Leadership Lessons from Nehemiah

Lesson 7: Nehemiah's Guide to Godly Leaders
Nehemiah Chapter 7, the Value of Developing Leaders

I. Faithfulness is required of stewards.

Nehemiah 7:1–2 *Now it came to pass, when the wall was built, and I had set up the doors, and the porters and the singers and the Levites were appointed, [2] That I gave my brother Hanani, and Hananiah the ruler of the palace, charge over Jerusalem: for he was a faithful man, and feared God above many.*

A. Leaders were appointed: porters (gatekeepers), singers, and Levites (priests).

1 Corinthians 4:1–2 *Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God. [2] Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful.*

B. God requires faithfulness of stewards. Whatever God gives us, whether finances, property, or work, we need to steward it well.

Luke 16:10–12 *He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much. [11] If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches? [12] And if ye have not been faithful in that which is another man's, who shall give you that which is your own?*

1. The least of things is finances. If you don't learn to be faithful in finances, God will not give you rulership over spiritual things.

C. Nehemiah chose a few people to be leaders in the city of God after he built the walls because he said they were faithful and they feared God above many. Matthew 22:14 says, *"For many are called, few are chosen."* The difference between being called and chosen is faithfulness.

D. What were the leaders faithful over?

1. What God put in their hearts (Nehemiah 7:5).
2. Leading the 42,360 people (verse 66).
3. Worship with 245 singing men and women (verse 67).
4. Work with livestock and farming (verse 68–69).
5. Finances (verse 70–72).

II. Respect the Word of God.

Nehemiah 8:1–3 *And all the people gathered themselves together as one man into the street that was before the water gate; and they spake unto Ezra the scribe to bring the book of the law of Moses, which the Lord had commanded to Israel. [2] And Ezra the priest brought the law before the congregation both of men and women, and all that could hear with understanding, upon the first day of the seventh month. [3] And he read therein before the street that was before the water gate from the morning until midday, before the men and the women, and those that could understand; and the ears of all the people were attentive unto the book of the law.*

A. Nehemiah restored respect for the Word of God.

    1. Ezra, the scribe, read from the Word of God, and the people listened.

    Nehemiah 8:6–8 *And Ezra blessed the Lord, the great God. And all the people answered, Amen, Amen, with lifting up their hands: and they bowed their heads, and worshipped the Lord with their faces to the ground. [7] Also Jeshua, and Bani, and Sherebiah, Jamin, Akkub, Shabbethai, Hodijah, Maaseiah, Kelita, Azariah, Jozabad, Hanan, Pelaiah, and the Levites, caused the people to understand the law: and the people stood in their place. [8] So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading.*

B. As the Word of God was read, the people worshipped. As God's Word was explained, the people understood.

    1. The Word of God will set people free. Stick to what the Word says!

    Mark 7:6–9, and 13 *He answered and said unto them, Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. [7] Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. [8] For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men, as the washing of pots and cups: and many other such like things ye do. [9] And he said unto them, Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition. …[13] Making the word of God of none effect through your tradition, which ye have delivered: and many such like things do ye.*

III. Serve God with Joy

Nehemiah 8:9–12 *And Nehemiah, which is the Tirshatha, and Ezra the priest the scribe, and the Levites that taught the people, said unto all the people, This day is holy unto the Lord your God; mourn not, nor weep. For all the people wept, when they heard the words of the law. [10] Then he said unto them, Go your way, eat the fat, and drink the sweet, and send portions unto them for whom nothing is prepared: for this day is holy unto our Lord: neither be ye sorry; for the joy of the Lord is your strength. [11] So the Levites stilled all the people, saying, Hold your peace, for the day is holy; neither be ye grieved. [12] And all the people went their way to eat, and to drink, and*

to send portions, and to make great mirth, because they had understood the words that were declared unto them.

A. When the Word of God was read, the people began to weep. They hadn't heard it for so long and realized they weren't keeping it.

    1. Don't weep about what you missed out on or the past because you cannot change the past. You can change the future.

    2. Don't weep about others' misunderstandings and mistakes. God gives people their own choice.

B. Enjoy what God has given you. The Lord helps us keep taking the message and fulfill what God has called us to do. Receive the strength of God to share the goodness of God with others.

C. Charis Christian Center culture: do whatever it takes, do everything with integrity, be passionate, and live with kingdom joy.

Acts 2:47 *Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.*

Conclusion: The keys to building leaders are faithfulness, respect for the Word of God, and living in kingdom joy. Romans 14:17 says, *"For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost."*

Go Deeper
We're all called to do something in the body of Christ. 1 Peter 4:10 says that we all receive the gift and need to be good stewards of God's grace.

- What gift are you called to steward? If you don't know, ask the Holy Spirit to show you.
- Are you faithfully stewarding it? If not, what will help you become a faithful steward?

As the people wept, the Levites told them that this day was holy and that they should not grieve. The people obeyed and went home to eat and drink. We need to enjoy what God has given us. Sometimes, you just need to have a party.

- When was the last time you celebrated God's goodness and faithfulness to you?
- What can you do this week to show your joy in the Lord?

Declaration: Everything I am and everything I own belongs to God, and I'm just managing it. I receive the strength of the Lord to share the goodness of what God has given me!