

Nehemiah 5:14-19

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 21 July 2013

Preacher: Kyle Webb

[0:00] Well, my name is Kyle, and I'm pinch hitting for Nathan this morning. Nathan and his family, as Wes mentioned earlier, they're on vacation. They're suffering for Jesus on the beach, and so y'all be in prayer for him as he's suffering this week, I'm sure.

I'm humbled to be here with you, though, to share God's Word. So if you have your copy of God's Word, I invite you to turn with me to Nehemiah 5. Nehemiah 5. And as you're turning there, I want to hopefully catch you up on where we are in Nehemiah.

In case you haven't been here with us, we've been walking through the book of Nehemiah. And Nehemiah is a book that really centers around the story of a great city, the city of Jerusalem. Jerusalem is a city that's really fallen into disrepair, and the people who live there have essentially fallen into disrepair as well. So God burdened a man named Nehemiah, who was the cupbearer to the king, the king of Persia, to rebuild this city and to restore the hearts of its people back to God. Essentially the theme of Nehemiah in a nutshell. In the earlier chapters of Nehemiah, Nehemiah was opposed by outsiders. He has seen a lot of opposition to this mission that he's on, to rebuild the wall of Jerusalem.

[1:15] And so in that opposition, he's struggled through it. He's overcome a lot of opposition. And up until we get to chapter 5, most of the opposition is coming from outside of the city.

People who don't want the people of God influencing the city of Jerusalem. And we get to chapter 5 and we begin to see some opposition coming from within. Opposition coming from within the city of Jerusalem.

Anybody ever experience that? The people that you thought should be the closest to you? The people that you think are the believers in your inner circles? And all of a sudden you experience opposition from that?

Sometimes we do. Sometimes we experience opposition from within. And Nehemiah finds himself in a place where he's having to deal with some things. I wish we could go through the whole chapter, chapter 5. I wish I could focus on the whole chapter.

We'd literally be here for a couple hours. So you can thank me later for not doing an entire chapter of chapter 5 of Nehemiah. But in the beginning of chapter 5, we see the rich people are essentially taking advantage of the poor.

[2:16] They're committing a sin that's known as usury. I have to explain this a little bit because usury today is defined a little bit different than usury was defined back then. Today, usury is defined as charging excessive interest on loaned money.

It doesn't happen a lot today because in our country we have checks and balances that prevent things like that from happening. But back then, usury was defined as any interest charged to your fellow countrymen.

And so Jews were not allowed to charge interest on borrowed money to their fellow Jews. It was illegal in God's law. And so that's what's going on here. They're basically the rich are getting richer, the poor are getting poorer.

They're charging money to their own countrymen. And tragically as well, Nehemiah finds himself, the great leader, falling and succumbing to the same sin. And he himself had to repent publicly and really followed it up.

He's an incredible leader. He realizes his sin. He repents publicly of that sin. And then he goes on to repay all the people, all the money that he owes back to them. And that's essentially what we're picking up in Nehemiah chapter 5.

[3:23] We want to start in verse 14. And Nehemiah says this, Moreover, from this day, I was appointed to be their governor in the land of Judah from the 20th year to the 32nd year of King

Artaxerxes.

That's the ruler in the day. For a full 12 years, Nehemiah was undertaking this urban rebuilding project. For 12 years, neither I nor my kinsmen have eaten of the governor's food allowance. So the first principle that we're really seeing in this passage is that we must understand that first we've got to understand our mission. What is our mission? And Nehemiah's mission was to rebuild a wall.

He moved into Jerusalem. And his little bit more than that, we're going to get into that in a minute. But Nehemiah's mission is essentially to come into Jerusalem and to rebuild the wall, to reconstruct the city.

It's in disrepair. But what is our mission today? Matthew 28. To go and make disciples of all nations. [4 : 25] Baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. It's Acts 1.8. You'll receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. You'll be my witnesses in Judea, Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.

That is the mission that's given to us. It's not the great suggestion. It's the great commission. God has called all believers to this. It's not just pastors and people who are in vocational ministry. We're missionaries.

It's all believers are called to this commission. We're all commissioned to do the great commission. Which is to make disciples of all nations. That is our mission.

So first, we've got to understand the mission that God has called us to. Secondly, we must accept the fact that there are times when our personal interests are misaligned with the mission. There are times when the needs of the mission call for us to give up some of our personal interests and our personal desires.

And we'll find ourselves as believers in situations where we have to serve the needs of the mission at our own personal expense. What that means is, for example, you're a person who is one to get married or maybe you are married in this room this morning.

