

Restoration – Dedication

Once God has brought restoration in our lives and church we need to dedicate ourselves to him in order to recognise what He has done and to walk in his ways not to undo the work that He has done.

The oxford dictionary defines “dedicate” as: “devote to a special task or purpose; devote to a deity, saint, etc; single-mindedly loyal to an aim, vocation, etc.

Nehemiah 12: 27 – 47

1) Dedication to God (vs. 27 – 30)

- The Levites were brought to Jerusalem for the dedication of the wall.
 - The Levites were the priests
 - The duty of the priests was to offer sacrifices and be a mediator between the people and God.
 - By bringing in the Levites in effect the Israelites were dedicating the newly restored wall of Jerusalem to God.
- Another word we could use for dedicate is consecrate i.e. set apart to God
 - The Nazarites dedicated or consecrated themselves to God
 - They refrained from eating and drinking certain food and drink and did not cut their hair.
- The above definition of dedication is to be single-mindedly loyal.
 - God has restored us to what He wants us to be so that we can be single-mindedly loyal to Him.
 - Loyalty is to be trustworthy, faithful, steadfast, dependable, reliable
 - Are we single-mindedly loyal to God or do we have divided loyalty between God and the world?
 - “A wife who is 85% faithful to her husband is not faithful at all. There is no such thing as part-time loyalty to Jesus Christ.” Vance Havner.
- The command to “Be holy as I am holy” is found throughout the Bible.
 - To be holy means to be set aside or to be consecrated to God.
 - Our life does not belong to us. We were slaves to Satan and sin but Jesus bought us by his blood. We are His bond slaves. We belong to Him.
 - However, unlike Satan, He gives us the choice to consecrate ourselves to Him.
 - His priority is that we will do so because we have recognised His grace to us and devote ourselves to Him because we love Him and not because we legally belong to Him.

2) Reviewing where we have come from (vs. 31 – 39)

- To recognise God’s grace to us we ought to have a look at our lives and review what God has done for us.
- Nehemiah had the leaders of Judah go up on top of the wall. (v. 31)
 - The best place to review the newly restored wall would be from on top.
 - It also showed that they needed to trust the quality to the restoration. A poorly restored wall could have crumbled at having weight on it.
 - When we look at our lives we don’t only look at what God has done in and for us but the quality of the work that he has done.
 - He is in the process of perfecting us. God doesn’t make mistakes.
- We often forget where we have come from and so don’t always appreciate the grace of God in our lives.
 - Looking back at the brokenness and hurt and freedom from sin that God has saved us from gives us a renewed sense of gratitude to God and joy in our lives.

- It leads us to give ourselves sacrificially to God.
- Romans 12: 1 – 2 “Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God--this is your spiritual act of worship. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is--his good, pleasing and perfect will.”

3) Dedication to the task that God has made us for (vs. 40 – 47)

- This leads to on to dedicate ourselves to doing the good pleasing and perfect will that God had originally made us for.
- God does not merely restore us to live our own lives for ourselves but to do His will.
 - Ephesians 2: 8 - 10 For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith--and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God-- not by works, so that no one can boast. For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.
 - In His restoration process he has and is molding us not only in our character to be the image of Jesus but also in our gifts and talents to do the good works that He had in mind when He created us.
 - In other words God has restored us to fulfill a purpose.
 - AC 13: 36 "For when David had served God's purpose in his own generation, he fell asleep
- It is understandable that in times of brokenness and bondage we will be very introspective – looking after our own needs.
- But the time has to come when we say: “What am I on this earth for and how am I going to fulfill that purpose?”
- Who are living for?
 - Yourself?
 - Others?
 - God?