

DISCIPLESHIP GROUPS

Our Mission: Reaching Out to Leaders Who Can Change the World.

13 – 17 August 2007

NEHEMIAH: MAN OF PRAYER & ACTION! ***#4 BEING GOOD AND MAD***

INTRODUCTION

- When have you taken action against a perceived and/or real injustice? What was the result?

TRAINING OBJECTIVE To discuss Nehemiah's approach to managing anger.

OBSERVATION/INTERPRETATION

In this chapter Nehemiah shifts his attention from building the wall to resolving some internal problems. He knows they cannot be assured of God's blessing if there's sin in the camp.

Read Nehemiah 5:1-11

Background: (1) Taxes were usually levied by the conquering king (Persia in this case). The poor could borrow money by using family members as security, and failure to pay meant the family member could be sold into slavery (servanthood). (2) Usury was lending money for very high or unfair interest; to practice this with fellow Jews was forbidden by God (Lev 25:39-43).

- What are the causes of the great outcry?
- What were Nehemiah's options for responding? What were the potential consequences?
- What anger management principles do we learn from Nehemiah's response? (Eph 4:26; James 1:19,20; Mark 11:15,16)
- Who does Nehemiah hold responsible, and what have they done wrong?
- What is Nehemiah's solution? What was the basis of his appeal (v. 9)?

Read Nehemiah 5:12-19

Background: (1) The folds of the robe (below the belt) were often used to carry loose grain. Kernels that stuck to the robe after it was emptied would be shaken out. (2) A public official had the right to demand food for his table from the people.

- How did the nobles respond to Nehemiah's exhortation? Why?
- Why did Nehemiah have them swear in front of the priests?
- Why do you think some people have trouble honoring agreements?
- Whom did the people praise for correcting the problem? Why not Nehemiah?
- How did Nehemiah practice what he preached? How do you think this affected the people's willingness to follow his leadership?
- What was Nehemiah's motivation for his prayer in verse 19?

APPLICATION

- What is one anger management principle that you want to apply to your life and relationships?

Seven reasons for anger stir up our sinful nature and hamper our effort to live by the Spirit. In a life fully surrendered to the Lordship of Jesus Christ, these seven reasons for anger are opportunities to either become angry, or to trust God with yet another area of our lives. [They] have two characteristics in common: selfishness and impatience:

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|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <i>(1) Violation of Rights</i> | <i>(4) Irritations</i> | <i>(7) Pathological/Psychological</i> |
| <i>(2) Disappointment with</i> | <i>(5) Feeling Misunderstood</i> | |
| <i>(3) Blocked Goals</i> | <i>(6) Unrealistic Expectations</i> | |