

Ministry & The Work of God: 14

The Work of God Is To Be Celebrated

Nehemiah 12

A Brief Point To Consider:

Nehemiah 7, 11 & 12 teach us the importance of good records.

- What God does ought to be recorded and documented for future posterity.
- These records serve as a reminder of God's dealings with us

The Dedication of the Walls – Nehemiah 12.27- 13.3

This was a time of great rejoicing, thanksgiving and celebration.

- Music and singing was a big part of that praise time (vs27)
 - Singers had built their villages all around Jerusalem (vs29)
 - The dedication was characterised by an elaborate ceremony of purification (v30)
 - Nehemiah appointed two large thanksgiving choirs to sing (vs31), one led by Ezra (vs31-37), the other by Nehemiah (vs38-39)
 - These choirs circled around Jerusalem on the walls
 - they met at the house of God and praised loudly (vs40-42)
 - Great sacrifices were offered (vs43) – see Ezra 6.16-17
 - these sacrifices would have been peace offerings (to give thanks to God) – these involved burning the fatty portions and the whole congregation feasting on the rest.
 - It was a festival - time of great rejoicing (and feasting) – all were included men, women and children - it was so loud that the sound of their praise was heard afar off (vs43)
 - Some Levites were appointed to positions of service over the storerooms and received offerings for the work of God (vs44)
 - Singers and gatekeepers ministered in accordance with their divisions and charges (vs45-46)
 - Read from the Book of the Law – acknowledged that God had now turned their curse (exile) into a time of blessing. (Nehemiah 13.1-2)
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- It is right and proper that the work of God is celebrated.
 - Thanksgiving is always an appropriate form of praise and worship
 - Dedicate ourselves to the call of God

The Example of Paul

Acts 12.25

- Barnabus and Paul had been sent to Judea with relief aid for the brethren affected by the famine (Acts 11.29-30)

- They return to their home base (Antioch) when they had fulfilled the ministry – they would have given a report.
- God calls Paul and Barnabus to a new sphere of ministry – the church dedicates them and releases them to the work of God. (Acts 13.2-3)

Acts 14.26-28

Paul and Barnabus return from their missionary trip and reported all that God had done with them

Acts 15.30-32

Paul and Barnabus, with Judas and Silas, return from Jerusalem and report, exhort and encourage the church – this caused a time of rejoicing.

Acts 18.22-23

Paul returns to Antioch and greets his home church

Acts 21.17-19

Paul returns from his missionary trip and reports in detail to the brethren '*the things which God had done among the Gentiles through his ministry*'

Paul was accustomed to give a report of all that God was doing through the ministry.

- Whenever he left to do what God had purposed for him – he went home and gave a report.

The purpose of our report is not to make anything of ourselves or boost our own ego or reputation – It is to celebrate what God has done and give Him the glory.

Lessons:

1. It is good practice to keep records and note what God is and has done – these will help us remember and recall His dealings with us
2. Be sure to give a report to those who support you – your church family, prayer and financial supporters
3. Dedicate the ministry to God – all that you do should be done 'as unto the Lord' - after all it is His work.
4. Make sure that you celebrate what God has done – not build your ego or reputation