



# CALLING AMERICA BACK TO GOD

Preaching and Teaching Resources

ADRIAN ROGERS





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# Calling America Back to God

**SERMON REFERENCE:** Nehemiah 1:1 – 2:8

**LWF SERMON NUMBER:** #1956

The America of today is not the America that we once knew. This nation has been taken captive by the world, the flesh, and the devil.

God has blessed America; but we have created greed out of abundance, turning freedom into license to sin. There is hope, as there was hope in the days of Nehemiah, but we must be committed to calling America back to God.

In the days of the Old Testament, God's people had been taken captive and carried away to a foreign land. In Nehemiah 1:1-3, Nehemiah, a cup-bearer to the king, heard about Jerusalem where a nation's glory was now buried beneath despair.

Nehemiah's first response was to **visualize** the situation: he wanted to see the situation for what it was.

City walls are for protection, and in this passage, Jerusalem's walls had fallen. Spiritually, America's walls of defense have fallen, and we are vulnerable to the enemy's attacks.

We must get an accurate picture of how our nation's moral walls have decayed, and how our spiritual gates have burned; once we picture it in our minds, it should break our hearts.

"So it was, when I heard these words, that I sat down and wept, and mourned for many days; I was fasting and praying before the God of heaven" (Nehemiah 1:4).

Nehemiah **agonized** over Jerusalem; he wept and prayed over the ruins of his home.

Adrian Rogers said, "The things that break the heart of Almighty God ought to break our hearts."

Nehemiah's prayer was filled with contrition, confession, and confidence. He prayed the Word of God, reminding God of His own promises to gather and restore those who have been scattered for His own sake. (See Nehemiah 1:8-9.)

Finally, after committing himself completely to God and fasting and praying for four months, Nehemiah **organized**. He risked his own life and livelihood when he sought the king's permission, protection, and provision to go on mission to restore the walls of Jerusalem.

God is primarily looking for our obedience, faith, and love. When we get serious about serving Him—when we have visualized, agonized, and organized—He will grant us permission to carry out His will, with His protection and provision.

## Life Application

Would you commit to fasting and praying for America? Visualize the ways this nation is in trouble. Agonize in prayer for our country—praying with contrition, confession, confidence, and commitment.



# Calling America Back to God

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## 1) INTRODUCTION

- a) The people of God in Nehemiah's day had been taken captive by a foreign entity and carried away into a strange land.
- b) America has been taken captive by the world, the flesh, and the devil.
- c) God has blessed America.
  - i) God gave us abundance.
    - (1) But the abundance has turned to greed.
  - ii) God gave us freedom.
    - (1) But the freedom has turned to license.
- d) This nation was dedicated by our founding fathers to Almighty God.
  - i) Now, there are powerful forces in America that are endeavoring to make it illegal to mention His name in public places and for boys and girls to carry Bibles to school or wear Christian emblems on their clothing.
- e) America is the most sinful nation on Earth.
  - i) But what about the pagan nations?
    - (1) They have not been given what America has been given.
      - (a) We have sinned against light.
    - ii) The United States does more to corrupt other nations than any other nation.
      - (1) We export pornography around the world.
        - (a) People watch American movies and American filth around the world.
  - f) As Christians, we have been unfaithful to God.
    - i) All of this has happened on our watch.
    - ii) All of the debauchery in the world today is a monument to the failure of the church.
      - (1) The media is full of crime, abortion, divorce, violence, suicide, drug addiction, alcoholism, unwed teen pregnancy, lust, fornication, adultery, and sodomy.
      - (2) Yet, there is hope.
  - g) Today's message will look at what happened to Nehemiah, and then we will apply it to ourselves.
    - i) When you read any Old Testament or New Testament story, ask yourself these three questions:
      - (1) What did it mean then?
        - (a) Study it to understand it.
      - (2) How does it apply now?
      - (3) What does it mean to me personally?
  - h) Our need in America today includes the following:
    - i) Our need is for recovery because we have been taken captive.
    - ii) Our need is for revival; to get back to where we ought to be.
    - iii) Our need is to rebuild because we have lost our moral foundations.
  - i) In Nehemiah's time, the people of God had been taken captive and carried away to a foreign land.



