

**SERMON SERIES**

**NEHEMIAH:**  
Recommitting  
God's People  
to God's Glory



# THE DECEPTIVE DANGER OF DECLINE

NEHEMIAH 13

Message Guide | August 15, 2021



# NEHEMIAH

RECOMMITTING GOD'S PEOPLE TO GOD'S GLORY

SERMON SERIES

TODAY'S MESSAGE | AUGUST 15, 2021

## The Deceptive Danger of Decline

NEHEMIAH 13

The most dangerous time for failure is when it follows after genuine success. Nothing can be more disheartening or draining than to enjoy unprecedented progress, only to find out after a while that decline has crept in. This was Nehemiah's experience.

What are some signs of spiritual decline that you and I must avoid at all costs, with all our hearts? Whether we refer to a personal or church-wide situation, there are serious dangers to watch out for:

### 1. A LOSS OF DISCERNMENT ABOUT THE ENEMIES OF GOD [vv. 1-9]

- The proximity of verses 1-3 to the story of Tobiah (vv. 4-9) may indicate a common cause: Eliashib, the compromising High Priest.
- Once God's people, especially spiritual leaders, refuse to call out destructive people or behavior "because it isn't loving" decline spreads like a virus until open compromise looks normal.
- Proverbs 24:11-12 *"Rescue those who are being taken away to death; hold back those who are stumbling to the slaughter. If you say, 'Behold, we did not know this,' does not He who weighs the heart perceive it? Does not He who keeps watch over your soul know it, and will He not repay man according to his work?"*

### 2. A LACK OF LOVE FOR THE SERVANTS OF GOD [vv. 10-14]

- The servants of God [Levites] had left the ministry because God's people had stopped supporting them.
- When God's servants are seen as burdens rather than blessings, and the ministry isn't supported sacrificially, God's servants may suffer materially but God's people suffer spiritually. Everyone loses. We put our money where our heart is (Matthew 6:21).





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## 3. A LOWER PRIORITY TO THE WORSHIP OF GOD [vv. 15-22]

- As enforced by Nehemiah, the strictness concerning Sabbath in the Law of Moses was because the external observance pointed to the inner state of the heart.
- Jesus made it clear in Mark 2:7 that “the Sabbath was made for man, not man for the sabbath”. But whether it’s Sunday or another day, we must show that we value the worship of God more than anything else. And that’s something we cannot fool God about.

## 4. A LESSER REGARD FOR THE STANDARDS OF GOD [vv. 23-31]

- God’s people had married into paganism in violation of the Law of Moses (Exodus 34:15-16; Deuteronomy 7:3). This evoked a strong reaction from Nehemiah that included public discipline.
- Today the standards of God are captured in the Bible, and its principles apply through all generations and to every age group. When a lesser regard for the Bible becomes common, a doctrinal downgrade begins. And where doctrine is corrupted, behavior soon follows.

## Final Thoughts

For lasting results, revivals require constant renewal and vigilance. It takes work to maintain it. But when we pray, God works! Nehemiah’s final words are a prayer, showing again his constant reliance on God (1:4–11; 2:4, 20; 4:4, 9, 20; 5:15, 19; 6:9, 14; 13:14, 22, 29). And so, the book of Nehemiah begins with prayer and closes with prayer. Prayer was Nehemiah’s secret of success, and that secret is ours for the taking.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Have any of the four areas mentioned become a struggle in your life recently? If so, how are you coping with it? How can the group/family help?
2. Seeing how crucial prayer was to Nehemiah’s success: how much of a role does prayer play in your career/business (or studies)? In your leadership (or followership)? How can you level up the role of prayer in these situations?
3. As you close in group prayer, pray for anyone who has shared serious concerns about personal decline. Praise God for those who are still holding steady. Praise God that these concerns are easier handled together than alone.

Download the study guide: [bit.ly/NehemiahStudyGuides](https://bit.ly/NehemiahStudyGuides)





# The Shepherd's Voice

by Pastor BJ Sebastian  
GCF Disciple-Making Ministry



***“And they devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers ..... praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.” (Acts 2:42, 47)***

The great blessing of the church of the Lord Jesus Christ is that He has taken on the responsibility of building His church Himself – “...*I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it*” (Matthew 16:18). And He has set out a clear mission – “*19 Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.*” (Matthew 28:19-20)

After Peter’s great first sermon at the inauguration of the church on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:14-36), and the rich harvest of souls that the Lord of the harvest caused that day (Acts 2:37-41), Dr. Luke, the writer of the book of Acts, talked about how the very first church did disciple-making in obedience to the Lord’s Great Commission (Acts 2:42-47). This paragraph I believe, gives us the strategy we are to employ; the five essential disciplines that every disciple-making church should have.

