



VICTORIOUS CHRISTIAN MINISTRY

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Study 19: MAKING A DIFFERENCE THROUGH PASSION, DECISIVENESS AND ACTION

Nehemiah 5:6-13

“Then said he unto them, Therefore every scribe which is instructed unto the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is an householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old” (Matthew 13:52).

For some time now, we have been drawing some old and new divine treasures from our studies of this chapter of the Bible; and we will draw out yet a few more in this study.

The ability to decide quickly and reasonably is an indispensable quality for progress and success in life. Many have moved from poverty to prosperity (1 Chronicles 4:10); scarcity to abundance (2 Kings 7:3, 4); obscurity to light (Galatians 1:16), and mediocrity to excellence (Luke 5:11) through their ability to decide quickly and act firmly. On hearing the cry of the people, Nehemiah considered the situation critically, was moved to anger against evil, decided promptly and followed up his decision with action. These qualities catapulted him to success in the reformation of the ills in the society. Majorities are, however, wasting away in the valley of indecision (Joel 3:14). ***Decision is like the wind in the open ocean, it can drive the ship to coast or calamity, depending on the set of the sail.*** To be undecided on vital issues is to set the sail for failure. And to decide aright, and act profitably, proper evaluation of the situation is essential (Deuteronomy 4:40; 5:29; Psalms 119:96-104).

1. PASSION AND DRIVE: Nehemiah 5:6

“And I was very angry when I heard their cry and these words” (Nehemiah 5:6). Undoubtedly it was Nehemiah's proper use of the emotion of anger directed at evil that was the key to his success in making a difference to many lives in His generation. Without this quality, a person can easily become like the proverbial story of complacent children in the market place - “They are like unto children sitting in the marketplace, and calling one to another, and saying, We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned to you, and ye have not wept” (Luke 7:32). It was right application of anger that made Jesus to cleanse the temple – making a difference to Spiritual worship (Mathew 21:12-13). The only way to be angry without sin is to be angry at sin (Ephesians 4:26). Anger against sin is a powerful drive for making a difference. A person can only develop and be driven by this type of anger if s/he has perfect hatred for sin. We cannot be passionately angry against what we secretly admire, desire or derive pleasure from.

2. PROPER EVALUATION: Nehemiah 5:7

Paramount to right and sensible decision is proper evaluation of not only the facts but also the possible outcome of our strategy, both in time and eternity (II Kings 7:3, 4). The believer is called to constant self-examination (2 Corinthians 13:5). Rational thinking does not nullify faith in God, for often God calls people to reason with Him

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(Isaiah 1:18; 43:26; Job 40:7). Appropriate consultation (Proverbs 4:25-27) may provide vital insight. Many however ignore both reason and God in their decisions (Isaiah 30:1). They accuse God of injustice (Ezekiel 18:25, 30) and prefer to grope in darkness rather than come to the true light because their deeds are evil (John 3:19). These err exceedingly through adherence to traditions and fables rather than to original principles of God (Matthew 19:1-12; Mark 12:24); fear of the society (John 9:21, 22); a biased mind (Ezekiel 14:1-11) and basic unwillingness (John 7:17). Creation and scripture provide enough light for meaningful decisions (Romans 1:19; Luke 1:1-4; John 20:30, 31) and we are exhorted to use them aright (John 5:39; 2 Timothy 2:15). To ignore them is to wander out of the way of understanding and to invite doom (Proverbs 21:16). The Berean Christians were more noble than others because they examined the scriptures to see if those things were so.

3. PROMPT DECISION: Nehemiah 5:7, 13

Procrastination is the thief of time, and to be undecided for the truth is to decide for evil. To procrastinate is to invite danger. Many however are like the Pharisees, after careful evaluation they stay on the fence rather than decide for the truth because their deeds are evil (Matthew 21:23-27) and they are not humble enough to repent. God expects quick decision from His children (1 Corinthians 15:30-34; 1 Kings 18:21; Joshua 24:15, 21-24; Deuteronomy 30:14, 15, 19). Immediately Nehemiah had thought through his case, he decided for the truth, not caring for whether he would be supported or not. Daniel decided for the truth in a foreign land without looking for followers. ***When deciding for the truth, one should not look back to see how many people are following.*** The gateway to life is strait and the way to heaven narrow, and few there are that find it. Though multitudes may be content to waste away in the valley of indecision, God has called every believer to be a model on a mountaintop holding forth the beacon of light for the perishing multitudes in the valley to follow. Jesus and the apostles were men of quick decision (Matthew 4:22; Mark 2:8; 5:30; 6:50; Galatians 1:16), and if we are aspiring for the same heaven and glory as theirs, we ought also to be men and women of 'like passion' as them. **Prompt decision will either make or mar our God given potentials.**

4. PROFITABLE ACTION: Nehemiah 5:7-13

Nehemiah fearlessly acted on his decision. His actions were profitable enough to lead to expected results, and he persisted in them till he got the results. Once decision has been reached it is no longer virtue to delay action indefinitely (Galatians 6:9; 1 Corinthians 15:58; Ecclesiastes 11:1-6). Our faith should be manifested by actions (James 2:17) but these actions should lead towards the desired goals of making a difference rather than merely maintaining the status quo. Positive results, not just mere actions must remain the primary objective in order to make a difference.

Sometimes the actions will require repetitions in order to achieve the results. Little droplets often form great pools of water, and little raindrops often form mighty floods. Similarly, ***little actions repeated over and over again can yield great results.*** Idleness and instability are the two enemies to profitable action, and always invite trouble (Genesis 49:15, 4a).