- i) Nehemiah himself was in that foreign land.
    - (1) He was a government official.
      - (a) He was the king's cupbearer.
  - ii) Nehemiah 1:3
    - (1) What are walls for?
      - (a) Walls are for protection.
      - (b) Walls are for separation.
      - (c) Walls are for conservation.
      - (d) Walls are for identification.
    - (2) But the walls were broken down.
    - (3) The gates speak of freedom and liberty.
      - (a) In the Bible, the gates of the city of Jerusalem spoke of the glory of God.
        - (i) In the Psalms, many times the psalmist would refer to the gates of the Golden City.
          - 1. Those gates were symbolic of the glory of God.
  - iii) The walls had crumbled, the gates were burned, the streets were filled with weeds and trash, and the people of God were in despair.
- j) Can we apply that to the church of the Lord God today?
  - i) Walls of protection are broken down.
    - (1) It is open warfare on Christians today.
  - ii) Walls of separation have broken down.
    - (1) Pollsters compare the church of the Lord Jesus Christ with the average Christian.
      - (a) They find very little difference.
      - (b) Yet, the Bible says to come out from among them and be separate.
        - (i) 2 Corinthians 6:17
  - iii) Walls of conservation have broken down.
    - (1) We are losing the legacy that our fathers bought for us.
    - (2) Freedom by freedom, truth by truth, and spiritual riches by spiritual riches are being taken away from us as the devil comes and goes at will.
  - iv) The walls have been broken down, and the glory of God is in ashes.
    - (1) That is where we are in America today.
- k) In today's message, we will look at the three things that Nehemiah did:
  - i) He visualized.
  - ii) He agonized.
  - iii) He organized.

## 2) NEHEMIAH VISUALIZED (NEHEMIAH 1:2-3)

- a) Nehemiah asked his brother what the situation was.
  - i) Nehemiah 1:2
  - ii) He wanted to know the truth.
- b) A Christian is not a negativist or a pessimist, nor is he an optimist.
  - i) He is a realist who must visualize and see the situation as it is.
- c) Walls are for protection; but in America, the wall of defense has fallen.
  - i) Today, we are very vulnerable because that wall has crumbled.
    - (1) It has been said that eternal vigilance is the price of liberty.



- (2) Our walls of defense, and therefore our freedom, are crumbling.
- ii) A wise man has said that there are nine steps to the growth and then the disintegration of any nation, society, and civilization:
  - (1) From bondage to spiritual faith.
  - (2) From spiritual faith to courage.
  - (3) From courage to liberty.
  - (4) From liberty to abundance.
  - (5) From abundance to selfishness.
  - (6) From selfishness to complacency.
  - (7) From complacency to apathy.
  - (8) From apathy to dependence.
    - (a) This is where America is right now.
  - (9) From dependence back to bondage.
    - (a) America is one step away.
- d) Domestic walls have fallen.
  - i) America's homes are in serious trouble.
  - ii) Many children do not live at home with mother and father.
    - (1) Many homes have a father who has walked out or has never been present.
    - (2) There are latch-key kids who wander the streets or use television with pornography and violence for a babysitter.
  - iii) Because the walls have fallen, Satan has leveled all of the artillery of Hell against the homes of America.
- e) Walls of decency have fallen.
  - i) Pornography in America is a billion dollar business.
    - (1) The devil has pipelined pornography into the living rooms of America's homes.
    - (2) We have ceased to be shocked.
      - (a) What was horrible yesterday is acceptable today and a stepping stone for something worse tomorrow.
      - (b) We have accepted pornography like baseball or taxes.
    - (3) Pornographers will say that what a man sees does not affect him.
      - (a) Why, then, do people spend so much money on advertising if what they see does not affect them?
  - ii) Value judgments have become offensive.
    - (1) For example, it has been said that we shouldn't use the word "prostitute" because it implies that there's something wrong or immoral about that line of work.
    - (2) Many Americans believe that men and women who produce babies out of wedlock should not be subjected to moral reproach of any kind.
  - iii) In our public schools, prayer and the Bible are out.
    - (1) Evolution, humanism, homosexuality, illicit sex, and abortion are in.
    - (2) Drugs and alcohol are ravaging America's young people.
  - iv) People ask if character makes any difference in the election of a public official.
    - (1) Does God make a difference?
      - (a) Do we want the blessing of God on our nation and on our nation's leadership?
      - (b) Can God bless debauchery?
    - (2) Does wisdom make a difference?



- (a) Can someone with a rotten character have the wisdom of God?
- (3) Does example make a difference?
  - (a) Do we want our children to have a national leader that they can look up to?
- (4) Does trust make a difference?
  - (a) If we cannot trust a man to keep his marriage vows to his wife, then how can we trust him in other matters?
- f) Walls of doctrine have fallen.
  - i) The truths of God's Word, the basic premise of our faith, are being eroded away.
  - ii) We are told that we must tolerate a new and a modern gospel for a new and a modern age.
    - (1) If it is new, then it is not true.
    - (2) We cannot tolerate that which is intolerable.
- g) The walls had come down, and as a result, God's people were defeated.
  - i) They lived in survival mode, not a revival mode.
    - (1) They were just holding on.
  - ii) They were disgraced.
  - iii) Nehemiah 1:3
  - iv) The place where God had put His name was now the place of God's shame.
  - v) They were defenseless.
    - (1) The enemy could come and go, and the people were in despair.
  - vi) The gates were burned, and the gates speak of the glory of God.
- h) That is a picture of America today.
  - i) We have been taken captive.
  - ii) The walls have decayed.
  - iii) The gates are burned.
- i) The first thing that Nehemiah did was to visualize.
  - i) He got this picture in his heart, and it broke his heart.

