

Unity of Service – Fellowship of Success

Nehemiah 2:17,18; 3:1 – 3, 30 – 32.

The record of Nehemiah starting in chapter 1 is extremely interesting. It tells of how Nehemiah learned about the overall state of Jerusalem and the ones who had been left behind. Inspired by God, he decides to do something about it. It is a tremendous record and while it is all interesting, not all of it pertains to what we are interested in this study. He is able to return to Jerusalem and we see in 2:17,18 that, led by Nehemiah, they decide to rebuild the wall around Jerusalem which had been destroyed and broken down.

In chapter 3, the building begins. To conserve teaching time, we will not read the entire chapter, only the beginning and the ending. The chapter begins with the building of the sheep gate and continues on with each part of the wall rebuild being assigned to different groups. Chapter 3 ends with having come around the entire city to the sheep gate once again.

For the wall to be rebuilt successfully, everyone and every group had to do their job. Not only did each one have to be committed to do their job; they also had to trust that everyone else would be committed to do their jobs. No one person could rebuild the wall, it took everyone. That is what we mean by the unity of service – being committed to doing your part and trusting everyone else to do their parts. That is how the wall was successfully rebuilt – the fellowship of success.

Matthew 4: 18 – 22. Luke 5:10.

While walking along the sea of Galilee, Jesus calls two brothers, Peter and Andrew, who were fishing to follow him. Then he calls two other brothers, James and John, to follow him as well. The Gospel of Luke adds an important piece of information for us. These two sets of brothers were partners in their fishing business.

We see that Peter and Andrew were actually fishing when Jesus called them while James and John were mending nets. In fishing, the nets could get stressed while being thrown and pulled on. They could drag on rocks underneath the water or snag on sunken obstacles. The nets required constant maintenance in order to maintain their usefulness. If all four of them only fished, the nets would eventually have tears, holes and weak spots making them useless for catching fish. If the four of them always mended the nets, no fish would be caught. Each task was a necessary part for the fishing business to be successful. Again, we see the unity of service and the fellowship of success.

Romans 12: 4 – 8.

One body with many members. Not every member has the same job to do or functions the same way. But every member is an important part of the whole. Everyone is a member of one another. Verses 4 – 8 don't necessarily list every needed function but it does set a pattern. Whatever it is that God wants you to do, get busy doing that. This section of Romans is discussed in the book *Receiving the Holy Spirit Today*. We need to do what God wants us to do and trust that other believers will do what God wants them to do. Again, the unity of service and the fellowship of success.

When Paul wrote the Epistle to the Romans, he had not yet ever been to Rome. But Romans contains things he had already been teaching in other places. And sometimes, even though Paul had been in a location and taught the people, they did not always adhere or stick to what Paul had taught. This required that Paul write back to these people with reproof and correction. This was the case in Corinth, where it was necessary for Paul to write and further explain the things he had taught them.

I Corinthians 12: 12 – 31.

Here we see an expansion of the doctrine that Paul had written in Romans. There are many varied members of the one body. The foot cannot say because I am not the hand I am not part of the body. No part of the Body of Christ should ever disparage itself in that way. We are God's masterpieces and God has set every member in the body as it has pleased Him.

And no member can say to any other member “we don’t need you.” Just like building the wall or having a fishing business, there needs to be a level of commitment to the common purpose and goal and to each other. Let’s close in Ephesians.

Ephesians 4: 14 – 16.

It is God’s will that everyone of us mature and grow up as Christians. The Body of Christ needs the effectual working in the measure of every part so that it can increase and edify itself in love. We won’t all be the same part and we won’t all do the same things. But we must be committed to do our part and realize that we need each individual to do the same. That is the unity of service and the fellowship of success.