Don’t Lose Heart
Nehemiah 8:9-12
Sermon Outline

A. Take Time to Learn How to Grow Spiritually (vs. 9-10a; Acts 2:42; Colossians 3:17; Revelation 4:11):

1. All the leaders were committed to the task of making sure they knew the Word of God.
2. All the leaders committed to making sure the people knew the Word.
3. The overall focus was to direct the people to understand the mind of God.
4. The leaders were committed to teach the people how to distinguish between good and evil by providing them the knowledge of the Word of God. This teaching was an ongoing process.
5. The leaders provided an understanding of God’s Word for daily living.
6. This teaching was an ongoing process.
7. The day of their teaching was devoted to God and was viewed as pure.
8. The day is a day of devotion because it is for the one who has all authority, is their majestic ruler (magnified by the fact that wall is completed and the enemies are no longer strong against them; 6:19), and must be reverenced, feared and respected by all men. He is not just ruler and creator of all He is also the one who judges the earth.
9. Remembering who the Lord God is should drive us:
   a. To come to church with a heart to learn because He is reverenced and respected.
   b. To have a heart to surrender our lives to live for Him because we would learn how to take refuge in Him.
   c. A surrendered heart is a worshipful life.
10. They must not become highly emotional with loud sounds of distress as if they are grieving or complaining about their circumstances.
11. Mourn - The Hebrew for this word often describes the reaction of those aware of the threat of deserved judgment (Ex. 33:4; Nu. 14:39).
12. When we are convicted, we must focus on the resolution not our feelings.
13. The people mourned when they came to the realization that their circumstances had a lot to do with their fathers and mothers decision to not live according to God’s standards.
14. The people gave their undivided attention to the reading and teaching of the law. Once the people acquired a full knowledge and understanding of what the Word of God said they mourned and wept.
15. Our heart for God’s Word is exposed by our attentiveness to it.
16. Could be a saying, a command, a saying or a promise - The word of the Lord was a technical expression for prophetic revelation - sometimes it is a report of what is done an account of the actions (2 Chr. 33:18) - it is an indefinite generalized concept rather than a reference to everything in particular.
17. All the leaders endlessly told the people to stop mourning and weeping. It seems like the leaders had to be persistent to get them to stop.
18. **When God speaks, even though a surrendered heart is necessary, the emotion that comes from the convictions should not be all that we do.**

19. They commanded the people to focus on celebrating God, fellowship with each other and help the poor. They provided them a clear direction that was now supposed to become a pattern for how the live before God.

20. **If we spend all of our time on our feelings of conviction, then we will not have the energy to get to know Him.**

21. **Obedience leads to spiritual growth; spiritual growth leads to experiencing God**

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**B. Focus on Experiencing God’s Strength (vs. 10b):**

1. The day of their teaching was devoted to God and was viewed as pure.
2. **If we respect God, we will respect His day of worship.**
3. **Come prepared to honor and adore Him.**
4. That day is a day of devotion because it is for the one who has all authority; for their majestic ruler (magnified by the fact that wall is completed and the enemies are no longer strong against them; 6:19), and must be reverenced and feared by all men. He is not just a ruler and creator of all, He is also the one who judges the earth.
5. **A reverence and respect for God keeps us in the day of trouble because it constantly reminds us that He is in control even if things seem to be going wrong (Romans 8:28; Psalm 23, 91)**
6. They should not allow themselves to be so sorrowful that they experience mental and physical anguish.
7. They were not supposed to focus on their feels but on God’s gladness (Philippians 4:8-9).
8. **Joy - To be exceedingly glad.**
   a) **Because the day is holy to the Lord, they are to desire it with holy joy. yhwh (OT:3068) chedªwat (OT:2304) is a joy founded on the feeling of communion with the Lord, on the consciousness that we have in the Lord a God long-suffering and abundant in goodness and truth (Ex 34:6). This joy is to be to them maa`owz (OT:4581), a strong citadel or refuge, because the Almighty is their God;** comp. Jer. 16:19. (from Keil & Delitzsch Commentary on the Old Testament: New Updated Edition, Electronic Database. Copyright (c) 1996 by Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.).
9. **Excessive gladness** should be expressed because:
   a) **This is His joy, not ours**
   b) The Lord did not forsake His covenant.
   c) He fought off their enemies in His own power and might, and demonstrated that He has all authority over everything.
   d) Nehemiah obeyed God’s call on his life after God established him as a cup bearer for the very king who stopped the process.
   e) The king who stopped the process provided materials to build the wall so the poor people did not have to do so.
   f) The people stayed the course and rebuilt the wall.
   g) God’s people are now cared for so His joy produced strength for them.
h) God sees the people surrendered to Him, committed to His Word and sincere in worship.

10. God’s victories reassure us of His power and might.
11. Strength - This verb carries the concept of taking shelter quickly - Natural and manmade places of safety can be designated by this word such as a mountain (Judges 6:26), harbor (Isaiah 23:4), cities (Isaiah 17:9), and temple (Ezekiel 24:25) - This word can also be used figuratively of human protection - By far the most common use of this word is the figurative one, designating God as the refuge of his people - Place of refuge, i.e., the means of being safe in a situation of danger as a figurative extension of a fortress
12. The Lord because of who He has proven Himself to be drives us to take refuge in Him. As a result, He becomes our fortress.
13. When we take refuge in God He protects and blesses us. The people trusted what God had provided them and what God, through the leadership of Nehemiah, had guided them to do.

C. Celebrate God Because We Trust in His Strength (vs. 11-12):

1. The Levites admonish the people to be silent by holding their peace.
2. They spoke to all the people directly ordering them to hold their peace.
3. They must seek to gain control of themselves by being silent; literally to “hush”.
4. Remember God so that our hearts can find comfort.
5. The day has been set aside to honor and magnify God not deal with their grief and weeping. They must keep it pure with complete devotion to God.
6. They should not allow themselves to be so sorrowful that they experience mental and physical anguish.
7. What the Levites told them to do became their righteous life-style; the manner in which they now lived. They will now live responsibly before God with an upright life-style.
8. The people matured from all that took place so that they did not mourn or weep because they functioned in the strength of the Lord as the Levites instructed them.
9. Living in the experience of His overcoming power leads to gladness.
11. The people matured through this trail because they came to know God better.
12. This means experiential knowledge. By obeying the words taught by their leaders, people came to a day to day experience of understanding the meaning of the Word. This allow them to be in a complete state knowing right from wrong as the live each day.
13. Their knowledge of God was more than information it was their day to day experience.
14. Their lives recalculated and now they can powerfully experience God.