In verse 42 we find the first three ingredients:

1. Bible Study – “*the apostles’ teaching*”
2. Fellowship – “*the fellowship*”
3. Prayer – “*the prayers*”

In verses 43-46 we find the results:

- a) Confirming Wonders (v. 43 – “*And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles*”)
- b) Common Faith (v. 44a – “*And all who believed were together*”)
- c) Caring Community (v. 44b-46 – “*and had all things in common. 45 And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need. 46 And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts*”)

In verse 47 we find the last two ingredients:

4. Worship – “*praising God*”
5. Witness – “*having favor with all the people*”

As a result, the first Christian church grew geometrically; not because of their efforts, but because of their obedience to the Lord. Thus, “*the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved*”(v. 47b)

We cannot employ any other strategy for carrying out the Great Commission: Bible Study, Fellowship, Prayer, Worship, and Witness. We will do this corporately as a whole church, in small groups through our growth groups, and in our homes. It is not new. It is from the Ancient of days.

This is the core of our Disciple-Making Ministry. For this we will toil, “*struggling with all his energy that he powerfully works within me.*” (Colossians 1:29)





# WORSHIP THROUGH GIVING



Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.

**2 Corinthians 9:7**

If you are led to give, you may do so through the following means:

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**GCF BAYANIHAN FOOD STALLS**

The GCF Mercy Ministry continues to accept donations, here’s how:

**For In-Kind Donations:** drop off at the GCF Lobby from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM.

**For Cash Donations:** give via the GCF bank accounts ([gcf.org.ph/give](https://gcf.org.ph/give)).

Email your deposit slip to [finance@gcf.org.ph](mailto:finance@gcf.org.ph) with the subject “*For Bayanihan Food Stall*”. For questions, contact the Mercy Ministry at 0917 532 7672 or [mercy@gcf.org.ph](mailto:mercy@gcf.org.ph)

**COVID-19 EMERGENCY RESPONSE EFFORTS**

You may also give to support the church family’s COVID relief efforts.

Just indicate “**For COVID-19 Fund**”when you email your transaction document.





# CHURCH UPDATES



## NO ON-SITE CONGREGATION UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE

### SIGN LANGUAGE INTERPRETATION

Available during the 5:00 p.m. service only until further notice

### REMINDERS OF GOD'S CARE AND FAITHFULNESS DEVOTIONALS

Mondays and Fridays | 8:00 p.m. | Livestream on GCF Facebook and YouTube

### MIDWEEK WORSHIP SERVICE

Wednesdays | 8:00 p.m. | via Zoom

### THE GCF FAMILY'S HOUR OF PRAYER

Thursdays | 8:00 p.m. | via Zoom

### LIVEstream (YouthLIVE Worship)

Saturdays | 5:00 p.m. | on youtube.com/user/gcfyouthlive

### KidsLIFE ONLINE SUNDAY SCHOOL

Sundays | 1:00 p.m. | on Facebook at @GCFKidsLIFE

### LOOK UP AND MOVE OUT

Let us plant churches with a high view of God and a high view of God's word!  
Visit [bit.ly/GCFChurchPlanting](https://bit.ly/GCFChurchPlanting) to find out more!

### TELECONSULTATION SERVICE

For appointments or questions, please contact:

gcfocstef@gmail.com (9:00 a.m. – 12:00 nn) • gcfocluan@gmail.com (1:00 – 4:00 p.m.)

### FAMILY GGEX (GROWTH GROUP EXPRESS)

Every Sunday Morning | 11:30 a.m. – 12:00 nn) | GGEx Leader: Pastor Emerson Manaloto  
Zoom: [bit.ly/FamilyGGEx](https://bit.ly/FamilyGGEx) • Passcode: familyGGEx | Contact Marj: 0917-779-1549

### GROWTH GROUP LEADERSHIP TRAINING (LEVEL 1)

August 22, & 29 | 1:00 – 3:00 p.m. | Pre-registration required: [bit.ly/GGLT1Aug2021](https://bit.ly/GGLT1Aug2021)  
For Inquiries, contact: 0917 779 1549

### LIVING A LIFE OF TRUE WORSHIP (7-WEEK ONLINE BIBLE STUDY)

August 1 – September 12 | 8:00 – 9:00 a.m. | Pre-registration required:  
(Precept) Ms Goldie/Jen: 0917-773 2378 • (GCF) Marj: 0917-779 1549

## HOW CAN WE PRAY FOR YOU?

Message us your prayer requests at:

Facebook: Greenhills Christian Fellowship | E-mail: [pray@gcf.org.ph](mailto:pray@gcf.org.ph)

## ONLINE VISITOR'S CENTER

We are so glad you're here today! We want to personally welcome you via Zoom after the 10:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. Worship Services.

**Zoom Room:** [bit.ly/WelcometoGCF](https://bit.ly/WelcometoGCF) | **Welcome Form:** [bit.ly/GCFWelcome](https://bit.ly/GCFWelcome)



**Greenhills Christian Fellowship**  
**Know Christ and Make Him Known**

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Monday to Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

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