

Do the Right Thing (Nehemiah 5, p 401)

“Remember for my good, O my God, all that I have done for this people” – Nehemiah 5:19.

I. EXPLOITATION (1-5)

- A. **Our families are starving! (2)**
- B. **We’re mortgaged to the hilt to buy food! (3)**
- C. **We’ve got to take out loans to pay taxes! (4)**
- D. **We have to sell our kids as slaves to survive! (5)**

II. CONFRONTATION (6-11)

- A. **Thoughtful anger (6-7a)**
- B. **Private accusation (7b)**
- C. **Public rebuke & appeal re: (7c-11)**
 - 1. shame of selling fellow Jews (8)
 - 2. fear of God—and His Word (9)
 - 3. taunts from the nations/enemies (9)

III. RESTITUTION (12-13)

“‘We will restore these and require nothing from them.’ ... And the people did as they had promised.”

IV. MOTIVATION (14-19)

- A. **Nehemiah feared (& loved) his God (15)**
- B. **Nehemiah cared deeply for his people (18)**
- C. **Nehemiah knew God sees & rewards what we do for others & for God’s glory (19)**

Let's do the right thing, and make a difference!

Hearing & Doing Questions

1. Have you ever been exploited or treated badly by someone in a position of power over you? How did that make you feel? Read through the verses describing how Nehemiah's people had been exploited (Nehemiah 1:1-5; Points I. A – D above). Try and imagine their despair.
2. Why is Nehemiah so angry about this shocking treatment of Jews by fellow-Jews? What does this behavior demonstrate about the perpetrators (verses 7-9)?
3. What impresses you about the way Nehemiah addresses this issue with the result that the people are convicted and respond appropriately (verses 6-11)?
4. We love and are rightly proud of our country and our freedoms. And yet, injustices remain in our society at many levels. What are some that come to mind?
5. What should the Christian's relationship be to social justice? As representatives of Christ in our culture, aren't we called primarily to preach the gospel? Or, are we also called to live out the implications of the gospel in a needy world? Read James 2:14-17.
6. Nehemiah's example challenges each one of us to do the right thing and make a difference in our own sphere of influence. As an application, what is one practical ministry opportunity discussed this morning with which you will engage?

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