

This series is making a difference in our people's lives. God is good!

Love y'all,

Pastor Heard

Part 17 – Feel the Passion!

Texts:

Ecclesiastes 9:7 (The Message) - "Seize life!"

Hebrews 4:14-16 (KJV) - "Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. [15] For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. [16] Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need."

Nehemiah 2:1-6 (NKJV) - "And it came to pass in the month of Nisan, in the twentieth year of King Artaxerxes, when wine was before him, that I took the wine and gave it to the king. Now I had never been sad in his presence before. [2] Therefore the king said to me, "Why is your face sad, since you are not sick? This is nothing but sorrow of heart." So I became dreadfully afraid, [3] and said to the king, "May the king live forever! Why should my face not be sad, when the city, the place of my fathers' tombs, lies waste, and its gates are burned with fire?" [4] Then the king said to me, "What do you request?" So I prayed to the God of heaven. [5] And I said to the king, "If it pleases the king, and if your servant has found favor in your sight, I ask that you send me to Judah, to the city of my fathers' tombs, that I may rebuild it." [6] Then the king said to me (the queen also sitting beside him), "How long will your journey be? And when will you return?" So it pleased the king to send me; and I set him a time."

Key No. 12 (Part 3) - Incredible Keys to Incredible Breakthroughs!

A. The Key of EXTRAORDINARY LEADERSHIP.

1. Last week, we spoke about how Nehemiah, an expendable, easily replaced average Joe, was advanced from being the king's wine taster to one of Israel's greatest leaders.
2. When I say that wine tasters were expendable and easily replaced, I mean just that. In those days, a wine taster was not a sommelier, or hotel wine steward. His job was to taste the king's wine to see if it had been poisoned before allowing the king to drink it.
3. Because of Nehemiah's extraordinary leadership, he was elevated from a quickly forgotten, nameless person to one who is honored and highly esteemed.
 - a. Of the 66 books in the Bible, only 34 bear the author's name or the person to whom it was written.
 - b. The Book of Nehemiah was one of the 34 and also one of the greatest leadership stories in history!
4. God promoted Nehemiah to a position of greatness because he was persistent and passionate about something that really mattered to God. His goal was to rebuild Jerusalem, the city of God, and to help restore his people to a highly esteemed nation.
5. As we have often said, passion moves our High Priest to act on our behalf by tapping into His supernatural resources. That fact alone sets God's children apart from all others.
 - a. We have been given access to His limitless power and abilities that others do not have.
 - b. Acts 1:8 says that we will receive POWER after being converted.
6. When the unsaved have exhausted every resource to change a situation, (money, family, friends, connections, doctors, medical procedures, |

- attorneys, etc.), there is nothing more they can do. But that's not true for the believer. The Mighty God of Glory stands ready to work on our behalf!
7. God wants to be involved in our daily lives—not just to solve our problems.
 8. Without His assistance, we are much like the car owned by my teenage friend, Lawrence. When he pumped diesel into his car instead of gasoline, it began to smoke like a mosquito fogger and clatter like crazy.
 9. Why don't we see His power actively demonstrated in our lives more often? The problem is that we're still thinking as the unsaved. Like Esther, we're reluctant to go before the King because we're thinking as an orphan rather than His bride. Esther should have said, "Hey, that's my lover in there, and he hasn't seen me for thirty days. I'm going to put on some Chanel No. 5 and have a long overdue visit!"
 10. The question is, what must we do to involve God? This series is about ordinary people who exhibited such intense passion, God had to do something extraordinary for them!
 11. Nehemiah, just an ordinary, average guy, moved God to act on behalf of Israel and Jerusalem by providing extraordinary leadership in a time of national crisis.
 - a. Godly principles elevated a nobody into an empowered leader who was determined to reconnect his people with their homeland and their Savior.
 - b. Principle No. 1 activated the process when Nehemiah made himself available.
 - c. With Principle No. 2, he recognized opportunity when others only saw problems.
 - d. Principle No. 3 was his vision that inspired others to follow him.
 - e. So, why would we teach about leadership principles on a Sunday morning? Because we are all leaders in one way or another.

