

God's Unfinished Work

The Lord's work is evangelism toward the lost, edification toward the saved, and benevolence toward the needy (saints). We know what the Lord's work is, we just need to be motivated to do more of it.

There is never a time when the Lord's work is completely finished. There is always work to do. Like Nehemiah, we need to be caring and concerned to do the Lord's work. What can we learn from this great man who went to Jerusalem to finish rebuilding the walls? Read Nehemiah 1 and 2 and consider his great qualities.

First, Nehemiah asked his brethren for information about the present situation (1:2-3). Then, Nehemiah wept for the cause and for the work that was unfinished (1:4). Next, Nehemiah asked God for grace and mercy to help in the work (1:4-10), volunteered personally to do the work (1:11), asked King Artaxerxes for permission to go to Jerusalem to work (2:1-5), formed a specific plan of action to work (2:6-16), asked his brethren for help in the work (2:17-18), and stood against the initial ridicule of the work (2:19-20).

We need caring Christians in the church to keep the Lord's work moving forward. The walls were finished being rebuilt in just 52 days! (Nehemiah 6:15). It all started with a man who cared. God does not want our indifference. He wants our caring concern for his work. Be a Nehemiah today! - *Chris Reeves*

Sentence Sermons

- Hell has no fire escapes and heaven needs none.
- The ways of men lead to a hopeless end, but the way of Christ leads to an endless hope.
- Christ doesn't want a few shares of your life, he wants controlling interest.
- The best things in life are not things.
- It is a sick society where babies are as disposable as the diapers they wear.

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Assembly Times
Sunday: 9:30 am, 10:30 am, 6 pm
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For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh, for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses.
- 2 Corinthians 10:3-4 -

What is man? **MAN HAS A PLACE** (Genesis 1:26-30). Man can know his place in the world and utilize the world around him, contrary to Eastern religions (Hinduism, Buddhism, etc.).

It is clear from the narrative of Genesis 1-3 that the Creator and the creation are separate. God is not creation; creation is not God; God is not man; man is not God; man is not "one with nature;" etc.

Many in the Eastern religions believe some form of pantheism (God is all; all is God). Accordingly, God is not a personal being, but a "force" that pervades all. If God is all and all is God, then man is God; man is "one with nature" which leads to worship of self and nature (see Romans 1:25 and Colossians 2:8-23). This is also the message of the New Age Movement.

Man's place in this world with relation to creation is to "subdue it" (work) (Genesis 1:28ff; 3:17,18), not become "one with it." Man's place with relation to God is to be thankful and obedient (Genesis 2:16,17), not become God.

What is man? **MAN IS RESPONSIBLE** (Genesis 2:16-17,24; 3:1-19). Man is responsible to God for his actions, contrary to all concepts of fate and determinism. Man has a moral capacity, a will, a conscience, and the ability to choose right and wrong. Neither God, nor Satan, choose for man. They invite man's service, but

man decides who he will serve (see Ezekiel 18).

There are many human philosophies that exist which try to shift the blame for man's actions. Fate and determinism says that we are compelled to act because of some outside force (like the stars, reincarnation, etc.).

Gnosticism says that man acts the way he does because his flesh was inherently evil. Calvinism (borrowed from Augustine, A.D. 354-430) teaches that man cannot do any good because he was born with a "depraved nature" and man is simply carrying out the acts of God's predestination and foreknowledge. Others place the blame for their actions on their environment (family, neighborhood, society, church, government, economic situation, genetic makeup, etc.).

The narrative of Genesis 2-3 teaches us that man is responsible to God for his actions. Man chooses to serve the Devil (3:1ff), man cannot blame others for his actions (3:9ff), and man must be punished for his sin (2:17; 3:13ff). Ezekiel 18 also teaches us that sin is not inherited. We are sinners by choice not by force. We are responsible and we can change if we want to (from good to bad or from bad to good).

What is man? **MAN IS A CREATURE OF WORK** (Genesis 2:15; 3:17,18). Man is a creature of work, contrary to the idea that I can live a life of ease without doing anything. God gave man a work to do even before they

sinned (Genesis 2:15). Adam and Eve should have been doing their work rather than listening to the Devil (Genesis 3:1ff; 1 Tim.5:13-15). After their sin, the difficulty of their work was increased (3:17,18).

Yes, our work in life is difficult at times. But, hard work teaches us self-discipline. We are to be busy working in order to take care of self and assist others. We are not to be lazy (Proverbs 10:4; 12:11,24,27; 13:4,11; Acts 20:35; Ephesians 4:28; 1 Thessalonians 4:11,12).

What is man? **MAN IS SUITED FOR ONE MATE** (Genesis 2:18-25). Man was created to be suited for one mate for life, contrary to the attitudes of license, hedonism, and immorality.

God's plan for man from the beginning was one man united with one woman for life (Matthew 19:3-9). According to Jesus, marriage is monogamous (one man, one woman), heterosexual (one man, one woman) and homo sapien (one human, one human). Bestiality, homosexuality, and polygamy are all contrary to God's order (Genesis 18-19; Leviticus 20:15,16; Deuteronomy 27:21; Romans 1:26-27; 1 Corinthians 7:1-2).

Those who advocate license, hedonism, and immorality confuse love with lust, liberty with license, pleasure with profit, and grace with gross perversion (2 Peter 2:19). - *Chris Reeves*