemiah 1:1-2)

- Once his brother returned from Jerusalem, Nehemiah asked about the welfare of God's people. Despite his stressful job as cupbearer, the condition of Jerusalem was Nehemiah's chief concern.
- We also must care enough about God's work to ask questions. We must ask our elders to keep us plugged in. We must ask our new converts, "How can I serve you and help you grow?" We must ask the lost, "Would you like to come and worship God with me?"

He cared enough to cry about it (Nehemiah 1:3-4)

- After learning that the walls of Jerusalem were still in ruin, Nehemiah wept. He mourned and fasted for several days. He emotionally invested himself in the work of God's people.
- Do we rejoice when we learn of the conversion of a lost soul? Do we mourn when we learn of a Christian leaving the Lord? Do we sympathize with those who are struggling in their faith?
- The Apostle Paul also was emotionally invested in the progress of God's work (2 Corinthians 11:28-29).

He cared enough to pray about it (Nehemiah 1:4-11)

- Nehemiah confessed his and the sins of the people. He humbled himself before God and begged for the favor of the king.
- There are several instances in this book where we find Nehemiah talking to God (Nehemiah 1:4-11; 2:4; 4:9; 6:14).
- Do we pray for our shepherds? Do we pray for our deacons? Do we pray for successful evangelism (Ephesians 6:18-20)? Do we pray for our youth?

He cared enough to act

- Nehemiah volunteered to go to Jerusalem and lead the effort to rebuild the city's walls. He was a man of action!
- Do we care enough about God's work to participate in it? Or, do we find ourselves sitting on the sidelines and complaining?

Conclusion:

Churches made up of people who sincerely care about God's work, grow and thrive for a very long time.

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