



RE:OLUTION.

being a solution is better than a resolution.

A 4-part churchwide sermon series | 6/7 Jan 2018 - 27/28 Jan 2018



PART THREE INTRODUCTION

When we have opened our eyes to what concerns us, how are we to respond? It is not hard to discern what is a good decision relying on our inherent moral compass. We know helping that old lady across the road or exercising to get fit are good decisions. But are they Godly decisions? Every Godly decision is good but not every good decision is Godly.

To distinguish a Godly decision from what is merely a good decision, there is no shortcut. We have to pursue God to find out God's solution. In Nehemiah's story, his first reaction to the burden in his heart was not to run to Jerusalem but to mourn and fast and pray before God. Fasting is making a choice to disconnect, to come away from the things that captivate us in our lives. Prayer postures us to connect with God and seek His heart.

Godly solutions are birthed when what concerns us align with what concerns God.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Have you ever boarded a plane without knowing where you are going? Or taken the train in the wrong direction even after studying the map multiple times?

Jumping into action without first seeking God is much like this. You will get somewhere, but at the end of the day you may end up moving away rather than towards your destination.

- a. From your list of areas in your life or the world around you that bother you, think about whether any of these issues are truly new or novel (not like anything seen before)?

The issue that concerned Nehemiah – the destruction of Jerusalem's wall and gates had occurred some 140 years before.

- b. In response to your list of concerns and things that bother you, write down some of the solutions that come to you on how they can be resolved.

Undoubtedly, many of these solutions are good. But do you know if they are Godly?

2. It must have been simple to say that the solution to Nehemiah's concern with protecting the Jews in Jerusalem was to rebuild the walls and gates of the city. Yet this was not the immediate action that Nehemiah took.

Read Nehemiah 1:5 – 11 on his response to the burden that was placed in his heart.

Do an inductive bible study (observations, interpretation and application). You can use the following as a guide.

- i. Posture your heart. Spend some time in prayer and ask the Holy Spirit to be your teacher. Open your heart to the Lord to speak to you.
- ii. Read the passage aloud.
- iii. Ask some context questions of the passage:
 - What sort of writing is this? (a letter, a poem, a narrative etc?)
 - Are there any clues about the circumstances under which it was written?
 - What has happened so far in this particular book of the Bible?
- iv. Some observation questions of the passage:
 - Are there any major sub-sections or breaks in the passage?
 - What is the main point or points?
 - What surprises are there?
 - What are the key words? What words or ideas are repeated?
- v. Some leading questions of the text:
 - How does this passage relate to other parts of the book?
 - How does the passage relate to Jesus?
 - What does this teach us about God?
 - How could we sum up the meaning of this passage in our own words?
- vi. Some application questions of the passage:
 - How does this passage challenge (or confirm) your understanding?
 - Is there some attitude I need to change?
 - How does this passage call on me to change the way I live?

WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

We invite you to embark on a 12-day fast and prayer as an act of obedience in seeking God's heart. We have prepared a 12-day devotional for us to posture ourselves as we seek God's will for 2018 and how to prepare for both the good times and difficult times to come.

Fasting and prayer is our decision to prioritize God over the distractions we are laying down. As we align our hearts with God's own heart, we are preparing to be called into action for God's plan.

CHANGE YOUR MIND

"When I heard these things, I sat down and wept. For some days I mourned and fasted and prayed before the God of heaven". ~ Nehemiah 1:4