

Remnant Life Church  
April 10, 2016  
**Protecting His House**  
Nehemiah 13:1-14

- What has happened in Nehemiah's time that we must also guard against today?
  - Background:
    - + The nation of Israel has been in Babylonian control but over the period of about 75 years the people are slowly returning
    - + This is taking place during the third return during the reign of Artaxerxes
    - + Nehemiah returns to the land of Jerusalem and finds the walls broken down, the homes and temple in disrepair, and the people not supporting the priests so they can lead them in worship
    - + Nehemiah would not stand for what had been allowed to happen
    - + Nehemiah also honored his word to Artaxerxes and returned back to him (Neh 2:6)
  - Of special grievance to him was what he found the priest Eliashib
    - + Eliashib was the high priest
    - + Tobiah was one of the men who had put up opposition to the re-building of the wall (Neh. 4:3)
    - + Tobiah was an Ammonite – a constant thorn and enemy of Israel yet he was not only in the temple – against Nehemiah's word (Neh. 2:20) - but had rented a room for storage! (Compromise!)
  
- Three distinct areas need to be protected:
  1. Our mission
    - worship
    - Witness to others
    - Minister to each other
    - Grow in the things of God
  2. Our reputation
    - This is not our reputation
    - It is the reputation of God's work in this area
    - A church must be a place of love, acceptance, integrity, and without compromise
  3. Our people
    - We are called as an extension of the love of Jesus to guard one another
    - A place of refuge and sanctuary
    - Not a place where sin is ignored or allowed to continue
    - A place of hope and acceptance
    - The "one another's"
      - + Serve – Gal. 5:13
      - + Bear burdens – Gal. 6:2
      - + Forbearing – Eph. 4:2
      - + Being kind, tenderhearted, forgiving – Eph. 4:32
      - + Teaching and admonishing – Col. 3:16
      - + Loving – I Thess. 4:9
      - + Edifying – I Thess. 5:11

- + Exhorting – **Heb. 3:13**
- When we embrace and integrate the “one another’s” we foster a vital element for the life, health, and growth of the church – **unity**
  - Unity is an absolute necessity to achieve anything of value or worth
    - + Family
    - + Business
    - + Government
    - + Teams of any type
  - But this is most true in the church
  - Unity is one of the key themes found throughout the Bible
  - It is the responsibility of EVERY ONE OF US to develop, foster, and protect the unity of RLC
- Why is unity important in the church?
  - Jesus prayed for it in **John 17:20-26**
  - The church was built on fellowship (**Acts 2:42**)
  - We are told to make unity a top priority (**Eph. 4:3**)
  - Any attitude or action that promotes disunity is SIN
  - Unity within a church is a powerful witness to the world (**John 13:34-35**)
  - God blesses the unified church (**Acts 2:46-47**)
    - + A place where He can send those who are searching and will pointed to Him
    - + A place for new Christians to be loved and know that they are safe
    - + A place for the hurting to be cared for and, again, pointed to the healer of our souls
- The good news is we don’t have to be alike to maintain unity.
  - What draws us together and helps us to stay together is our common love for Jesus Christ
  - That love does not look at differences it looks at what is the common – our need for Him, His forgiveness for us, our walk to be more like Him
- How do we maintain unity?
  1. Maintain an attitude of acceptance (**Rom. 14**)
    - Don’t major on the minor things of life
    - Acceptance does not mean agreement
    - Christians do not agree on every passage of the Bible – agree simply not to agree
  2. Focus on the common purpose that we all share
    - **1 Cor 1:10** *I appeal to you, brothers and sisters, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree with one another in what you say and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly united in mind and thought.*
    - What is our common purpose here at RLC?
      - + First and foremost to honor God in every aspect of our lives
      - + Be a witness for Jesus Christ everywhere that we go and in everything we do
      - + Help others

+ Pray for, support, encourage, love one another to become men and women who tell others about Jesus and what He has done for us

3. Support the leadership of the church

- If you don't why are you attending that church?
- Talk to the pastor
  - + Never too busy
  - + We are all busy – no excuse
  - + I cannot pray, I cannot be there for you if I do not know what is happening
- **Heb. 13:17** - *Have confidence in your leaders and submit to their authority, because they keep watch over you as those who must give an account. Do this so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no benefit to you.*
- I will be held accountable for the time that you were on my spiritual watch!
- I desperately need your prayers – so does Dave, Katerina, the BOD, the Sevens

4. Control your tongue

- One of the most damaging actions within every church today is gossip
- Once started it's like a wildfire that will consume everything in very short amount of time
- Don't try and hide it in "Christianeese" language
- If any one comes to you with a concern about someone else here is the process:
  - + "Why are you telling me?" (Ask this as soon as realize what is happening)
  - + "Did you talk with that person about this?"
  - + Yes, but there is still a problem..."Have you talked with Pastor Dave?"
- **Eph 4:29** - *Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen.*

5. Practice the Biblical method of conflict resolution (as given by Jesus)

- **Matt. 18:15-17** - *If your brother or sister sins go and point out their fault, just between the two of you. If they listen to you, you have won them over. But if they will not listen, take one or two others along, so that 'every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses. If they still refuse to listen, tell it to the church; and if they refuse to listen even to the church, treat them as you would a pagan or a tax collector.*
- If you do this in the order that God dictates the problem, one way or another, will be resolved

- This is not about if these things will occur but when
- We are all fallible, capable of blowing it, and getting our noses out of joint

**A church that is guarding the peace from within will be a church making an impact for the Kingdom of God!**