### 3) NEHEMIAH AGONIZED (NEHEMIAH 1:4-11)

- a) When Nehemiah visualized the problem, he then agonized in prayer.
  - i) Nehemiah 1:4
  - ii) It is not enough to see the ruins.
    - (1) We need to weep over them.
- b) The four elements of Nehemiah's prayer:
  - i) It was a prayer of contrition.
    - (1) Nehemiah 1:4
      - (a) What he saw broke his heart.
    - (2) What is wrong with us today is that we are more interested in the latest sports event, vacations, money, etc.
      - (a) America and the church have forgotten how to weep.
    - (3) Nehemiah wept over the people of his day.
    - (4) As Jesus saw Jerusalem under impending judgment, He convulsed in sobs.
      - (a) Luke 19:41-44
    - (5) When was the last time you shed a tear over some soul that was mortgaged to the devil?



- (6) When was the last time that you broke down and literally wept before God?
- (7) The things that break the heart of Almighty God ought to break our heart.
- (8) Someone has described the church of the Lord God today as a dry-eyed church in a Hell-bent world.
- (9) It is time to weep.
  - (a) Our children and grandchildren are worth weeping over.
  - (b) Our homes and nation are worth weeping over.
  - (c) The lost souls of people are worth weeping over.
  - (d) The glory of God that is being trampled in the dust when the gates have been burned with fire ought to move us to tears.
- ii) It was a prayer of confession.
  - (1) Nehemiah 1:5-7
    - (a) It was a two-fold prayer.
      - (i) It was a prayer that confessed national sin and personal sin.
  - (2) The problem with many of us is that we are glad to confess the sin of the drug dealer, the pornographer, the Hollywood mogul, and the fast-talking politician.
    - (a) But God says, "If My people, which are called by My name, shall humble themselves and pray and seek My face and turn from their wicked ways."
      - (i) 2 Chronicles 7:14
  - (3) 1 Peter 4:17
  - (4) Romans 14:22
    - (a) It happened under our watch.
  - (5) The moral situation in America can be laid at the footsteps of the church of the Lord God.
    - (a) We have failed to preach as we ought to preach, speak as we ought to speak, live as we ought to live, give as we ought to give, and go as we ought to go.
    - (b) We have lost the moral consensus in America today because the people of God have failed.
    - (c) We need to confess our sins before God.
- iii) It was a prayer of confidence.
  - (1) Nehemiah 1:8-10
    - (a) This prayer was based on the promise of God.
      - (i) All true prayer is.
      - (ii) All prayer has the confidence of Almighty God.
      - (iii) Nehemiah reminded God of His own Word.
  - (2) There is nothing too hard for God.
    - (a) Don't say that God cannot bring America back to Himself.
      - (i) That is saying that God cannot do it.
      - (ii) It is an insult to God to say that we cannot have revival.
        - 1. As long as there is God, there is hope.
- iv) It was a prayer of commitment.
  - (1) Nehemiah 1:11
  - (2) Nehemiah had a job.
    - (a) He was to bring food to the king.
    - (b) He served in the king's court.





- (c) He was the king's companion.
- (d) He would eat with the king and cheer up the king.
- (e) Before the king would eat, the cupbearer would taste it and tell the king that there was no poison there.
- (3) Nehemiah knew that he was about to take his job and his life in his own hands.
  - (a) He was to ask the king for a favor to return and rebuild the walls.
    - (i) Nehemiah was not content just to see the ruins and weep.

#### 4) NEHEMIAH ORGANIZED (NEHEMIAH 2:1-8)

- a) The Bible teaches that faith without works is dead.
  - i) When we pray, that prayer should energize us and gear us to action.
  - ii) We cannot do more than pray until we pray.
    - (1) But when we pray, we then must act upon our prayers.
- b) Nehemiah 2:1-2
  - i) Nehemiah had committed a social faux pas.
  - ii) He did something that was politically incorrect, and the king remonstrated him.
- c) Nehemiah 2:3-4
  - i) Nehemiah had been praying for four months, and he was still praying.
    - (1) We are to pray without ceasing.
      - (a) 1 Thessalonians 5:17
  - ii) Nehemiah was going to get help from King Artaxerxes, but he was really getting help from Almighty God.
    - (1) Proverbs 21:1
    - (2) We might think that King Artaxerxes was doing something for Nehemiah, but it was God who was doing something for Nehemiah.
- d) Nehemiah knew that he had to have three things; the same three things that we need and America needs.
  - i) Nehemiah 2:5-6
  - ii) He needed the king's permission.
    - (1) We need the King's authority.
    - (2) Would you ask God for His blessing, for His hand to be upon you, and that the King of kings would use you?
    - (3) God has chosen you.
      - (a) God has a job for each one of us.
      - (b) We need to come to the King and hear the King say, "Even so, send I you."
        - (i) John 20:21
  - iii) He needed the king's protection.
    - (1) Nehemiah 1:7
    - (2) Nehemiah was going to be passing through hostile territory, and so are we.
      - (a) This world is not our home.
        - (i) We are pilgrims.
        - (ii) We are living now in Satan's headquarters, and we need the protection of Almighty God.
    - (3) Nehemiah wanted the king to write something and give it to him so that he would have the king's protection over him.