[5 : 30] And there's times when the needs or desires of your spouse will have to supersede your own needs and desires. And we, being loving spouses, we sacrifice sometimes our own desires because it's what we're called to do.

We're called to love our spouses in Scripture. To put it in the words of my seminary president, Dr. Danny Akin, he's a real funny guy at times.

And he says, man, if you haven't figured it out already, I'll let you in on a little secret that I learned a long time ago. Women, they give you two options. You can either be right or you can be happy. He said, I just assume be happy. You parents in the room, you can relate to this as well. How many of you who are parents in this room, but whether you have little ones now or whether you used to have little ones, would have rather have been sleeping at night than being up awake with your children as they're crying, or better yet, if your children are throwing up and you're having to clean up the mess.

There's often times when that happens. I remember my dad sitting in the back row right now. I remember a time when my dad literally caught it in his hands. And he had to carry it to the toilet and clean himself up afterwards.

[6 : 46] It's what we do as parents. We sometimes sacrifice our own needs or wants or desires to see that our children are raised in a godly manner. It's the same way in our calling as Christians, particularly as it relates to our commission to make disciples.

It means that there are times when we make sacrifices. You might have to give up watching your favorite TV show one week in order to have a family over for dinner. Maybe neighbors that you're wanting to minister to that you have over for dinner.

It might mean that you give up your cable or satellite service altogether so that you have the extra money to be able to help a family put food on their table. A family who's struggling to put food on their table.

You see, this is what's going on in this text. Nehemiah is working in a situation where as a governor, he has the legal right to tax the people as much as he wanted to.

And he could have made himself a very wealthy person. He could have been very affluent. He could have had all the nice things that the world could offer him in that day. But what he determines to do is not to impose an additional tax burden upon the people.

[7 : 54] And he takes it a step further. He forgoes his salary. For 12 years, he essentially works for free. He doesn't take anything out of the governor's food allowance. How many of you would be willing to do that?

Your boss comes up to you and says, You know, the times are kind of lean right now and we're not going to be able to afford to pay for 12 years. So if you'd just work for free for 12 years, that'd be really great. And by the way, we're going to make you pay for your desk as well.

We don't have enough money to buy you a desk. And we're going to have to pay for your laptop. And you're probably going to be traveling a lot for your job. So you're going to have to pay for your own car and your own gas mileage.

We don't have money to pay for that stuff. Oh, and by the way, you might die in your job. How many of you are going to take that offer? There's no hands, right?

No, you're going to say, I think I'm going to find a better job. Something that's not going to cost me hundreds of thousands of dollars and possibly my life. But Nehemiah is willing to set aside his own interest for the sake of the calling on his life.

[8 : 55] Furthermore, he tells us in verse 15, The former governors who were before me laid heavy burdens on the people and took from them bread and wine besides 40 shekels of silver.

What I hope we're beginning to see as we travel through this book is that Nehemiah is kind of a different guy. He's not the typical leader. And he's really not the typical person to begin with. He is set apart for the glory of God.

He has set himself apart. He doesn't do things the way that previous leaders have done them. He says, Just because former governors lay these tax burdens upon the people doesn't mean that I should.

Nehemiah goes against the grain of the culture, and he went to great lengths to be unusual. But why? We see it as we continue reading on. It says, Even their servants domineered the people, but I did not do so because of the fear of God.

So we're beginning to see the whole picture here. We're beginning to see the whole picture that Nehemiah isn't just being different for the sake of being different. He's not being different just so the people would like him.

[10 : 01] He's being different because he is set apart for the glory of God. He is a man who loves God. He's a man who understands the mission. He's a man who wants to fulfill that mission no matter what the cost.

And what we learn and glean from Nehemiah is that if we're going to fulfill this mission that God has set before us, and if we're going to live a life that's set apart, it's going to come at some personal cost to us sometimes.

For some of us, it might cost a job. I have a friend who used to work for a big insurance company. I won't name the company. I don't want to talk bad about a company by any means.

But he was an underwriter for an insurance company. His boss came up to him one day and he said, you know, Adam, we're going to send you on a business trip.

And we're going to send you with your female co-worker, just the two of them. He's a married man. He made a commitment not to travel alone with another woman that's not his wife. So he explains to his boss, I appreciate the opportunity, but I'm not going to be able to do that.