Whether it's our family, friends, or fellow employees, we are all influencing someone—and that makes us leaders.

B. Leadership Principle No. 4 – Nehemiah built and then motivated a team.

1. **Nehemiah 2:18 (NKJV)** - "And I told THEM of the hand of my God which had been good upon me, and also of the king's words that he had spoken to me. So THEY said, "Let US rise up and build." Then THEY set THEIR hands to this good work."

2. You cannot do it alone! To motivate others, leaders must stay on course themselves.

3. **Joke:** Cheating on Your Diet

Too often we become like the member of a ladies' diet club. Bemoaning her lack of will-power, she confessed to her fellow club members about making her family's favorite cake the past week-end and that only half of it was eaten.

However, on the following day, the uneaten half kept beckoning to her. So, she cut herself a slice, and then another, and another. In no time, she had polished off the remaining cake. But she knew her husband was going to be very disappointed in her.

"What did he say when he found out?" one club member asked.

"Oh, he never knew about it," she said.

Another lady asked, "How did you keep him from finding out what you did?"

"It was simple," she said. "I made another cake just like the first one and ate half of it."

4. We all need a team to help us get where we want to go. That means we must recruit friends, family, church members, pastor or anyone else who can help.

5. When the world's greatest athletes face an inferior team with far less talented players, they are sure to be defeated if they're not backed by a

good team. As good as LeBron James is, without a team to support him, he could be easily defeated by high school players. As fast as Usain Bolt is, the slowest team on record could defeat him if he had to run all four positions by himself.

6. Notice these scriptures about team effort:

- a. **Deuteronomy 32:30 (NKJV)** - "How could one chase a thousand, And two put ten thousand to flight . . . "
- b. **Genesis 11:6 (NKJV)** - "And the Lord said, "Indeed the people are one and they all have one language, and this is what they begin to do; now nothing that they propose to do will be withheld from them."
- c. **Ecclesiastes 4:9 (NKJV)** - "Two are better than one, Because they have a good reward for their labor."
- d. **Ecclesiastes 4:12 (NKJV)** - "A three fold cord is not quickly broken."

C. **Leadership Principle No. 5** – Nehemiah stayed focused and kept the main thing the *main thing*.

1. **Nehemiah 2:19-20 (NKJV)** - "But when Sanballat the Horonite, Tobiah the Ammonite official, and Geshem the Arab heard of it, they laughed at us and despised us, and said, "What is this thing that you are doing? Will you rebel against the king?" [20] So I answered them, and said to them, "The God of heaven Himself will prosper us; therefore we His servants will arise and build, but you have no heritage or right or memorial in Jerusalem."
2. The enemy tried to distract him by mocking, laughing, attacking his motives, questioning his integrity, and threatening his life. Even though Nehemiah had no experience in rebuilding a city, he would not allow the enemy's ridicule to keep him from accomplishing his goal.

3. Do not allow the enemy to distract you with things that don't really matter.

D. **Leadership Principle No. 6** - He refused to allow problems to discourage him.

1. **Nehemiah 4:1-2 (NKJV)** - "But it so happened, when Sanballat heard that we were rebuilding the wall, that he was furious and very indignant, and mocked the Jews. [2] And he spoke before his brethren and the army of Samaria, and said, "What are these feeble Jews doing? Will they fortify themselves? Will they offer sacrifices? Will they complete it in a day? Will they revive the stones from the heaps of rubbish—stones that are burned?"
2. Whenever you attempt something great or worthwhile, whether in business or ministry, problems will always come.
3. The greater the opportunity, the greater the opposition!
 - a. **1 Corinthians 16:8-9 (NKJV)** - "But I will tarry in Ephesus until Pentecost. [9] For a great and effective door has opened to me, and there are many adversaries."
 - b. **Galatians 6:9 (KJV)** - "And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not."
4. The enemy's first attempt was to insult Nehemiah. Then they tried to lure him away from his work by coaxing him to defend and justify himself. But he would not waste his time by even meeting with them.
 - a. **Nehemiah 6:3 (NKJV)** - "So I sent messengers to them, saying, "I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down. Why should the work cease while I leave it and go down to you?"