

Community Group Study Guide

The Danger Within Nehemiah 5

Main Idea

Internal conflict threatens our ability to display God's glory

Overview

I. The Complaints to Nehemiah: Our Greatest Danger Comes From Within

- a. The unified community rallying under pressure in chs. 3 & 4 is now unraveling internally
- b. Jews were enslaving and charging interest to their very own brothers (cf. Dt. 23:19; Lev. 25:39)

II. The Confrontation by Nehemiah: Internal Problems Require Confrontation

- a. Nehemiah is "very agry" at the sin of his brothers
- b. Nehemiah's righteous indignation moves to prayerful contemplation then direct confrontation
- c. Nehemiah is jealous for the glory of God to be displayed (v. 9)
- d. Nehemiah calls for repentance and he himself repents of his sin
- e. Repentance leads to changed behavior and renewed praise

III. The Example of Nehemiah: God's People are Motivated by God's Glory and the People's Good

- a. Nehemiah lays personal gain aside even though he is governor
- b. Nehemiah did not lay heavy taxes on the people out of reverence for God (v. 15)
- c. Nehemiah footed the bill himself to ease the burden on the people (v. 18)

Questions

1: We have seen two types of danger, external & internal. Which is more dangerous? Why?

2: Why is confrontation of sin necessary, both corporately and individually? What is the appropriate way to confront another person's sin? What is the proper response when you are confronted about your sin?

3: Does it really matter what your motivation of an action is as long as the action is itself good? How can we ensure that our motivation is "God's glory" and not our own?

4: Why is personal gain, especially monetary personal gain, so tempting?

5: How does the gospel help us defeat internal conflict and pursue unity over personal gain?