- (a) God has given us the same thing.
  - (i) God has given us His Word.
  - (ii) God has not only given us His authority, but God has also given us His protection, His Word to see us through.
  - (iii) Nothing can come to us that does not come through Him, which He allows for our good and for His glory.
- iv) He needed the king's provision.
  - (1) Nehemiah 2:8
    - (a) It was not King Artaxerxes, but it was Almighty God who gave Nehemiah provision.
  - (2) God's work is never stopped because of insufficient funds.
    - (a) It may be insufficient obedience, insufficient faith, or insufficient commitment, but never because of insufficient funds.
  - (3) When we line up with God, God lines up all of the universe behind the people of God.
  - (4) Many times, we ask God to give us what we already have.
    - (a) God is looking for obedience, love, and faith.
- e) When we get serious about serving the King of kings, then we will have the King's permission, the King's protection, and the King's provision.
  - i) We will be able to get back into the job of rebuilding the walls, resetting the gates, and reclaiming that which the devil has taken away and laid waste.

## 5) CONCLUSION

- a) Does God have a message for you today?
- b) What does God want to do in your heart and in your life?
- c) We need to fast and pray.
  - i) God does business with those who mean business.
  - ii) Nehemiah 1:4
  - iii) We give without sacrifice.
  - iv) We pray without fasting.
  - v) We witness without tears.
    - (1) Is it any wonder that we sow without reaping?
- d) America is in serious trouble.
  - i) You may think that you will make it alright, but what about your children and grandchildren?
  - ii) What about people in pagan lands who will never hear the Gospel because the greatest Gospel-sending nation in all the world died because of moral suicide?
  - iii) God wants to bless this nation.
- e) Do you know Jesus personally? If not, you can pray to Him today by asking Him to come into your life.
- f) Call upon Jesus today. Repent (turn) from your sins, and turn to Jesus. Ask Him to forgive you of your sins, and acknowledge Him as Lord of your life.
  - i) Romans 3:23
  - ii) Romans 10:9-10
  - iii) Romans 10:13
  - iv) Acts 16:31
  - v) John 3:16



# Calling America Back to God

**SERMON REFERENCE:** Nehemiah 1:1 – 2:8

**LWF SERMON NUMBER:** #1956

Would you be finding the book of Nehemiah, please, in the Old Testament, and when you found it turn to chapter 1, and then when you found that let me speak with you for just a moment. Before I read the Scripture to you we're going to read, in just a moment, the first three verses and then read some other verses.

But I want to tell you something with a broken heart. That is, the America that I knew as a boy is gone; and that breaks my heart. We as a nation have been taken into a Babylonian captivity. We have been captured by the world, the flesh, and the devil. And the theme of this message today is to call us back to God. Something has happened in America, God has blessed us with abundance, but our abundance has turned to greed. God blessed us with freedom, and our freedom has turned to license. God gave us a great heritage, and now that heritage is being mocked. Our forefathers dedicated this nation to Almighty God and now we have forces in America today that are endeavoring to make it illegal to even mention the name of Jesus in public schools, for our youngsters to carry Bibles or to wear Christian emblems, or for us in a society to make any public religious display in so-called God blessed America. The judgment of God is upon this nation.

I'm going to tell you something shocking: America, the shining light on the hill is doing more to lend degeneracy to the other nations of the world than any other nation on the face of the Earth. This is being done through American pornography and American movies, which, exporting pornography around the world. And we look here at home and we see a nation that is awash in abortion, crime, divorce, violence, suicide, drug addiction, alcoholism, unwed teen pregnancy, lust, pornography, fornication, adultery, and sodomy. That is America! And friend we must say something must be done and soon. We're going to call America back to God. We're going to get serious about this. It's time in America to wake up. God's alarm clock has gone off and we dare not push the snooze button; it is time for revival.

Now, in Nehemiah's time the people of God had been taken away captives and Nehemiah was a captive, living in a strange land. And he wondered about the people of God and notice what Nehemiah says here in chapter 1 and verse 1 through 3, "The words of Nehemiah the son of Hachaliah. 'And it came to pass in the month of Chisleu, in the twentieth year, as I was in Shushan the palace,'" that is, he's in a foreign land, "that Hanani, one of my brethren, came, he and certain men of Judah; and I asked then concerning the Jews that had escaped, which were left of the captivity," that is, that remnant at home after the captivity, "and concerning Jerusalem." Now Jerusalem, you know, was the holy city. "And they said unto me, 'The remnant that are left of the captivity there in the province are in great affliction and reproach; the wall of Jerusalem also is broken down, and the gates thereof are burned with fire.'" Now, especially, I want you to notice that last phrase, "the walls are broken down, and the gates thereof are burned with fire."