[11 : 03] I'll be happy to pay for my own rental car. I'll be happy to pay for my own hotel room. I'll be happy to pay whatever expenses I have to pay in order to not do that. So his boss goes to the human resources representatives for the company and they say, look, you can't make him based off of religious reasons.

So the boss is like, okay, well, fine. I'll go back to our employee. And so he goes back to my friend and he says, look, I can't make you go on this business trip, but what I'm going to tell you is that you're not going to make it very far in this company if you're not willing to take these types of business trips.

And he said, fine, I understand. See, my friend was willing to be set apart for the glory of God. He was willing, if it cost him his job, he was willing to go, to move to a different position, to move to a different job in order to be set apart, to be different.

And I submit to you that Nehemiah is somebody who is being different in this case. Maybe your job has been the excuse for you. Maybe you've been so busy in your job and that's the excuse for the reason why you haven't been sharing the gospel with people.

Maybe you've delayed your mission, the Great Commission, and your job has been your excuse. It might be that God's calling you to free up some time in your life in order to fulfill the Great Commission.

[12 : 23] It might be that God's calling you to use some of your own personal finances to go toward a foreign mission trip to share the gospel with unreached people groups.

Or maybe you're a business owner. God's calling you to take your business in a new direction to give a percentage of those funds in order to help fund mission groups that would be serving both here and abroad.

There's a great example of a company that does this on a regular basis. It's Chick-fil-A. And if you decided you wanted to go get a Chick-fil-A after church today, if you wanted to go get a big, juicy Chick-fil-A chicken sandwich, you know that we all...

Or maybe you're like a... Maybe you like the Cool Wraps. I don't know what your preference is. But, man, everything that they serve is just so good. It doesn't just taste good. We all just crave Chick-fil-A sometimes.

And it seems like we always crave Chick-fil-A the most on Sundays, right? Because why? You can't go to Chick-fil-A. If you go to Chick-fil-A today, you're going to be very disappointed because they're closed.

[13 : 30] But why are they closed? Because the leadership at Chick-fil-A believes it's important for their employees to be able to attend a corporate worship service if they so choose.

Chick-fil-A also gives a lot of money away to things like their wind-shaped camps and make an impact on Georgia's children and children all over the place. They go to their camps.

But would Chick-fil-A make more money if they were open seven days a week as opposed to six? Of course they would. In fact, Sundays are some of the biggest revenue-making days for the fast food industry. But they close their doors because they understand sometimes the mission that's before us will cost us.

You say, well, I don't own a business and I don't really have a lot of money to give away. That's okay. I know exactly where you are. I completely understand. In fact, the Apostle Paul also understood when he wrote in Philippians 4, where he says, I know what it's like to be in need. I know what it's like to have plenty. I've learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well-fed or hungry. So Paul had learned what it was to be content, whether he had a lot of food, whether he had a lot of things, or whether he had very, very little.

[14 : 38] But I guarantee you, there's a place in Paul's life where he was not content. And Paul was never content with where he was with the spread of the gospel. He always knew there was more towns to visit, that there were more people to share the gospel with, and there was more strangers to meet to make an impact on them with the gospel.

That's one thing that Paul completely understood. And you see, it doesn't matter where we stand financially. It doesn't matter where we stand spiritually. With 4.5 billion people in the world today that are without Jesus.

I want you to just let that soak into your mind and into your heart right now. 4.5 billion people in this world without Jesus.

1.4 billion of those people have no access to the gospel. We can't really fathom that in our culture. You see, we live in a culture where the Bible is translated, I don't know how many times, but probably at least 50 times in our own language. There's people who don't even have access to the scripture that we have access to each and every day.

[15 : 54] They don't even have access to it in their own language. 1.4 billion people. Zero access to the gospel. Believers. There is much more to be done. Too few of us in our culture are sacrificing for the mission.

This mission is going to cost us something. What Nehemiah here is saying is that God has placed this desire in my heart. It doesn't matter how much the cost. It doesn't matter how much it is. It's all worth it to be able to see people's lives and people's hearts changed. Verse 16. I also applied myself to the work on this wall.

We did not buy any land and all my servants were gathered there for the work. There's a couple things going on here. First of all, he mentions land. Specifically, he mentions not buying any land. Let me tell you how this would work.

Let's say you have a place that's very depressed economically. A city like Jerusalem. And the people there are suffering because of the economy. But on top of that, simultaneously, what's going on is that there is a famine.

[16:58] There's shortage on money. There's shortage on food. And what Nehemiah could have done is he could have moved into town. He could have raised the taxes. And then he could have thereby decreased the land value.

