

Financial Bondage and Financial Freedom¹

Nehemiah 5

PROPOSITION: God has given us important information concerning the use of our money.

INTRODUCTION:

1. When anyone starts something for good, the devil gets in the way.
2. In Nehemiah 5, the devil uses division over money and greed.
3. We are reminded of God's concern about our attachment to material things and His concern that we be free from such attachments.

DISCUSSION:

I. Financial Bondage

- A. Nehemiah lists Israel's problems:
 1. Economic necessity existed (v. 2).
 2. People were starving (v. 3).
 3. Strife and division were present (vv. 4, 5).
- B. People trying to get the money of others, and they were borrowing money to pay taxes.
- C. Being in debt, some were in financial bondage (v. 5).
- D. God said, "I do not want My people to be in bondage. I want them to be the head, not the tail. I want them to be lenders, not borrowers" (cf. Deut. 28:1-14; Neh. 5:5).
- E. The devil had the Jews in a trap.
- F. He never has us in a tighter vice than when he has control of our pocketbooks.
- G. How do you know if you are in financial bondage?
 1. Are you charging daily expenditures because of a lack of funds?
 2. Are you putting off until next month paying the bills that are due this month?
 3. Are you unaware of how much money you owe?
 4. Do you have creditors calling?
 5. Are you taking money from savings to pay current bills?
 6. Are you making new loans to pay off old ones?
 7. Do you argue with your spouse over money?
 8. Are you finding it difficult to give to the Lord?
- H. Nehemiah 5:6-10 tell the cause of the Israelite bondage.
 1. The people were in a time of crisis.
 2. Wealthy people were taking advantage of special situations.
- I. Nehemiah was angry (v. 6).
- J. Beware of financial bondage. It could happen to anyone.

¹ From "God's Formula for Financial Freedom" by Doug Parsons, *The Preacher's Periodical*, Vol. 6, No. 3, August 1985, pp. 19-21. Adapted by Andy Kizer.

II. Financial Freedom

- A. The first principle of financial freedom is priority.
 - 1. Nehemiah was an extraordinary leader who said, "Do as I do" (vv. 14-19).
 - 2. He showed a contrast between himself and the rich nobles (v. 14).
 - 3. He was concerned about his life before God (vv. 14, 15).
 - 4. When our priorities are right, we can have financial freedom.
 - 5. Material things are only temporal (cf. 2 Cor. 4:18; cf. Matt. 6:20; Neh. 5:16).
- B. Another principle for financial freedom is industry (work).
 - 1. Nehemiah worked (v. 16; cf. 3:5).
 - 2. Work is a God-appointed obligation for man (2 Thes. 3:10).
 - 3. Even in the church we have some who are willing to work and others who are willing to let them.
 - 4. Nehemiah was the leader, but he was out on the wall working.
- C. Integrity is another principle for financial freedom.
 - 1. Though prices were low, Nehemiah said, "We acquired no land" (v. 16).
 - 2. If money is your god, it will be a poor master.
 - 3. Solomon wrote, "...whoever hastens to be rich will not go unpunished" (Prov. 28:20).
- D. Generosity is yet another principle for financial freedom.
 - 1. Nehemiah had learned generosity (vv. 17, 18).
 - 2. He knew the principle of Luke 6:38.
 - 3. God wants me to give from His resources.
 - 4. Think of how an unsaved man gives.
 - 5. Spiritual, beneficial giving takes place when a man decides that he will glorify God.
- E. Finally, for financial freedom, there must be the principle of trust.
 - 1. Nehemiah 5:19 speaks of the dependability of God.
 - 2. God is not going to forget you (cf. Psa. 37:25).

CONCLUSION:

- 1. Not equal gifts but equal sacrifices
- 2. If everyone will do his part, God will bless us together as we build.