Nehemiah wanted to know, he asked somebody, "Have you been to Jerusalem?" he said, "Yes." He said, "Tell me what has happened to the city of God? What has happened to the people of God?" And Nehemiah's brother just shook his head. And I can see a tear as it trickles down the corner of his eye. Oh he said, "You wouldn't believe it. That once glorious city is filled with weeds and rubble and trash. The



beautiful walls that were once around our city, they've crumbled. And the gates, that speak of the glory of God, they're burned with fire. It's rubble. The people of God, they're in despair and they're in disgrace."

Now folks, when Nehemiah heard that, he set about to do something about it. And basically he did three things that I'm calling you to do today: number one, **he visualized the problem**. He said, "Tell me what is the situation." He was not like many of us who just simply, like an ostrich, want to stick our heads in the sand, build a sweet little nest perhaps in another assembly, somewhere in the west, and let the rest of the world go by. We can't do that. That's a luxury we can't afford. A Christian is not a pessimist, nor is he an optimist, he is a realist. He can see things as they are. And Nehemiah said, "Tell me about that situation." And the report was that the walls were broken down.

Now, what are walls for? Walls are for protection. What are walls for? Walls are for separation. What are walls for? Walls are for conservation. What are walls for? Walls are for identification; and the walls had fallen. Now when you look at any passage of Scripture, you have to ask three questions. You have to ask yourself this question, first of all: what did it mean in that day, when it was written? The second question you have to ask is: how does it apply today? The third question you have to ask is: how does it apply to me personally? I hope you'll listen that way. I hope you'll not listen to this just merely as a sermon, what the Pastor is saying to everybody; I hope you'll listen to this as to what God is saying to me personally today. And that will not happen unless you give me your heart, your mind. Unless you open yourself up to God and let God speak to you today. And those of you who are watching on television, I plead with you to do the same thing. Let God speak to you out of His Word.

And the very first thing we need to do is to visualize the problem; I tell you, ladies and gentlemen, the walls have fallen. **Walls of freedom and defense have fallen**. America, Christians, are losing their freedoms one by one. And freedom is like health, so many times it must first be lost so that we can understand what we once had. And it's a very subtle thing. John Curran said in 1808, "Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty." Someone has wisely pointed out that all nations and empires and all civilizations have progressed along a cycle that has nine points. Number one: from bondage to spiritual faith. Number two: from spiritual faith to courage. Number three: from courage to liberty. Number four: from liberty to abundance. Number five: from abundance to selfishness. Number six: from selfishness to complacency. Number seven: from complacency to apathy. Number eight: from apathy to dependence. And number nine: from dependence back to bondage. Walls of defense had fallen and God's people were vulnerable to the enemy.

But not only have walls of defense fallen, **walls of domestic tranquility and happy homes have fallen**; domestic walls have fallen. America's homes are in trouble. Unwed births are epidemic. Many boys and girls do not know who their natural father is. Many are living in a one parent household; many are living on the streets with no parent at all. The devil knows if he can destroy our homes, he can destroy our nation, and he has leveled all of the artillery of Hell against the home.

Walls of defense have fallen, domestic walls have fallen, **walls of decency have fallen**. In almost every corner drug store in America, pornography stares us in the face. It's as if a broken sewer line is overflowing in our newsstands, and we cease today to be shocked. What was horrible yesterday is acceptable today and a stepping stone for something worse tomorrow. And I tell you there's something that frightens me terribly, I mean in the natural sense, and that is that people are asking the question, "Does character count?" when it comes to an elected official. That the question would even be asked, "Does character



count?” Well, just ask this question, “Does God count?” I mean, do you think God can bless ungodliness. “Does wisdom count?” Don’t you know that wisdom and character are inextricably interwoven? “Does influence count?” Do you want your children to have a leader that they can look up to? “Does trust count?” Can you trust somebody who has no character? But we as a nation today have lost character. And in our national election, the referendum will not be on the character of the leader that we will choose, it is a referendum on the character of the American people. And I’m going to tell you something folks, we have lost our moral consensus. We have reached the bottom of the garbage pail, we cannot go any lower. We have accepted, today in America, pornography like we have accepted taxes and baseball. It’s an amazing thing.

In a newsletter, James Dobson tells us this, I want you to listen to what he said. He said, “A few weeks ago I was required by the California state legislature to attend a continuing education class in order to renew my psychologists’ license. The subject that day focused on the latest methods on treating drug abusers and their families. During the class, the instructor mentioned that he was talking to a co-worker one day about a prostitute who had contracted the AIDS virus. His colleague immediately chided him in all seriousness for describing the woman in politically incorrect terms. “You must never call someone a prostitute,” she said, “She is a sex worker.” Dr. Dobson says, “The woman was not joking. Her point is a familiar one among the culturally elite, that value judgments are offensive. In this case, the word prostitute implies there’s something wrong or immoral about that line of work. America is sick.

