

## Ministry and Financial Problems

### Introduction

- God provides what is needed for ministries to progress in times of difficulty including miracles & deserves all credit (4:15).
- Believers must often make some radical changes after a successful battle in ministry to continue making progress (v.16-20).
- Believers must make wise use of their time & remain alert in order to maintain progress made in ministry (v. 21-22).
- Maintaining the progress made in ministry requires great personal sacrifice from everyone involved (v. 23) – *everyone is a saint & soldier; worker & warrior, etc.*

### I. Financial Problems Revealed (v. 1-5)

#### A. Non-landowners (v. 1-2)

*Even the most faithful ministry in the will of God may experience severe financial problems. Families with very little income that are committed to faithful ministry may not be able to provide basic needs (v. 2). Believers must clearly reveal their financial problems to the people of God – leaders (v. 1; Ac. 6:1). Women & wives often experience the effects first at home. The sinful actions of some believers may cause financial problems for other believers – “Jewish brothers” (Ex. 22:25).*

#### B. Landowners (v. 3-4)

*Believers in ministry who have done well financially may also experience severe financial problems. Unmanageable debt is a serious problem for believers attempting to be faithful in ministry (v. 3-4). When believers begin to borrow money to meet their basic needs, they are in a financial crisis – *2nd & 3rd mortgage, home equity, CU loans, credit cards, etc.**

CRISIS (v. 5): Out of control debt is a form of slavery that can keep believers from obeying God (Pr. 22:7).

### II. Financial Problems Corrected (v. 6-13)

#### A. Biblical corrections encouraged (v. 6-11)

*Grievous sin & devastating consequences should provoke righteous anger & wise actions (v. 6-7a; Eph. 4:26). The*

*wealthy believers were taking advantage of poor believers, but Nehemiah wisely addressed the sin not their social status. The sin of injustice & exploitation among believers is grievous (v. 7b.-8; Ex. 22:25). The fact that something is legal does not make it morally right before God. Sinful financial issues among believers always reflect negatively on God & hinders gospel ministry – “taunts” (v. 9). The desperate needs of believers in the Lord’s ministry demand a radical financial sacrifice from supporters (v. 10-11).*

#### B. Biblical corrections accepted (v. 12-13)

*Believers should confess grievous financial sins & accept biblical correction (v. 8b, 12a-b; 1Jn. 1:9) – “We will do as you say”. Believers convicted of this sin must accept the grave consequences of not making biblical changes financially (v. 12c-13b; Eccl. 5:4-7; Jas. 5:12). When sin is corrected, God is to be praised & believers are blessed (v. 13c-d).*

**ILL:** You may say, “Since I’m not wealthy, have no slaves, not exploiting & creating injustice for anyone, this does not apply to me.” We are wealthy compared to believers living on \$350 SS/mo., \$60 FS, 40% of UE or Disability, UE run out, shelter, homeless & in desperate need in USA; much worse in other countries... We are wealthy with time, skills, talents, sp. gifts, etc. We may be putting faithful believers in desperate situations with their time, skills, etc.

**APPL:** We must be willing to let the Holy Spirit search us all now to see if our selfishness & greed has caused us to deprive some other believer of basic needs; in a state of desperation... Are we individually or collectively guilty of this grievous sin? On the other hand, you might be a believer going thru a financial crisis – very little income, out of control debt, too many loans, credit cards, etc.; cannot provide basic needs. Are you willing to be examined by the Holy Spirit to determine why you are going thru a financial crisis? Debt is a form of slavery & the Lord wants us to be free to serve Him!

## CONCLUSION

So then my beloved brothers & sisters, that's the situation that Nehemiah faced & that's the situation that we face. I am not aware of a massive financial crisis among us or else I would address as Nehemiah did. However you know what kind of financial problems that you are facing personally. You know if those financial problems are hindering your ministry. By the help & power of the Holy Spirit, you need to consider whether your sin or the sin of others is the cause of your crisis. Either way, you cannot receive help unless you humble yourself & make it known to the people of God – your true family, true Blood relative, fellow sheep, citizen of kingdom, etc. We are children of God with you – talk to us. That's the way God delivered Nehemiah & believers in 400 BC & that's the way He'll deliver us in 2012 AD. Remember the Lord plans for us to finish the work that He has called us to do – no financial problem is too hard for Almighty God. Victory belongs to Christ & to us!

And if you are not a Christian, you have the most serious financial crisis of all. You are spiritually bankrupt. Because of your sins, you have an enormous spiritual debt & you have absolutely nothing to give to God to pay for your sin. He requires a sinless & perfect life as payment – you cannot do it, but Jesus has already done so.... Will you trust Him & believe today...?

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