

BURDENED

Nehemiah 1

From Nehemiah 1 we discover some basics for becoming burdened

I. BE CONCERNED ABOUT PEOPLE (1-4)

- If we don't care about others we will never have a burden for them or our church

A. BE PROPERLY INFORMED (2-3)

- "I asked them concerning the Jews"

1. Take the time to ask questions

a. Without information there will be no inspiration

b. We dare not assume that we know what is going on

2. Be aware of difficulties (3)

a. Nehemiah learned that the people were discouraged

b. Nehemiah learned that the walls were still dismantled

3. Application:

a. Do you know how things are going in Kathy Maupin's Sunday School class?

b. Do you know if the nursery is overstaffed?

c. Do you know who is sick, shut-in or discouraged?

d. Do you keep up with our missionaries?

B. BE PERSONALLY INVOLVED (4)

1. Allow the situation of others to personally affect you

- Nehemiah was deeply affected by this news

2. Don't isolate or insulate yourself in your palace of prosperity (1)

- Nehemiah didn't say, "Well that's not my problem"

II. BE COMMITTED TO PRAYER (5-11a)

- Unless and until our concern moves us to prayer, we will not have a real burden

A. BE DEPENDENT (4-5)

1. Don't fret or try to figure it out on your own

2. Don't hesitate to get God involved

3. Don't hurry God

- We note that Nehemiah prayed and fasted for "many days" (v.4)

B. BE DECISIVE (6a)

1. Pray for people not property

2. It is true that the walls were broken down and the people were discouraged but in his prayer Nehemiah never mentions the walls!

3. When we pray let us learn to be people focused.

C. BE DETERMINED (6b)

1. Note Nehemiah's passion
2. Note Nehemiah's persistence

D. BE DISCIPLINED (Nehemiah knew how to pray)

1. Adoration (5)
 - a. Nehemiah didn't rush into God's presence with requests
 - b. He began with reverent adoration
2. Confession (6b-7)
 - a. After reflecting on God, he sees his own corruption more clearly
 - b. We have sinned against you and acted very corruptly by disobeying your commands
 - c. He humbly identifies himself and his family as among the sinful
3. Intercession (8-11)
 - a. He asks God to remember His covenant (8-9) > What He said
 - b. He asks God to remember His congregation (10) > What He did
 - c. He asks God to remember the committed (11a) > What He can do

III. **BE COMPELLED TO PARTICIPATE** (11b)

- When we're concerned and committed we're then likely to become personally involved

A. EMOTIONALLY AFFECTED

- "Let us learn this lesson from Nehemiah: You never lighten the load unless first you have felt the pressure in your own soul. You are never used of God to bring blessing until God has opened your eyes and made you see things as they are." - Alan Redpath, "Victorious Christian Service" (New Jersey: Flemming H. Revell, 1958), p. 19.

B. PRAYERFUL ABOUT INVOLVMENT

1. Praying before acting
2. Demonstrating a God-dependence and not independence

C. READY TO ENGAGE

1. Impressed with an obligation to assist
2. Beginning to sense that God might use him personally
3. First praying but now participating
 - a. He realizes he might be a part of the answer to his prayer
 - b. Prayer fueled his passion

CONCLUSION: God wants us to be burdened:

1. Interested in people
2. Inspired to pray
3. Involved with participation