

Ministry & The Work of God: 13

True Ministry Points People To Jesus

Nehemiah 9-10

In these chapters we read that the people of God who had been involved in and/or watched the reconstruction of the wall make a re-commitment to God

In chapter 9 they confess their sin and remember His dealings with them:

- Confess their sin – (9. 1-3)
- Remember His dealings with them & give thanks – (9. 5-37)

Chapter 10 outlines the people's re-commitment to God's covenant. They renew their covenant with God to:

- Walk in God's Law (29)
- Keep marriage amongst God's people (30)
- Honour the Sabbath Day (31)
- Exact an annual Temple Tax - For the service of the House of God (32)
[see Matthew 17.24-27]
- Bring gifts for the offerings (34)
- Bring their tithes into the storehouse (35-39)

In Lesson 9 we made the following points:

- The work of God is not to be used for profiteering, or making money for personal gain.
- We do not take advantage of other people's situations or misfortunes to further our own lifestyles or ministries.
- The work of God is to minister to (serve) people not take from them, or to build empires or our own reputation – it is God's work not ours!

The main purpose of ministry is to point men and women to Jesus.

- Nehemiah's ministry was not just about rebuilding the walls
- It was to bring the people, who had gone astray from God, back to Him.

John 15.26-27

- part of the ministry of the Holy Spirit is to point men and women to Jesus, and to convict them of sin, righteousness and judgement (John 16. 8-11)
- If our ministry carries the anointing of the Holy Spirit then it can only point to Jesus.

John 1.20-23, 29, 35-37; John 3.27-36

- John the Baptist was 'the voice of one crying in the wilderness' preparing the way for Jesus.
- His ministry was to point men to Jesus – 'Behold the Lamb of God'

- John was not interested in building a kingdom for himself but fulfilling that ministry – 'He must increase, I must decrease'

Acts 8.35

- Philip preached Jesus to the Ethiopian eunuch – not a ministry.

1 Corinthians 1.22-23

- Jews and Greeks sought after different things – Jews wanted to see signs and miracles, the Greeks wanted to learn wisdom and fill their intellect.
- There were contentions in the church at Corinth (v11-13) some were hanging on to labels – Paul, Apollos, Cephas (as many do today ministry or denominational labels)
- Paul said 'but we preach Christ crucified'

2 Corinthians 4.5

- We do not preach ourselves but Christ Jesus the Lord
- Paul did not proclaim anything other than Jesus – Jesus the Saviour, Healer, Baptizer

Acts 4.8-14

- Peter & John proclaimed Jesus
- There is salvation in no other name

But they were preachers! What about me?

Acts 8.1,4

- The scattered believers went everywhere preaching the word – the good news that peace, pardon, righteousness and salvation is in Jesus - sharing their testimony

Matthew 5.14-16

- You are a light in a dark world
- Let your light shine – let Jesus be seen in you

2 Timothy 4.5

- Whatever our ministry, eg administrative or helps, we must fulfill the work and do the work of an evangelist (pointing men to Jesus)

John 6.37,44

- The Father draws men and women to Jesus

Lessons:

1. Be careful to proclaim Jesus to the world and not the work or programmes of ministry