56% of Americans, according to a poll, believe that men and women who produce babies out of wedlock should not be subjected to moral reproach of any kind. And 70% of those from 18 to 34 said there should be no judgment and no reproof for unmarried couples that conceive babies. That’s in America! That is, birth out of wedlock today is taken as a normal thing. 70% of those from 18 to 34. Walls of decency have fallen. In public schools, prayer is out, the Bible is out, evolution is in, homosexuality is in, illicit sex is in, abortion is in, venereal disease is in, the Bible, Christ and God are out; in America. Drugs and drinking are ravaging America’s youth. From the school house up, something is wrong.

Walls of decency have fallen. **Walls of doctrine have fallen.** The old time religion, today, that made America great, is being ridiculed. And liberals have taken over so many of our theological institutions. And let me say this about liberalism. Liberalism is a parasite. It has no power to generate; it has power to dissipate. The liberals crawl into institutions that have been built by Bible-believers. It is a parasite and a moral pariah; I’m talking about theological liberalism.

And so, Nehemiah heard that the walls had fallen. Now remember that walls are for protection. Walls are for identification. Walls are for conservation. But those walls have fallen. Nehemiah said to his brother, “Tell me about the situation.” He says, “Alright, God’s people are defeated. God’s people are disgraced. God’s people are defenseless. And God’s people are in despair.” Now I want to say folks, that we do not have the luxury to look away. First we must do what Nehemiah did, we must visualize the problem.

Here’s the second thing that Nehemiah did. Not only did he visualize the problem, but **he agonized in prayer.** And that follows if you see the situation, if you’re a man, a woman of God, once you see the ruins you should weep over them. Notice now in Nehemiah 1 verses 4 through 11, “And it came to pass, when I heard these words, that I sat down and wept, and mourned certain days, and fasted, and prayed before the God of Heaven. And I said, ‘I beseech Thee of Lord God of Heaven, the great and terrible God, that keepeth covenant and mercy for them that love Him and observe His commandments: Let Thine ear now be attentive, and Thy eyes be open, that Thou mayest hear the prayer of Thy servant, which I pray



before Thee now, day and night, for the children of Israel Thy servants, and confess the sins of the children of Israel, which we have sinned against Thee: both I and my father's house have sinned. We have dealt very corruptly against Thee, and we have not kept the commandments, nor the statutes, nor the judgments, which Thou commandedst Thy servant Moses. Remember, I beseech Thee, the word that Thou commandedst Thy servant Moses, saying, 'If ye transgress, I will scatter you abroad among the nations. But if ye turn unto Me, and keep My commandments, and do them; though there were of you cast out unto the uttermost part of Heaven, yet will I gather them from thence, and will bring them unto the place that I have Chosen to set My name there.' Now these are Thy servants and Thy people, whom Thou hast redeemed by Thy great power, and by Thy strong hand. O Lord, I beseech Thee, let Thine ear be attentive to the prayer of Thy servant, and to the prayer of Thy servants, who desire to fear Thy name: and prosper, I pray Thee, Thy servant this day, and grant him mercy in the sight of this man. For I was the king's cup-bearer.'" It's a marvelous prayer. I want you to see it in a simplified form.

First of all it was a **prayer of contrition**. Verse 4 says that he wept, he mourned. Where are the tears in America today? We're more interested in football and the World Series than we are in national revival. When do we come to God in all seriousness? Our lives, our children, our grandchildren, this city, this nation, the souls of men and the glory of God is worth weeping over. Somebody has described this generation as "a dry-eyed church in a Hell bent world". Jesus wept over Jerusalem; God is calling us to weep over our nation. And if you don't have a heart of concern, I suggest that you wait before God and confess your poor, pitiable, backslidden condition. It was a prayer of contrition.

And it was also a **prayer of confession**. Look in verses 6 and 7. He says, "I pray before Thee now, day and night, for the children of Israel Thy servants, and confess the sins of the children of Israel, which we have sinned against Thee: both I and my father's house have sinned. We have dealt very corruptly against Thee." It's a prayer of confession and this was a confession for both national and personal sin. Now notice Nehemiah included himself. So many times we meet in these stained-glass prisons we call churches and we're praying for all those sinners out there. But the Bible says in First Peter 4 verse 17 that, "Judgment must begin in the house of God." You say, "Well pastor, I am not a pornographer. I am not an adulterer. I don't use nor sell drugs. I don't produce these wicked movies." No, but I'm going to tell you something folks, all of this happened on our watch. What I mean by that is this, that the Bible says in Romans 14:22, "Happy is the man that condemneth not himself by the thing which he allows."

Do you know what happened first of all? Do you know why America got into the mess that she got into? Because the church of the Lord God got away from the Word of God: straight-forward preaching, honesty, prayer and integrity. And as the church goes, so goes the world. And the problem is in the church house, not in the White House. And we don't like to hear that. But here Nehemiah prays, and Nehemiah says, "O God, I confess the sins of the people." And then he said, "I confess my own sins." It was a prayer of confession. Look up here and I'm going to tell you something: America's in trouble, and you're one of two things: either you're part of the problem or you're part of the solution; one or the other.

