

DISCIPLESHIP GROUPS

Our Mission: To win, build and send Department of Defense leaders to live for Jesus Christ

22-26 April 2002

NEHEMIAH: MAN OF ACTION!

#10 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

INTRODUCTION

- What was the last church, school or community activity for which you volunteered? Would you do it again? Why or why not?
- Do you prefer a rural, suburban or city setting to make your home?

OBSERVATION/INTERPRETATION

Read Nehemiah 11:1-3

- The wall is completed. The Israelites have prayed, confessed their sin and renewed their covenant to obey God fully. Now they must decide who will inhabit Jerusalem, and very few people are signing up. Why might that be? (See 11:20 for one insight.)
- How did they solve the problem? How do we deal with similar situations today?
- What was the attitude toward those who volunteered? How does this compare to today?

Note: The next 55 verses list the heads of households by name, delineating those who lived in Jerusalem and those who lived in the nearby countryside. Good luck with pronouncing these!

Read 12:27-47

- This describes how they celebrated the dedication of the wall. After they called in all the priests, what was the first thing they did (v. 30)? What significance does this have?
- How did the people celebrate – what all was included (vv. 31-43)? Where did they end up?
- What do we learn about putting closure on a project?
- Throughout this we see everyone had a certain role or responsibility to fulfill, down to the children. What lessons can we glean here?
- The chapter ends describing something in which all Israelites participated – what was that?
- What is the significance of the three different words for giving in verse 44?

APPLICATION

- What just occurred or is coming up that you can celebrate in your family, church or organization? How can you involve people in various roles and give thanks to God?
- Are you contributing to God's work? Are you giving from the top or from what's left over? Are you giving at least a tithe (10%) of all that God has given to you?

None of us has to be an accountant to know what ten percent of a gross income is, but each of us has to be a person on his knees before God if we are to understand our commitment to proportionate giving.

Proportionate to what? Proportionate to the accumulated wealth of one's family? Proportionate to one's income and the demands upon it, which vary from family to family? Proportionate to one's sense of security and the degree of anxiety with which one lives? Proportionate to the keenness of our awareness of those who suffer? Proportionate to our sense of justice and of God's ownership of all wealth? Proportionate to our sense of stewardship for those who follow after us? And so on, and so forth. The answer, of course, is in proportion to all of these things.

Proportionate giving has kept us from mistaking our churchgoing for Christianity, and from looking at our neighbor to see what we should be doing....

– Elizabeth O'Connor, Letters to Scattered Pilgrims