**A RENEWED COMMITMENT**

**Nehemiah 10:1-39**

**THE BIG IDEA:** **When God’s people get off track the best course of action is a renewed commitment to God and His principles.**

**FOLLOWERS OF THE LORD KNEW WHO WAS GENUINELY PART OF THE FAMILY OF GOD (vss. 1-29)**

* **Church Membership is an important part of the Christian walk because it shows that you are genuinely accountable to and connected with God’s people.**
* *“… join with their noble brothers and commit themselves with a sworn oath to follow the law of God given through God’s servant Moses and to obey carefully all the commands, ordinances, and statutes of the Lord our Lord.”* (Nehemiah 10:29)
* **When we are “born again” as Christians we are ot only turning away from our old lifestyle, we are turning to a completely new life in Christ.**
* *“Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those in Christ Jesus, 2 because the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and death….5 For those who live according to the flesh have their minds set on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit have their minds set on the things of the Spirit.”* (Romans 8:1-5)

**MARRIAGE SHOULD BE A REFLECTION OF CHRIST AND HIS CHURCH**

* *“We will not give our daughters in marriage to the surrounding peoples and will not take their daughters as wives for our sons.”* (Nehemiah 10:30)
* **The forbidding of intermarriage in the Bible was never about race or nationality, but about God’s people marrying idolaters who worshipped pagan gods.**
* **Only a husband and wife who are born again serving the Lord together can reflect the relationship between Christ and His Church, and raise children in the admonition of the Lord together. (See Ephesians 5:21-33)**

**THE PEOPLE OF GOD SHOULD BE COMMITTED TO MAKING RADICAL CHANGES IN THEIR LIVES**

* *“When the surrounding peoples bring merchandise or any kind of grain to sell on the Sabbath day, we will not buy from them on the Sabbath or a holy day. We will also leave the land uncultivated in the seventh year and will cancel every debt.”* (Nehemiah 10:31)
* **Some people are masters of finding justification for their disobedience to the Lord, but we are called to live a life worthy of the Lord who hung and died for us.**
* **While it is certainly okay for Christians to observe a Sabbath Day, all Christians have entered into rest when Christ saved them.**
* *“For we who have believed enter the rest…”* (Hebrews 4:3)
* **God’s laws are a reminder for us to trust him in all areas of our lives.**

**BELIEVERS IN CHRIST SHOULD BE COMMITTED TO SUPPORTING THE WORK OF THE MINISTRY THROUGH THE LOCAL CHURCH**

* *“We will impose the following commands on ourselves: To give…for all the work of the house of our God….* *We will not neglect the house of our God.”* (Nehemiah 10:32-39)
* **As God’s people in the Bible reflected on God’s mercy and faithfulness they *wanted* to support God’s temple and His Kingdom work; they did not give out of pressure or unwillingly.**
* *“I can testify that, according to their ability and even beyond their ability, of their own accord, 4 they begged us earnestly for the privilege of sharing in the ministry to the saints.”* (2 Corinthians 8:3-4)
* *“Then a poor widow came and dropped in two tiny coins worth very little. 43 Summoning his disciples, he said to them, ‘Truly I tell you, this poor widow has put more into the treasury than all the others. 44 For they all gave out of their surplus, but she out of her poverty has put in everything she had —all she had to live on.’”* (Mark 12:42-44)
* **Supporting the work of the Church financially demonstrates that we care about lost and hurting people in our community and the world.**

**CONNECT GROUP DISCUSSION**

**Ice Breaker:** What is the most unusual promise or commitment you have ever made?

**Start thinking:**

* What do we learn about God from Nehemiah 10?
* What was the purpose of the list of names “and the others”?
* Why were the Israelites drafting and signing a new covenant with God?
* Why did the Israelites commit to not intermarrying with other people groups?

**Start sharing. Discuss in depth to create openness.**

* How has this message impacted your view on Church Membership and accountability?
* What have you learned from this message regarding marriage? How can you apply this in your life?
* What are some “justifications” that Christians use today to “excuse” disobeying the Lord’s principles?
* Why is supporting the church generously and faithfully important? (Pray and reflect on what, if anything, you need to change in your support of the Lord’s work at Renew).
* What is your big takeaway from this message?

**Pray**

* Share prayer requests and pray for each other.
* Pray for our community to be open to the Gospel.
* Pray for our church, and leadership.
* Pray for our government leaders, and local leaders.
* Pray about anything else the Holy Spirit leads you to pray