And he could have bought up all of their land at pennies on the dollar. Just a fraction of the cost. Thereby being a burden on the people. What Nehemiah is saying, he says, no, while that might be legal, that's not something that I'm interested in doing.

That's not something that God would want me to do. The second part of this verse. All my servants were gathered there for the work. Nehemiah is saying, not only have I been an example financially, but I'm also being an example in my work, in my obedience in my work.

So what Nehemiah is really indicating to us here is that a leader must be willing to persevere, to give their lives to the cause, and be willing to pay the price for the mission. Then he gives us another leadership insight, beginning in verse 17.

And I love this. I hope that you can track with me through this because this is so intriguing to me. It says, Moreover, there are at my table 150 Jews and officials, besides those who came to us from the nations that were around us.

[18:13] Wait a minute. How many people was he inviting over for dinner? 150? And they sat where? At my table?

I don't know about you, but that has got to be some really gargantuan table for 150 people. Maybe they were just really small people. You never really know.

It says, Now what was prepared? At whose expense? At my expense? Nehemiah's personal expense. Can you imagine a dinner party every night for 150 people? Can you imagine the cost of that?

It says, Now that that which was prepared for each day was one ox, six choice sheep. Also birds were prepared for me. And once in ten days, all sorts of wine were furnished in abundance. Prepared each day. And these were lavish meals. And Nehemiah's paying for it all. And he says, Yet for all of this, I did not demand the governor's food allowance because the servitude was heavy on his people.

[19:20] You say, Well, great. That's awesome. You know, Nehemiah, he had a bunch of people over to his house around what must have been a huge table. And he was doing these big dinner parties. What does that mean for us in our culture today?

I want you to track with me here because mealtime in Scripture, I know this is going to sound silly at first, but meals are incredibly important in Scripture. I want you to think back with me to Genesis. The story begins where there's a Trinitarian God, a God that exists in three persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. This God creates the world and everything that's in it. And in that world, He creates man in His own image and His own likeness.

And there's one thing, before sin enters the world, there's one thing that God says isn't good. And that's that man should not be alone. It's not good for man to be alone. So what we see from the very beginning that God is a relational God and that He's created us to be relational people.

And from the very beginning, we begin to see that. But what happens is something tragic happens. Adam and Eve partake of fruit, which they were forbidden to eat.

[20:29] They partake of a meal outside of God's will. sin enters into the world. And God made a promise to us in Genesis 3.15 that Jesus Christ, the second member of that Trinity, would enter into human history.

Even as early as Genesis 3, we had that prophecy. And then you zoom forward, Jesus comes. Jesus being a pretty important guy, right?

He is God. He's pretty important. He, over and over and over and over again, throughout His life, throughout His ministry, He takes time to sit down and to eat with people. He has dinner with them. In fact, His ministry even begins at a wedding feast. The wedding at Canaan, where He turns water into wine. That's where His ministry begins, is at a meal. Then, Jesus, over and over again, spends a good portion of His life at the dinner table eating with sinners like Zacchaeus.

And it, man, it lit the Pharisees on fire. These religious leaders of the day, they hated the fact that He ate with sinners. And they would whisper among themselves, Can He believe that He's eating

with sinners? Surely, if He was God, He would know those people were sinners.

[21 : 46] But Jesus found it incredibly important to spend time with sinners, to eat with sinners. He sits down and has a drink beside a well in Samaria with an outcast, a woman who is an outcast.

He also made time to eat with His friends like Mary, Martha, Lazarus. Then, as the cross was approaching, as His death was imminent, He has the most famous meal in all of human history, where He sits down with His twelve disciples.

We call it the Last Supper. And this meal is the reason why each and every week, we participate in the Lord's Supper. This idea that the bread symbolizes Jesus' body that was broken.

And the juice that we drink, it symbolizes His blood. And we partake of this meal in order to remember the sacrifice that Jesus made for us on the cross.

The sacrifice that would reconcile us back to God, but not only reconcile us back to God, but to reconcile all of us back to one another. And that's why we do it each and every week.

[22 : 52] That's why we participate in the Lord's Supper each and every week. We partake of the elements so that we can remember the sacrifice that Jesus paid for us on the cross. Then you get to the very end of Scripture.

Just a few chapters from the very end of Revelation. It's Revelation 19. We see another meal. And man, this meal is going to be incredible. It's a meal in which all people, everyone who's ever accepted Jesus as their Lord and Savior, we're all gathered together.

