

Whos and Whats

3.28.10

“Now when the wall had been built and I had set up the doors, and the gatekeepers, the singers, and the Levites had been appointed, I gave my brother Hanani and Hananiah the governor of the castle charge over Jerusalem, for he was a more faithful and God-fearing man than many. These men were chosen because of their character.

P: Our character opens and closes doors for us.

Examples in Scripture:

1. Jesus - (Rom. 5:19, 2 Cor. 5:21)
2. Acts 6:1-7 - choosing of those who would help the Apostles’
3. Qualifications for Pastor/Elders - 1 Timothy 3, Titus 1

Steps Toward Developing Godly Character:

1. Immerse yourselves in the Scriptures.
 - a. Your time in the Bible has got to become more important than whatever is keeping you from it. *What is keeping you from sending quality time in the Bible? What needs to change?*
2. Spend time with Jesus in prayer.
 - a. His character will rub off on you.
3. Spend time with Jesus’ people.
 - a. He who walks with the wise grows wise (Prov. 13:20). Bad company corrupts good character (1 Cor. 15:33). The opposite is also true.
 - b. Taking it to the next level:
 1. People who are ‘in your life.’ Spouses. Pastors. etc. Fight Clubs.
 2. Ask someone you trust to *honestly* assess your character.
 - i. Someone who sees your blind spots and can address them in the Gospel.

P: There is a direct link between our fear of God and our faithfulness to God.

Definition: The “fear of God” is the reverential awe, worship, and even trepidation before the holy Creator God. For us, it finds its fullness in the cross where we see the intersection of God’s holiness and wrath and God’s love.

Practically: If we take the holiness of God seriously, we will take our sin and the Cross seriously. If we will see that our sin is so serious that it cost Jesus His life and Jesus is so loving that He willingly laid down His life, then we will be motivated to live our lives as people who are not our own but who were bought with a price (1 Cor. 6:20)

Am I walking in an appropriate, biblical, fear of God that comes together in the Cross today? If not what, needs to change?

“And I said to them, “Let not the gates of Jerusalem be opened until the sun is hot. And while they are still standing guard, let them shut and bar the doors. Appoint guards from among the inhabitants of Jerusalem, some at their guard posts and some in front of their own homes. “The city was wide and large, but the people within it were few, and no houses had been rebuilt.” This would have been an adjustment to typical practice.

P: It’s not enough to be used by God to build something, we have to be ready to protect it as well.

**If you neglect it, the enemy will wreck it. If you ignore it, the enemy will destroy it. (John 10:10)*

How is the enemy attacking you? How effectively are you protecting what God is rebuilding within you?

“Then my God put it into my heart to assemble the nobles and the officials and the people to be enrolled by genealogy. And I found the book of the genealogy of those who came up at the first, and I found written in it:” Nehemiah was a man with an intimate relationship with God.

“*These were the people of the province who came up out of the captivity of those exiles whom Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon had carried into exile...*”

About the List of Names (v. 6-73)

1. This list is comparable to another list recorded in Ezra 2, though there are some slight differences. This is not an “error” in the Bible, as some suggest. It is possible a copyist’s error or they counted and included things in different ways. No cause for concern.
2. There Are Ten Different Groups of People Listed Here: Leaders who returned with Zerubabel, families or clans, priests, gatekeepers, various temple servants, singers, etc.
All together, some believe the list references 50,000 names.

P: God’s work force is both unified and diversified.

The same is true today and seen in the church (Eph. 2:10, Rom. 12)
Do I know and am I content with the part God has given me to play? Am I playing it to the best of my ability? If not, what needs to change?

P: Nehemiah counted the people because the people counted.

Just like Nehemiah knew the names of his workers, God knows the names of His workers as well.
Do I know that God knows my name today? How is that impacting my daily life?

P: Nehemiah counted their financial investment because their financial investment counted (v. 66-72).

How would I feel if my giving was broadcast as theirs was? Encouraged or convicted? Am I faithfully investing in the expansion of the Gospel through Crossing and beyond? What needs to change in this area?

P: Our vision needs to extend beyond our own generation (v. 8).

Do I recognize that the choices I make today can affect my grandchildren’s children someday? How might God use this fact to help influence my daily life for the better?

P: Being able to prove your bloodline matters (v. 61-65).

How am I leveraging my spiritual bloodline in my fight against the world, flesh and devil?

Through the Gospel, we join the most important bloodline of all - the bloodline of Jesus.

Works Consulted: Expositor’s Bible Commentary, ESV Study Bible, MacArthur Study Bible, Be Determined by Warren Wiersbe, Numerous Resources from the Logos Electronic Library.