

November 3, 2013

MAKING YOUR LIFE COUNT
Letting God Use Your Life
Romans 12:1-12; Nehemiah 1:1-3:

The words from **Romans 12:1-12** remind us that God has called us to a life of purpose, a life of holiness, formed to be like Jesus. This call to holiness is followed by the practical application of God's desire for us and how to live this life in Christ. God expects us to grow and mature in our relationship with Him. We must forge a real faith that brings us to a life of maturity and Christlikeness. That means we must be ready and willing for God to use our lives for His purpose and plan. Let's follow the words of the apostle Paul and the model of Nehemiah to make this a reality.

1. **We develop a heart that is in tune with God.**

"When I heard these things, I sat down and wept." **Nehemiah 1:4 (NIV)**

"For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the measure of faith God has given you." **Romans 12:3 (NIV)**

"When He saw the crowds, He had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd."
Matthew 9:36 (NIV)

2. **We seek God faithfully in prayer, first and foremost!**

"For some days I mourned and fasted and prayed before the God of heaven. Then I said: 'O Lord, God of heaven, the great and awesome God, who keeps His covenant of love with those who love Him and obey His commands, let Your ear be attentive and Your eyes open to hear the prayer Your servant is praying before you

day and night for your servants, the people of Israel. I confess the sins we Israelites, including myself and my father's house, have committed against You.'" **Nehemiah 1:4-6 (NIV)**

"The king said to me, 'What is it you want?' Then I prayed to the God of heaven, and I answered the king." **Nehemiah 2:4-5 (NIV)**

"Going a little farther, He fell with His face to the ground and prayed, 'My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from Me. Yet not as I will, but as You will.'" **Matthew 26:39 (NIV)**

"Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer."
Romans 12:12 (NIV)

3. **We let God use us as He made us.**

"I was cupbearer to the king." **Nehemiah 1:11 (NIV)**

"We have different gifts, according to the grace given us."
Romans 12:6 (NIV)

"For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do."
Ephesians 2:10 (NIV)

4. **We prepare ourselves for obstacles and spiritual battles.**

"When Sanballat the Horonite and Tobiah the Ammonite official heard about this, they were very much disturbed that someone had come to promote the welfare of the Israelites." **Nehemiah 2:10 (NIV)**

"Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord." **Romans 12:11 (NIV)**

“For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand.” **Ephesians 6:12-13 (NIV)**

5. We must serve together in community as His body.

“Then I said to them, ‘You see the trouble we are in: Jerusalem lies in ruins, and its gates have been burned with fire. Come, let us rebuild the wall of Jerusalem, and we will no longer be in disgrace.’ I also told them about the gracious hand of my God upon me and what the king had said to me. They replied, ‘Let us start rebuilding.’ So they began this good work.” **Neh. 2:17-18 (NIV)**

“Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others... Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honor one another above yourselves.” **Romans 12:4-5, 10 (NIV)**