"Taking Some Time to Give Thanks (Nehemiah, Part 10)"

Text: Nehemiah 11:1-36 + 12:1-47

Now that the walls and gates of Jerusalem were restored it was important that the builders inhabit the holy city of Jerusalem. 10% of the people were chosen by casting lots to move from the villages into the city. Through the process outlined in Nehemiah 11 & 12 we see four traits demonstrated by God's people which are also applicable to us.

First, we need to ***move out of our comfort zone***. Many of the families chosen to re-locate into Jerusalem had become established in their familiar routines. But they were willing to set up a new life in a much different environment, because that's what God wanted. **Second**, we need to ***commit to holiness***. Jerusalem itself was set apart for the Lord's special use, and they were coming to live in the holy city. It was one thing to have a home in the holy city – it was another thing to make their homes holy. When the presence of our holy God fills our lives and homes others will sense His presence in our lives. **Third**, we need to ***be involved in ministry***. We see in Nehemiah 11 & 12 that God used a wide variety of people who offered themselves willingly to the Lord. Some had leadership gifts, others had administrative gifts, and there were also those with serving gifts. **Fourth**, we need to ***adore God in worship***. In thanksgiving, we acknowledge God's generosity; in prayer, we seek God's help. Nehemiah records that there were two large thanksgiving choirs who *sang loudly* and *rejoiced*! *Glad celebration*, *thanksgivings*, and *singing* were part of their joyful worship; and it should always be part of our worship, as well!

Discussion Guide/Action Steps

1. Are you willing for God to move you out of your comfort zone for the sake of the Kingdom?

2. Pray that *holiness would adorn your house for endless days* (see Psalm 93:5).

3. Are you using your God-given gifts to bless the Kingdom of God and bring glory to Him?

4. Do you enter in with your whole heart whenever you have opportunity to praise and/or pray?

5. Can you affirm and declare the Westminster Shorter Catechism: "*Our chief end is to glorify God and enjoy Him forever*."