Not only was it this, it was a **prayer of confidence** and I'm glad for that. Look in Nehemiah 1 verses 8 and 9, he says, "Remember, I beseech Thee, the word that Thou commandedst Thy servant Moses, 'If ye transgress, I will scatter you abroad amongst the nations. But,'" put a circle around that word "but", "But if ye turn unto Me, and keep My commandments, and do them; though there were of you cast out unto the uttermost part of the Heaven, yet will I bring them from thence, and will bring them unto the place that I



have Chosen to set My name there.” Now, look up here and let me tell you something: it is not too late for America. Think of the situation in Nehemiah’s time. There they were, a remnant, disgraced, defenseless, down-trodden, forgotten. The walls have crumbled, the weeds, the rubble is there. But he remembers the Word of God, God had rather forgive and restore than judge and condemn. Don’t you know that? Don’t you know that God longs to bless us? The worst that could happen to us in America, is for us to say, “Well, we’ve gone too far, it’s too late, God will not have mercy.” I’m here to say that is a lie, there is a God in the glory. And as long as there is God, there is hope. We must remember this.

Nehemiah prayed. And the prayer that he prayed was a prayer of contrition, it was a prayer of confession, and, thank God, it was a prayer of confidence. Don’t insult God by saying we cannot have revival. “Real prayer,” as someone has wisely said, “is not overcoming God’s reluctance, it is laying hold of God’s willingness.” God wants to bless America. It is not our job to persuade Him to do so but to permit Him to do so if we will pray according to the Word of God and the pattern that is laid out here in this passage.

Not only was it a prayer of confidence, it was a **prayer of commitment**. Now notice in Nehemiah 1 verse 11, “O Lord, I beseech Thee, let now Thine ear be attentive to the prayer of Thy servant, and to the prayer of Thy servants, who desire to fear Thy name: and prosper, and I pray Thee, Thy servant this day, and grant him mercy in the sight of this man.” Now what man is he talking about? King Artaxerxes. He says, “For I was the king’s cupbearer.” That is, he had a very high and exalted position. He was the one who appeared before the king, this mighty, powerful potentate, and Nehemiah was the one who would bring his food in; he was probably the food taster. Because, the king didn’t want to be poisoned and so Nehemiah would come in and say, “Take a bite of this, and this, and this.” And he’d say, “Sire, it is fine.”

But being in that position, he was in a very intimate place with the king, a pagan king. But he has a plan. He is going to risk it all, he’s going to lay his life on the line, because you have to be very, very careful that your head doesn’t come off if you do anything to offend an oriental potentate. He says, “Now God, I’m going to do something, and I want You to help me, for I was the king’s cupbearer.” So what does that mean? He’s gearing up for action. His prayer is not a prayer that let somebody else do it. It was a prayer of contrition. It was a prayer of confession. It was a prayer of confidence and it was a prayer of commitment. And that’s the prayer I’m going to ask you to pray. That’s the prayer, I’m not going to ask you to look over and see what your wife is going to do. Don’t be like the man who said, “Take my wife and let me be.” This is for you. This is for me.

Now what did he do? Number one, listen, he visualized the problem. Number two, he agonized in prayer. And very frankly, that’s where most of us are failing. That’s why we’re calling our church to fasting and prayer. That’s why I’m a part of a movement with Doctor Bill Bright to call thousands and thousands of Christians and believers across America to fast and pray for America, to fast and pray for revival. And I want to tell you what God’s Word has to say about fasting and prayer and seeking the face of God in revival. And it’s very important that we do this.

I’m calling you to fast all day Wednesday. If you want to you can begin a three day fast; Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday. If you cannot fast for a day, fast for a meal. If you cannot for some particular reason fast, and there may be legitimate reasons, give Wednesday over as a special day of prayer for America. You say, “Oh pastor, you mean so that the election will come out right?” Friend, listen to me, the problem





is not in Washington, the problem is in here in the church. You didn't like to hear that did you? But I want to tell you something, God says in Second Chronicles 7:14, "If My people, which are called by My name, shall humble themselves and pray and seek My face and turn from their wicked way, then will I hear from Heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land." Yes, I'm going to vote and yes I'm interested in the election and I don't even have to think about who I'm going to vote for. But I want to tell you something folks, nobody in Washington can bring revival and nobody in Washington can stop it. There's a God in the heavens. That's right.

So what did he do? What did he do? He visualized the problem. What did he do? He agonized in prayer. And then, what did he do, the third thing? **He organized a plan.** Visualize, agonize, and organize. It's not enough just to weep about fallen walls and burned gates, despair and defenselessness of God's people. God has called us to build; we're to be builders. And so, he wanted to rebuild the wall.

