

Nehemiah 5:14–19 (ESV)

Review:

Ecclesia semper reformanda – The church always reforming.

- The saying comes from an esteemed 20th century theologian, Karl Barth, who greatly influenced many Christians including Dietrich Bonhoeffer.
 - Chapter 1 – God break my heart for what breaks yours,
 - “Prayer does not equip us for greater works— prayer is the greater work.” Oswald Chambers.
 - Chapter 2 – God’s good hand was on Nehemiah to accomplish great things for his glory.
 - Chapter 3 – Everyone had a part to play in the mission.
 - Chapter 4-6 is about opposition
 - Today is about Nehemiah’s perseverance in midst of opposition.
 - **God’s people do kingdom work with the heart of generosity and hospitality.**
 - **He did it with a big heart not a big head**
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- Big heads gets you stuck and causes crashes.
 - Do you have a big head or a big heart?

1. **Big heads lord over others, big hearts lead others.**

Vs 14 *Moreover, from the time that I was appointed to be their governor in the land of Judah, from the twentieth year to the thirty-second year of Artaxerxes the king, twelve years, neither I nor my brothers ate the food allowance of the governor.*

Vs 15 *The former governors who were before me laid heavy burdens on the people and took from them for their daily ration forty shekels of silver. Even their servants lorded it over the people. But I did not do so, because of the fear of God.*

Vs 16 *I also persevered in the work on this wall, and we acquired no land, and all my servants were gathered there for the work.*

2. **Big heads close their doors, big hearts open their doors.**

Vs 17 *Moreover, there were at my table 150 men, Jews and officials, besides those who came to us from the nations that were around us.*

Butterfield defines hospitality as “using your Christian home in a daily way that seeks to make strangers neighbors, and neighbors family of God”

“Hospitality shares what there is; that’s all. It’s not entertainment. It’s not supposed to be.”
Rosaria Butterfield.

- It’s about following Jesus, and inviting others to come along.

A. We open our heart to each other.

1 Peter 4:9 (ESV) *Show hospitality to one another without grumbling.*

Romans 12:13 (ESV) *Contribute to the needs of the saints and seek to show hospitality.*

B. We open our heart to strangers.

Hebrews 13:2 (ESV) *Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares.*

Luke 14:12-14 (MSG) *Then he turned to the host. “The next time you put on a dinner, don’t just invite your friends and family and rich neighbors, the kind of people who will return the favor. Invite some people who never get invited out, the misfits from the wrong side of the tracks. You’ll be—and experience—a blessing. They won’t be able to return the favor, but the favor will be returned—oh, how it will be returned!—at the resurrection of God’s people.”*

Leviticus 19:33–34 (ESV) *“When a stranger sojourns with you in your land, you shall not do him wrong. 34 You shall treat the stranger who sojourns with you as the native among you, and you shall love him as yourself, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt: I am the LORD your God.*

C. We open our heart as a guest.

- Hospitality is not only opening up your home, it is also being a good guest.
- Jesus was always going to others’ homes. He healed Peter’s mother-in-law.

3. Big heads are greedy, big hearts are generous.

Vs 18 *Now what was prepared at my expense for each day was one ox and six choice sheep and birds, and every ten days all kinds of wine in abundance. Yet for all this I did not demand the food allowance of the governor, because the service was too heavy on this people.*

“And, yes, daily hospitality can be expensive and even inconvenient. It compels us to care more for our church family and neighbors than our personal status in this world. Our monthly grocery bill alone reminds us that what humbles us cannot hurt us, but what puffs up our pride unwaveringly will.” Butterfield.

- Nehemiah gave more than he received!

- Nehemiah is aware of the good hand of God upon him. When you get grace, you get generous; when you get mercy, you get hospitable.

Vs 19 *Remember for my good, O my God, all that I have done for this people.*

- Nehemiah's heart was for the good of the people and the glory of God.
- We are given a big heart from a big-hearted Savior through His grace and our repentance.

Rev 19 – The Marriage supper of the Lamb! Jesus welcomes the nations to His table.

Jesus the better Nehemiah is generous and hospitable. He gave everything so you could be forgiven and he invites you to His table.

Matthew 11:28–30 (ESV) *Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. 29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. 30 For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."*

Nehemiah governed well, but Jesus reigns forever