Every tribe, tongue, nation, language, everybody is gathered all together and we're celebrating the second coming of the Lamb. The second coming of Christ. And let me tell you something.

In this meal, there's going to be stuff there that you've literally never seen before. It's going to be like nothing you've ever seen before. It's going to be amazing. It's going to be a celebration. It's going to continue through eternity.

And so we see that sin enters into the world with a meal. And yet God concludes this story as we head into eternity with a meal.

[23 : 57] And all throughout Scripture we see how important meals are. And the reason why this is important is because what Nehemiah is trying to do is he's seeking to transform a city. And he determines that one of the most effective ways to do this is through demonstrating hospitality toward people.

Showing them how much he cares about them. And he's chosen to do that through inviting people over into his home and into his life. And I submit to you that it's going to take us as a church family as believers it's going to take us turning strangers into friends to impact North Georgia for the glory of God.

I'll give you one example of one of the many ways that this can really work in your lives. We as a seminary student I went out to eat one time in the city of Raleigh North Carolina we went to go eat just as a fellowship of believers we wanted to kind of go have fun that night and to eat together so we went to this restaurant and we're having a good time just had a good conversation you know how things normally go when you go out to eat with people.

One of my friends gets up during the middle of the dinner that we're having and goes to the restroom and on his way back he notices that there is what looks like a single mom sitting there having dinner with her children.

And so he comes back to the table and he says hey guys explains to us I've seen this lady over here eating with her children I think she's a single mom and I don't know why but I feel like we should pay for her dinner tonight.

[25 : 30] And so we kind of shrugged our shoulders who are we to say that God's not really truly speaking to you so sure let's do it. So we arranged for our waitress to go get her waitress and to get us the bill instead of her the bill and we would make all the arrangements set it all up we get the bill we all chip in you know five bucks or so each there's four or five of us there I think it didn't take too much for us to pay for her meal and we give the money to our waitress and they take care of everything and I'd like to be able to tell you that this was a life changing thing for this single mom I wish I could tell you that to be honest with you it was kind of awkward you know people don't normally pay for other people's meals sitting at other tables in a restaurant so this lady comes up to us on our way out the door and just kind of says thanks and kind of walks out the door we didn't know what to say to her she didn't really know what to say to us and we went on about eating our meal and she went on about her life about five minutes later our waitress comes up to us and she says why would you do something like that and we just replied back to her well we're just we're all

saved by the grace of God by the blood of Jesus and we we just want to share the love of Jesus with people and we thought that that might be a simple way to show this mom the love of Jesus she was like okay she went on about her business serving other tables and what not we went on about eating our meal about five minutes later she's making her rounds again she comes back to our table and she says can I just ask you guys something what church do you go to she was almost in tears she was almost kind of broken up at this point we all went to different churches so we explained to her we don't all go to the same church we can recommend some good churches for you if you're interested and she said she wanted to tell us a story about how she was experienced brokenness within the church that she had kind of been burned by church people before in the past and she said you know

I haven't really since then had a desire to go to church but if there's a church somewhere out there doing what you guys are doing then that's something I want to be a part of I don't tell you that story to pat myself on the back I don't tell you that story to you you know make much of myself it wasn't even my idea to do it it was my friend's idea I tell you that story to show you what a little hospitality can do what a little trying to reach out to somebody can do when you do it in the name of Jesus and we had no idea when we decided that we were going to pay for the single mom's dinner we had no idea that would make an impact such a big impact on a waitress that was serving us that night sometimes it takes something very incredibly simple in order to make a huge impact for God Nehemiah as a leader understands this principle he's having people over for dinner he's interacting with the people he could have just moved into Jerusalem if he wanted to and not have paid much attention to the people he could have just rebuilt the wall and just moved on with his business but he doesn't do that

I hope that what we're beginning to see is that it was more about building a people than it was about building a wall you see the task on the surface level looks like he's rebuilding the city of Jerusalem as physically what's going on here in the process is that God is using Nehemiah to rebuild his people to turn the hearts of the people of Jerusalem back to God so next time that you're near a coffee shop just go around introducing yourself it might seem a little awkward at first in fact you might freak a few people out just walking up to them and say hey my name is so and so is there anything that I can pray about for you it would be fun it would be something interesting it would be something interesting later on to post on your Facebook status just try it but in this we're sort of cutting against the cultural grain that hey we're strangers and we don't talk to each other well yeah we're strangers until we break that ice until we show a little hospitality then we become friends and when you open that door to friendship you also open the door to be able to share

