



Week 8: Pledge Wholeheartedly

Nehemiah 9:38 and 10:28-33 (NIV)

A. The Pledge by the People: A Unified Mission

1. Leadership led the way

“In view of all this, we are making a binding agreement, putting it in writing, and our leaders, our Levites and our priests are affixing their seals to it.” Nehemiah 9:38 (NIV)

2. The people followed

*“The rest of the people—priests, Levites, gatekeepers, musicians, temple servants and all who separated themselves from the neighboring peoples for the sake of the Law of God, together with their wives and all their sons and daughters who are able to understand—”
Nehemiah 10:28 (NIV)*

3. The contents of the pledge

a. Not to intermarry

*“We promise not to give our daughters in marriage to peoples around us or take their daughters for our sons.”
Nehemiah 10:30*

b. Honor the Sabbath

“...we will not buy from them on the Sabbath or on any holy day. Every seventh year we will forgo working the land and will cancel all debts.” Nehemiah 10:31b-c (NIV)

c. Give to the Lord what is His

“We also assume responsibility for bringing to the house of the Lord each year the firstfruits of our crops and of every tree.” Nehemiah 10:35 (NIV)

“And we will bring a tithe of our crops to the Levites, for it is the Levites who collect the tithes in all the towns where we work.” Nehemiah 10:37b (NIV)

B. The Backsliding by the People: Corruption Through Compromise

1. Leadership led the way

“Eliashib the priest had been put in charge of the storerooms of the house of our God. He was closely associated with Tobiah, and he had provided him with a large room formerly used to store the grain offerings and incense and temple articles...” Nehemiah 13:4-5a (NIV)

2. The people followed

*“Moreover, in those days I saw men of Judah who had married women from Ashdod, Ammon, and Moab. Half of their children spoke the language of Ashdod or the language of one of the other peoples, and did not know how to speak the language of Judah.”
Nehemiah 13:23-24 (NIV)*

C. The Reform by Nehemiah:

A Holy Displeasing

1. Eliashib and Tobiah

“I was greatly displeased and threw all Tobiah’s household goods out of the room. I gave orders to purify the rooms...” Nehemiah 13:8-9a (NIV)

2. The officials

“So I rebuked the officials and asked them, ‘Why is the house of God neglected?’” Nehemiah 13:11a (NIV)

3. The nobles

“I rebuked the nobles of Judah and said to them, ‘What is this wicked thing you are doing—desecrating the Sabbath day?’” Nehemiah 13:17 (NIV)

4. The men

“I rebuked them and called curses down on them. I beat some of the men and pulled out their hair. I made them take an oath...” Nehemiah 13:25a (NIV)

5. Nehemiah’s plea to God

*“Remember me with favor, my God.”
Nehemiah 13:31b (NIV)*

D. A 21st Century Agreement

1. I will practice my faith regularly

*“From 2000-2020: Non-practicing Christians have grown from 30%-43%. Practicing Christians declined from 45%-25%. Non-Christians or agnostic rose from 20% to 32%.”
-Barna Group*

2. I will make disciples every year

*“Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit...”
Matthew 28:19 (NIV)*

3. I will live and love like the Bible is true

“All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.” 2 Timothy 3:16-17 (NIV)

4. I will witness knowing there is a heaven AND hell.

“Then He will say to those on His left, ‘Depart from Me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels.’” Matthew 25:41

To begin a relationship with Jesus...

Text: I Choose Jesus to 88202

Next Sunday: A new series: “All In: Don’t just go to church. Be the church.”

(Service will be outdoors.)

Nehemiah in Review

Nehemiah was made aware of Jerusalem’s destruction. He **prayed boldly** and **planned intentionally** for God’s favor, as well as King Artaxerxes. He got it. He **proceeded confidently** to Jerusalem with armored guards and a mission to rebuild the gates, walls, and the people. He came under attack by the enemies of God--**protected externally** by continuing the work and arming the men with weapons. Then, they had to **protect internally** when the people started to doubt Nehemiah and God. They took matters into their own hands. The walls and gates were finished in 52 days. The people celebrated and **praised humbly** by reading God’s Law, realizing their sin, and worshipped together as one. Three weeks after the celebration, the people **pleaded sincerely** after realizing generational sin and the cause of exile. They wanted better going forward. Nehemiah tried to get the people to **pledge wholeheartedly** with reform, but they failed. The good news was that the final reform happened over 400 years later when God wrapped Himself in flesh and became our sin.

