

Dr. John Johnson

November 26-27, 2005

What Good is a Wall without a Community?

Pastor Johnson shared the essence of Nehemiah 5 in which Nehemiah finds out that there is disregard among the community. He becomes righteously angry about the way fellow Jews are treating their brothers. In the midst of the continued taxation as a colony, the building of the wall, and the still apparent threats by enemies, fellow Jews inside the wall were price gouging, exploiting, and allowing brothers and sisters to go into slavery for debts. Nehemiah steps in to be the standard bearer of community, to hold that flag high and challenges the people to respond to his challenge and they do.

Key Statements by Pastor John:

“They were graceless in their dealings with their brothers.”

“By disregarding their moral obligations, what good would the wall be?”

“What is it to have a vision or build a building without having a community behind it?”

“Do we come to receive AND give?”

Application questions for us as a church:

1. What are words or phrases that describe community?
2. Review Nehemiah 5:9 when he speaks to the nobles and officials about their testimony to Gentiles being a reproach. What does it mean to “walk in the fear of our God?”
3. If there was a “sensitivity meter” related toward those who are “have nots” and the number 1 was not sensitive at all and the number 10 was really sensitive, where would you place yourself on that meter?
4. What could you do in your Worship Service or with your Life Group to connect to others and have them connect to you? (Brainstorm some ideas and begin to carry them out with your group, then report back and see how you are doing.)