Jesus with the lost culture that we live in this passage concludes in an interesting way Nehemiah is kind of reflecting on the series of sacrifices that he's made for the cause of the mission and the cause that God has called him to and he says in verse 19 remember for my good oh God all that I have done for this people how many of you at first glance kind of read that as maybe Nehemiah has a little hair of arrogance when he's saying that dear God please remember all the wonderful things that I've done amen right kind of seems a little bit much doesn't it but remember the words that were spoken out of the mouth of Jesus Christ nearly 440 years later after this Jesus says in Matthew 6 you don't have to turn there just listen to these words do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth where moths and vermin destroy and where thieves break in and steal but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven where moths and vermin do not destroy and where thieves do not break in and steal see

Nehemiah I don't believe that Nehemiah is trying to boast here what Nehemiah is saying is I've given a lot towards this cause I've given up many years of my life I've given up a lot of my personal finances I've given up my life for this cause and I'm not likely to receive much earthly reward for this I'm not likely to be thanked by these people and so God if you would just remember these things that I'm storing up my treasure not here on this earth but in heaven and Nehemiah simple prayer here is demonstrating something that Nehemiah understood that we sometimes don't grasp in our culture in a day where we have televangelists on TV who are in the ministry for their own personal gain and say you know just call the 1-800 number on the bottom of your screen and if you just donate a minimum of \$100 you can be blessed by God and they hop in their helicopter and fly home right see say that tongue in cheek but this is something that's really really important because [32 : 14] I feel like this is something we don't really grasp in our theology we're not saved by our works I want you to hear me clearly this morning we're saved by grace alone through faith alone in

Christ alone there's nothing that we can do on our own to bring about salvation in ourselves
Ephesians 2:8-9 and 10 say this for by grace you've been saved through faith not of yourselves it is
the gift of God not as a result of works so that no one may boast and here's what Paul is saying
here we owe a lot to God we owe infinitely to God because of our sin there's nothing that you and I
can do to repay that debt that we owe to God there's absolutely nothing if we're saved by faith but
then he says for we are his workmanship created in

Christ Jesus for what for good works see we may not be saved by our good works but good works
certainly play a large part in the life of the believer you're saved by grace through faith so it's not
about walking in an aisle it's not about!

saying a prayer it's not about getting a ticket into heaven I've heard that phrase more times than I
would ever hope to people say I'm so glad my children have their ticket into heaven these types of
phrases cringe when I hear them you don't get a ticket into heaven it's God who works in you and
the point when you receive!

salvation he works in through this process! sanctification! as you become more holy as you work
out your salvation to do good things for the glory of God God calls us to do that as believers so you
see for the believer there's one of two options that are going on here you can store up your
treasures here on earth and lose it for eternity we've created this mentality in our culture that we get
all we can we can!

all we get and we sit on the can I'm sorry but most of that stuff in that can is not going to go with you
to heaven or you can pour out all of your time your resources and your money toward kingdom
purposes and what you lose here you gain abundantly for the glory of God you gain it in eternity and
I believe that's exactly what Nehemiah is teaching and for some of you I want you to be encouraged
today for some of you there's somebody in here I know that there is who feels discouraged because
you haven't maybe you haven't had the opportunity to make this huge impact on lots and lots and
lots of people in this world I want you to know that it's not necessarily you don't have to necessarily
do Billy Graham size task you don't necessarily have to be holding these rallies where thousands of
people come to know the Lord in order to be working to our kingdom purposes in order to glorify
[35:54] God in your life in fact sometimes it's the little things that we do in this life that make the
biggest impact on the kingdom I don't believe that what we did that night when we paid!

that lady and her children's meal I don't think that was a huge thing but it made an impact on the
waitress you don't have to do huge things to make an impact I want to share with you this quote
from a guy named Blaise Pascal really intelligent guy very brilliant but it's really more of a prayer
that he penned he said God help me to do the big things as though they are small because I do
them in your power you see people like Billy Graham they can't do the things that they do on their
own they do the big things as though they are small because they do it in God's power but the
second part of that prayer is even more profound to me he says Lord help me to do the big things
as though they were small because I do them in your power and help me to do the small things as
though they were big because I do them in your name see the small things can make a big impact
for the glory of

God when we do them in his name so let's all work together like Nehemiah did as he brought
together a people as he rebuilt not just a wall he rebuilt to people and turn their hearts back to God
the same task as before us today to turn the hearts of a wicked culture back to God let's go make
an impact in our cities and our culture this week and next week and beyond for the glory of God let's
pray together