

LIFE GROUP SERMON SUMMARY QUESTIONS

NEHEMIAH SERIES

These questions are for the **October 16, 2016** sermon, "Internal Challenges." Please read the sermon passage (Nehemiah 5:1-19) together out loud.

Sermon Outline:

WHEN AN INJUSTICE ARISES, SPIRITUAL LEADERS SHOULD . . .

1. **Listen intently when learning of the injustice (1-5)**
 - A. When we focus on "social justice," we may be providing a substitute for biblical justice.
 - B. Notice the various groups who have needs to be met:
 - i. First group: Physical challenges, poverty and hunger. (1-2)
 - ii. Second group: Mortgaging their homes to buy food. (3)
 - iii. Third group: Borrowing money to pay taxes. (4-5)
 - C. Spiritual leaders see what is, and what ought to be and work for change.
2. **Respond biblically when confronting injustices (6-13)**
 - A. Is there a basis for spiritual leaders to be angry at injustices?
 - B. Nehemiah processes what God has already instructed his people to do:
 - i. Exodus 22:25-27: Do not take interest (especially from your brother).
 - ii. Leviticus 25:35-40: Treat the poor with dignity.
 - iii. Deuteronomy 23:19-20: Charge non-Jews interest, but not your Jewish brother.
 - C. Walk in fear of the Lord, not in greed.
3. **Live honorably after resolving injustices (14-19)**
 - A. The leader does not demand rights, but serves their responsibilities.
 - B. The leader perseveres in the work of the Lord even amidst injustices.

Life Group Discussion Questions

1. Based on #1, above: It's easy to come up with simplistic answers and try to simply do something immediately. Nehemiah took his time in trying to truly understand what the injustice was and how to address it from the Scriptures. How can you apply this to your life?
2. Based on #1, above: We noted that "justice" and "righteous" comes from the same word. Where there is unrighteousness, there will be injustice, and no "social justice" campaign can fix that. Also, where there is growing "righteousness" there will be growing "justice." Talk about this concept: "Where there is no righteousness, there will be no justice." Or, "We cannot address cultural injustices without addressing cultural righteousness."
3. Based on #2, above: Are you ever moved to anger at injustices? In what way might this be right? In what way might it be wrong? How does this passage teach your heart?
4. Based on #3, above: You may be treated unjustly, and yet called to fulfill a calling or role from God. Are you able to be faithful to your call even while living in the midst of injustices?