Now notice in the chapter 2, and I'm going to read just the first eight verses and that's all the Scripture we'll read this morning. "And it came to pass in the month of Nisan, in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes the king, that wine was before him: and I took up the wine, and gave it unto the king. Now I had not been beforetime sad in his presence." That is, you didn't come into a king with a sad countenance. If you did, off came your head, your smile or your tears with it. "Wherefore the king said unto me, 'Why is thy countenance sad, seeing thou art not sick? This is nothing else but sorrow of heart.' Then I was very sore afraid, and I said unto the king, 'Let the king live forever: why should not my countenance be sad, when the city, the place of my father's sepulchers, lieth waste, and the gates thereof are consumed with fire?' And the king said unto me, 'For what dost thou make request?'" Now notice this, "So I prayed to the God of Heaven."

Now be very careful, you're going to think in a moment that King Artaxerxes gave Nehemiah some things. King Artaxerxes did not do it; Almighty God did it through King Artaxerxes. "The heart of the king is in the hand of the Lord, and as rivers of water, He turns it whithersoever He will." Proverbs 21:1. So here's Nehemiah, the king, this powerful king in this foreign land says, "Nehemiah, what do you want me to do?" And Nehemiah, who's been fasting and praying for months, says, "Oh God, now help me as I say what the plan is that you put in my heart." And so, Nehemiah chapter 2 verses 5 through 8, "And I said unto the king, 'If it please the king, and if thy servant have found favor in thy sight, that thou wouldest send me unto Judah, unto the city of my father's sepulchers, that I may build it.' And the king said unto me, the queen also sitting by him, 'For how long shall thy journey be? And when wilt thou return?' So it pleased the king to send me, and I set him a time. Moreover I said unto the king, 'If it please the king, let letters be given to me to the governors beyond the river, that they may convey me over till I come to Judah; and a letter unto Asaph the keeper of the king's forest, that he may give me timber to make the beams for the gates of the palace which appertained to the house, and for the wall of the city, and for the house that I shall enter into.'" Now notice verse 8, the last part, "And the king granted me, according to the good hand of my God upon me." Now this was not King Artaxerxes, God only used King Artaxerxes. The king gave it to him according to the good hand of God upon him.

He had a plan. He said, "I'm going to go back and I'm going to rebuild that which the enemy has taken away." And I want to say to you in this church today, we need a plan to take back that which Satan has taken from us, where Satan has wanted to waste the people of God. There were three things that Nehemiah wanted. First of all he wanted **the king's permission.** He said, "King, let me go." And when the king said





go, it was really God who said go. Now that's what you and I need to do. We need to wait before God until He gives us His will. It's as dangerous to run ahead of God as it is to run behind Him. But he needed the king's permission.

He also needed the king's protection. He said to King Artaxerxes in verse 7, "Would you have someone to convey me over, because, there are many enemies out there." Now look up here and let me tell you this, when we get serious, when we fast and pray, we'll know the King's permission and we'll know the King's protection. Psalm 34 verse 7, "The angels of the Lord encamp round about them that fear Him." That doesn't mean we won't suffer. That doesn't mean there will not be enemies. As you read the rest of this book, Nehemiah had many of them. But he had victory because he had the king's permission. He had the king's protection.

Then the last thing he needed was the king's provision. He said, "Look, I want you to write a letter to the man who has all of the building materials; the timbers and all of this, because I need materials to rebuild." And the king said, "You've got them." And Nehemiah said, "That was the hand of God upon me."

Do you know what, when we begin to get serious about his thing of serving God, when we visualize and when we agonize, and when we organize, God moves in to move Heaven and Earth for His people. Do you believe that? I hope you do. I hope you don't just sit here and just kind of nod your head and say, "You know, I think I understood the outline." It's not what I'm talking about. I am saying, folks, listen to this man, we're in a mess. We are in a mess! And if God does not move, and soon, I shudder to think the kind of America my grandchildren will grow up in. It is time to visualize, agonize, organize, take back, rebuild the walls and the gates for God's glory and for our good. We must, we must, we must. And by God's grace, we will.

Lord God, send a mighty revival. Wake us, Lord. Stir us and move us. In the mighty name of Jesus. And Lord we remember Your Word like Nehemiah remembered Your Word, where you promised judgment if we turned from You, but mercy if we would return to You. And Lord now with our hearts as individuals, we want to return.

Now, if you're not certain that you're saved, would you like to be saved, would you? Would you like to know that you really do have life? Jesus said, "I've come that you might have life." Could I lead you in a prayer? We'll call this prayer the sinner's prayer. And you can pray and accept Christ as your personal Lord and Savior. You can do it right now. Would you pray this prayer? "Dear God, I know that You love me. Thank You for loving me. And I know that You want to save me. Jesus, You died to save me and You promised to save me if I would trust You. Jesus, I do trust You. I believe You're the Son of God. I believe you paid for my sin with Your blood on the cross. I believe that God raised You from the dead. And now I receive You as my Lord and Savior. Forgive my sin. Cleanse me. Come into my life. Take control of my life and begin today to make me the person You want me to be. And Jesus, give me the courage to make it public. Help me never to be ashamed of You. In Your name I pray, Amen."



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