

Remnant Life Church
June 16, 2013
“The Heart of a Father”

Nehemiah 2:1-10

- Two types of fathers
 - A **physical** father must be a man,
 - a **spiritual** “father” is anyone with a heart to nurture others for the kingdom
 - A physical father chooses to have his child;
 - a spiritual father is chosen by his child
 - Nurturing takes not only words but **time, action** and **prayer**
 - The prophet Nehemiah gives us a wonderful blueprint for the father -

- Nehemiah was charged with a great task – rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem
 - Solomon built the first temple in 957 BC
 - Several decades later after his death the temple was plundered by Egyptian Pharaoh Shishak
 - Babylonians totally destroyed it in 586 BC
 - Second temple began to be built in 538 BC (Darius the Great authorization) took 23 years to complete
 - Jeremiah prophesized a 70 period of captivity for the people of Jerusalem
 - The temple fell quickly into disrepair
 - The walls had broken down
 - represented protection, power and beauty to the city
 - they were also needed to guard the temple and assure worship would continue
 - Nehemiah arrives in 445 BC to begin repairs

- Nehemiah had risen to a position of great importance in Babylon (city of Susa) under King Artaxerxes (cup bearer or personal secretary)
 - **God will always places His people where he needs them to accomplish His will**
 - Joseph (Potiphar and Pharaoh)
 - Daniel (Nebuchadnezzar)

- Nehemiah asked the king for permission to return to his home leading a group of exiles with him
- Why did the king agree and even provide assurance of safe passage?
 - Artaxerxes was the son of Xerxes
 - He had two wives – Vashti and Esther
 - Artaxerxes was the stepson of Queen Esther
 - **God always places His people where He needs them to accomplish His will**
- **The Characteristics Of a Father’s Heart Found in Nehemiah**
 - **A Man of Prayer**
 - 8 times in this account of Nehemiah’s journey he prayed spontaneously
 - First prayer is of humility and repentance
 - His last words in this account are a prayer “Remember me with favor, Oh my God.”
 - We understand the importance of prayer even as Jesus teaches on prayer (**Math. 6; Luke 11**)
 - Nothing of any lasting value or significance in our lives can be achieved without prayer
 - Prayer will properly position my heart to live honorably
 - Not just in the eyes of others but in the eyes of God
 - **A Man of Vision**
 - Means seeing more than what just what directly involves you
 - You must learn to listen
 - You must give your undivided attention
 - You must give of your time not convenience
 - You must be of a demeanor that people want to be around you
 - Means believing more than what you can see or even understand – Jeremiah embraced the vision
 - **Ephesians 3:20** - *...is able to do immeasurably more than all we can ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us,*
 - **A Man unwavering in his conviction**

- Refuse to ever compromise
- Satan is almost never one and done
 - 4 times Nehemiah was tempted and each time he gave the same answer
 - What turns you away?
 - Difficulties
 - Fatigue
 - Too long a time
 - Temptation
- **Romans 8:38-39** *“For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”*

○ **A Man of Action**

- Action must always be preceded by strategy
 - Noah was given the plans for the ark
 - David and Solomon were given plans for the temple
 - Jesus was given His assignments by His Father every time He prayed
 - **John 5:19** *“I tell you the truth, the Son can do nothing by himself; he can do only what he sees his Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does.”*
 - Strategy must always be preceded by prayer
 - **I Thess 5:17** – *pray without ceasing*
 - Action without prayer and strategy is nothing more than activity that wears you and others down
- What action is God calling you to today as a man with the heart of a father?
- It is being more patient, understanding and kind?
 - Is it forgiveness?
 - Offering
 - Receiving
 - Reconciliation?

Are you willing to do whatever it takes to carry the heart of a Father?