

November 6th, 2022 AM – Pastor Kevin Olivier
Nehemiah 12:22-30 – “Dedicate Yourselves to God”

- A. Modern English has a tendency to diminish the grandeur of certain biblical words.
- B. Religious dedication or consecration during the days of Nehemiah was rooted in thanksgiving to God.

You are to dedicate yourself to God.	I. <u>GIVE PRAISE & THANKS & CELEBRATE</u> II. <u>DEDICATE YOURSELVES IN CHRIST</u>
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I. GIVE PRAISE & THANKS & CELEBRATE-

A. **v24** tells us the heads of the Levites along with their Levite brethren opposite them gathered “**to praise & give thanks, as prescribed by David the man of God.**” Like the Levites during the days of Nehemiah, we ought to learn how to give God thanks & praise from the life & Psalms of David.

1. Yes, David had a history of falling into heinous sin, yet the Holy Spirit even used that to enable David to write beautiful & profound confessions of sin.
 - a. When God rejected Saul because of his stubborn disobedience, Samuel said how “**The Lord has sought out for Himself a man after His own heart**” (**1 Sam 13:14**).
 - b. From the life of David, we can glean that being a man of God doesn’t mean being sinless. Jesus was the only sinless man who set foot on this earth.
2. Being a man of God means:
 - a. Having a sincere saving faith that bears fruit of the Holy Spirit
 - b. Repenting from sin which means turning away from sin with a sincere endeavor after true obedience.
 - c. A man of God gives God praise & thanks as mentioned in **v24**.
 - 1) This is God’s ideal of what men should be.
 - 2) This secular, corrupt world has a distorted view of what men should be.
3. In your homes, God desires for you husbands & dads to lead your wives & kids in reading Scripture & in giving your Triune God the praise & thanks He deserves.

B. Today’s text mentions giving God praise & thanks as a celebration. → Look at **v27**.

1. Christians ought to celebrate because we have true cause to be thankful & rejoice.
2. Many outside the church love to celebrate or party yet their lives & spiritual conditions are more deserving of weeping & grief.

C. Celebration in Jerusalem brought in people from all of the surrounding area. → Look at **vv28-29**.

The end **v29** says some moved to be closer to their place of worship: “**...the singers had built themselves villages around Jerusalem.**”

II. DEDICATE YOURSELVES IN CHRIST – **v27** describes the events in this chapter as a great day of **“dedication of the wall of Jerusalem.”**

A. What is a dedication?

1. The Hebrew word here should be familiar to you. It is **“Hanukah”** which can also be translated as **“consecration.”**
2. To dedicate or consecrate something to God is to offer or commit it to Him.
 - a. If a church has a dedication service for a new building, that involves offering or committing the building for holy use for the sake of God’s kingdom.
 - b. That is what they were doing with the walls of Jerusalem.

B. Under the leadership of Nehemiah & Ezra, there was a component of this dedication service that we should not practice today. → Look at **v30**.

1. This practice was a type or shadow which pointed to the person & work of Jesus Christ.
 - a. We no longer need earthly priests to offer purification rites because that has been done fully & beautifully through Jesus.
 - b. Turn to **Heb 1:1-4**.
2. According to the NT, there are to be elders— ruling elders & teaching elders (a.k.a. “pastors”) & deacons as the ordained officers in the church.
 - a. There is no longer the office of priest or Levites because the ceremonial system & law has been fulfilled in Christ.
 - b. As pastor, I can’t purify anyone; however, I can point you to the Lord Jesus who can purify you of all your sins— past, present, & future.
 - 1) For those who have put steadfast, persevering faith in Jesus & His gospel, **Col 1:22** says **“He has now reconciled you in His fleshly body through death, in order to present you before Him holy & blameless & beyond reproach.”**
 - 2) Pray for such a saving faith & purification through the person & work of Christ.
 - c. Some of you in this church have put your faith in Christ many years ago.
 - 1) You believe that Jesus died for your sins & washed you clean by His blood.
 - 2) Like your pastor & elders, you may grieve at times over the fact that you still continue to sin.
 - 3) For true believers who depart from this life, their bodies remain in the grave awaiting the resurrection; however, in the meantime, **Heb 12:23** describes their presence in heaven as **“spirits of the righteous made perfect.”**

C. In light of the holy gospel of Christ, how ought you to live? **Rom 12:1** says you are **“to present your bodies a living & holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship.”**

1. We no longer believe in animal sacrifices, yet we believe in offering ourselves body & soul to God through Christ & for Christ & for His praise & glory.
2. When you meet a Jew, you can tell him or her you believe in the practice of **“Hanukah.”**

Review, further application, & conclusion: