

Guidelines For Successful Christian Living

All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: 2 Timothy 3:16 Therefore, all Scripture has practical application to our lives today.

We now come to the natural outcome of everything that was done prior in Nehemiah, the building of the walls, the reading of the Scripture, the praise and confession: all these resulted in a commitment to a new lifestyle.

And because of all this we make a sure covenant, and write it; and our princes, Levites, and priests, seal to it. Nehemiah 9:38

The people saw a need for preserving and perpetuating the changes in their lifestyles so as to keep in step with God, and so they sign this agreement to bind themselves to that end.

The Israelites made Six Specific Commitments.

1. They promised themselves to proper marriages
2. They promised to observe the proper rest: day & year
3. They promised to provide for the sacrificial offerings
4. They promised to give their lives to the Lord
5. They promised to pay the tithe of all their income
6. They promised to attend faithfully the house of God

The Commitment To Proper Marriage

We promise not to give our daughters in marriage to the peoples around us or take their daughters for our sons. Nehemiah 10:30

For us today, this means Christians should only marry Christians.

Do not be yoked together with unbelievers, for what does a believer have in common with an unbeliever, or what agreement is there between the temple of God and idols? II Corinthians 6:14-16.

The Commitment To Proper Rest

When the neighboring peoples bring merchandise or grain to sell on the Sabbath, we will not buy from them on the Sabbath or on any holy day. Every seventh year we will forgo working the land and will cancel all debts. Nehemiah 10:31

The Sabbath day and the seventh year are both a picture of rest.

For us today, it means we must learn to work and live out of rest. Remember, God will pick up what you do and use it far greater than you were able to do. Expect Him to do so and rest on that fact. Do not strain or worry, and feel it all depends on you to produce success in what He calls you to do.

The Commitment to Provide The Sacrificial Offerings

We assume the responsibility for carrying out the commands to give a third of a shekel each year for the service of the house of our God: and for all the offerings. Nehemiah 10:32-34

These bloody offerings prepared the way for the death of Jesus and even our remembrance of that death at the Lord's Table.

For us today, it is to remind us of the cost of our redemption; we must not forget the precious blood of Jesus. We can do nothing that can make us acceptable to God, but we have acceptance because of the blood of Jesus.

We are not redeemed with corruptible things, such as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot. 1 Peter 1:18-19

The Commitment To Give Their Lives To God

As it is also written in the Law, we will bring the firstborn of our sons and of our cattle, of our herds and of our flocks to the house of our God. Nehemiah 10:35-37

The purpose of offering the first born was to help them recognize the ownership and rights of God in their lives.

For us today it remains the same; we need to remember daily that we are not our own. We are responsible to the Lord to follow His guidelines, to obey His words, and to honor Him.

You are not your own; you are bought with a price. 1 Corinthians 6:19-20

The Commitment To Tithe

And we will bring a tithe of our crops to the Levites, for it is the Levites who collect the tithes in all the towns where we work. Nehemiah 10:37b-39a

For us today, God still expects us to give. We are to support the church and ministry out of gratitude. We are to do so out of a sense of blessing and thanksgiving, not legalism. Our motive for what we give is God's primary concern.

On the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God has prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come. 1Corinthians 16:2

The Commitment To Be Faithful To The Church

We will not neglect the house of our God. Nehemiah 10:39b

For us today, the need has not changed. We must not neglect meeting with other believers for mutual support, worship and prayer. That is the only way to have a successful Christian life.

Let us not give up meeting together as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another and all the more as you see the Day approaching. Hebrews 10:25

God calls His people to be obedient to the things that He teaches. When we are, health begins to spread over the land around us—in the community, in the family and in the home, as once again we change the circumstances of our lives in dependence on the strength of God