

PROMISES MADE. PROMISES BORKEN.
NEHEMIAH 10:28-13



COMMUNITY
GROUPS

Overview

- I. It takes a community to make a Name (10.28 – 10.39)
 - A. The entire community who has understood word enters into Covenant
 - B. Covenant begins a relationship, that in this case is defined by four things
 1. To walk in God's Law (10.29); 2. Not intermarry (10.30); 3. Keep Sabbath (10.31); 4. Give to ministry of House of God (10.32)
 - C. As the people of God, we too should give ourselves to God and one another through His current covenant community the church by membership, not by living on fringes
- II. Community needs a connection to people of the past to be the people of the future (11 – 12.26)
 - A. List of names documents the particular trades that God preserved (Priests, Levites, etc.)
 - B. List of names connects to the story of the past to solidify themselves as the People of God
 - C. We should also be quick to identify with peoples of the past and not attempt to remove ourselves from the church as something different, unique, or better
- III. Celebrate the work of God (12.27 – 13.3)
 - A. After people are named who will live in the city the people dedicate the walls
 - B. After doing so the people met at the Temple and celebrated and God gave them joy
 - C. We too should celebrate in the seasons of faithfulness and see that God is the one that offers us joy
- IV. The Community is a broken and needy people (13.4 – 13.31)
 - A. Nehemiah returns to scene and finds the following
 1. Tobiah has moved into a place in the Temple where offerings are to go; the people weren't walking in the Law; the people weren't keeping the Sabbath; the people weren't giving to the work of the House of God
 5. In short, all the commitments in the covenant renewal were broken and the author highlights each of them and closes the book with Nehemiah trying to plug the gaps
 - B. Author is closing the book in despair instead of joy to show us our need for a greater Ezra and a greater Nehemiah because we cannot keep the Law precisely because we do not want to
 1. We need Jesus, the son of God to come and make a way that we can be the people of God for all the world to see

Questions

1. Discuss the importance of a "covenant community" (i.e. membership) in the church and why that is important in the life of the believer and in the mandate to display God's glory...highlight how that is reflected in Nehemiah
2. Why is it we feel the need to distance ourselves from the past in order to be something more interesting and engaging for the future? How can we embrace the story of the past in order to be the people of the future?
3. Do you celebrate the work of God? How? If you don't, why not? How can we celebrate God's work more faithfully?
4. Discuss the strategy in the author to end the book this way and how it directs us to Christ.