

## Rebuilding What is Broken: Financial Wholeness Nehemiah 5 / July 10, 2022

**Question: How can we experience financial wholeness?**

**Answer: Use money to love people instead of using people to love money.**

### **Recognize our financial brokenness.**

*5 About this time some of the men and their wives raised a cry of protest against their fellow Jews. 2 They were saying, "We have such large families. We need more food to survive." 3 Others said, "We have mortgaged our fields, vineyards, and homes to get food during the famine." 4 And others said, "We have had to borrow money on our fields and vineyards to pay our taxes. 5 We belong to the same family as those who are wealthy, and our children are just like theirs. Yet we must sell our children into slavery just to get enough money to live. We have already sold some of our daughters, and we are helpless to do anything about it, for our fields and vineyards are already mortgaged to others." 6 When I heard their complaints, I was very angry. 7 After thinking it over, I spoke out against these nobles and officials. I told them, "You are hurting your own relatives by charging interest when they borrow money!" Then I called a public meeting to deal with the problem. 8 At the meeting I said to them, "We are doing all we can to redeem our Jewish relatives who have had to sell themselves to pagan foreigners, but you are selling them back into slavery again. How often must we redeem them?" And they had nothing to say in their defense.*

- We have a security problem.
- We have a pleasure problem.

### **Insist on holiness.**

*9 Then I pressed further, “What you are doing is not right! Should you not walk in the fear of our God in order to avoid being mocked by enemy nations? 10 I myself, as well as my brothers and my workers, have been lending the people money and grain, but now let us stop this business of charging interest. 11 You must restore their fields, vineyards, olive groves, and homes to them this very day. And repay the interest you charged when you lent them money, grain, new wine, and olive oil.”*

- Set apart
- For a purpose

### **Commit to action.**

*12 They replied, “We will give back everything and demand nothing more from the people. We will do as you say.” Then I called the priests and made the nobles and officials swear to do what they had promised. 13 I shook out the folds of my robe and said, “If you fail to keep your promise, may God shake you like this from your homes and from your property!” The whole assembly responded, “Amen,” and they praised the Lord. And the people did as they had promised.*

- Real faith produces real change.
- A disciple of Jesus is someone who follows Jesus in an ever-deepening relationship of love with God and others, and helps others do the same.

### **Hold out for God’s blessing!**

*14 For the entire twelve years that I was governor of Judah—from the twentieth year to the thirty-second year of the reign of King Artaxerxes—neither I nor my officials drew on our official food allowance. 15 The former governors, in contrast, had laid heavy*

*burdens on the people, demanding a daily ration of food and wine, besides forty pieces of silver. Even their assistants took advantage of the people. But because I feared God, I did not act that way. 16 I also devoted myself to working on the wall and refused to acquire any land. And I required all my servants to spend time working on the wall. 17 I asked for nothing, even though I regularly fed 150 Jewish officials at my table, besides all the visitors from other lands! 18 The provisions I paid for each day included one ox, six choice sheep or goats, and a large number of poultry. And every ten days we needed a large supply of all kinds of wine. Yet I refused to claim the governor's food allowance because the people already carried a heavy burden. 19 Remember, O my God, all that I have done for these people, and bless me for it.*

- Present benefits of financial wholeness.
- Future benefits of financial wholeness.