



How God Restores His People

Nehemiah 9-12

A guy on a summer sheetrock crew was known only as “The Convict.” All summer, nobody learned his name. Imagine being defined by your worst moment. The walls went up in 52 days, but what good is a rebuilt city if the people are never restored? *God doesn't convict us of our sin to condemn us. He convicts us so He can restore us.*

FOUR MARKS OF RESTORATION

1 Restoration begins with conviction

NEHEMIAH 8:1-3, 9; EXODUS 19:5-6; LUKE 18:9-14

When Ezra read the Law, the people measured their lives against it and wept. They had broken covenant, but God wasn't done. Take just three commandments: covet, adultery, murder. Jesus said lust and anger count. The one most in danger is the one who thinks he has nothing to confess.



For your one: Some people stay away from church because of shame. Your one needs to hear that God's conviction is an invitation home, not a sentence.

2 God's grace frees us to confess

NEHEMIAH 9:1-3, 16-21, 31

Wouldn't confession invite judgment? No. It invited grace. In one of the longest prayers in the Bible, the people tell their story truthfully. You were good. We rebelled. Over and over, *but You did not forsake them.*



For your one: Your honest story may be the clearest picture of grace your one ever sees.

3 His faithfulness inspires our commitment

NEHEMIAH 9:38; 10:28-39

The people signed a covenant, named the sins they would turn from, and made it public. Faith is meant to be personal, but never private. We still do it through baptism and membership.



For your one: A faith people can see is a faith people can follow. Let your one watch you keep your word to God.



EVERY CHAIR A NAME. EVERY NAME A PRAYER.

4

Restoration should be followed by celebration

NEHEMIAH 12:43; JOHN 3:16; LUKE 15:7

God hadn't just restored a city. He had restored His people, and the joy of Jerusalem was heard far away. But Nehemiah is only a preview. God's people sinned on repeat, just like we do. *But God* broke the cycle. Jesus lived the life we could not live and died the death we deserved, so our sins could be paid for once for all.



For your one: All of heaven is waiting to throw a party over your one. Pray that you get a front-row seat.

READ TOGETHER

Nehemiah 8:1–3, 9 · Nehemiah 9:1–3 · Nehemiah 9:16–21 · Nehemiah 10:28–29 · Nehemiah 12:43 · Luke 18:9–14 · James 5:16

TALK ABOUT IT

- 1 Why is it so easy to believe we are “pretty good people”? Where do you see yourself in the Pharisee's prayer in Luke 18?
- 2 Nehemiah 9 retells Israel's story truthfully. If you told your story that honestly, where would you see God's goodness, and where your rebellion?
- 3 Have you ever felt defined by your worst moment? What changes when you believe God convicts to restore, not to condemn?
- 4 “Faith is personal, but never private.” What public step, like baptism, membership, or confessing to another believer, have you been putting off?

THIS WEEK · PRAY & PREPARE

- Ask God to show you what you need to confess. Don't ignore it.
- Confess to one trusted believer this week and let them pray for you.
- Haven't put your one's name in the lobby box yet? Write it on a ball Sunday. Then pray, and pursue.
- Never been baptized or joined the church? Talk with a pastor about your next step.

“When our Lord and Master Jesus Christ said, ‘Repent,’ he willed the entire life of believers to be one of repentance.”

MARTIN LUTHER



EVERY CHAIR A NAME. EVERY NAME A PRAYER.