

PLAIN SPEECH

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“Seeing then that we have such hope, we use great plainness of speech” (2 Cor. 3:12)

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WHY DO CONGREGATIONS APOSTATIZE?

Apostasy has been a long standing problem for God’s people (**Isaiah 1:21**). This much we readily understand. However, what we sometimes do not reflect enough upon is why the problem is so common. Ask yourself the following concerning local churches today:

- Why have some sold themselves to do evil and have thus become harlot churches (**2 Kings 17:15-17**)?
- Why has institutionalism infiltrated so many congregations?
- Why are social programs used to “reach out” to the lost and “edify” the saved?
- Why are the women out of line in so many assemblies?

Many answers might be given. However, the answer I will cite is simply this: congregations apostatize because of a lack of genuine leadership! Departures from truth are the symptoms. Poor leadership is the problem.

Nehemiah was a great leader. He was a rebuilder of walls and people. When we study the book that bears his name, some valuable leadership lessons are gleaned, ten of which are listed below. Each man of this congregation would do well to put said lessons into practice.

- **Nehemiah was a man of prayer.** Wise indeed (**1:4, 6; 2:4; 4:4-5, 9; 5:19; 6:14; 13:14, 22, 29**).
- **Nehemiah genuinely cared about the people.** He came to seek the welfare of his people (**2:10**).
- **Nehemiah planned ahead.** He did not put the cart before the horse (**2:7-8**).
- **Nehemiah was courageous.** Read **6:10-11**.
- **Nehemiah was not self-deceived.** Nehemiah’s head did not swell (**2:20; 4:14, 20**).
- **Nehemiah understood he could not do it alone.** He employed the help of faithful men (**7:1-2**).
- **Nehemiah directed the people to the will of God.** He led them to do it God’s way (**8:14-18; 13:4-22**).
- **Nehemiah was not a quitter.** He had a goal to reach and reached it (**6:15**).
- **Nehemiah was not a respecter of persons.** He did not cater to “special interest” groups (**5:7**).
- **Nehemiah was a man who was willing to listen to people.** No matter what the problem may have been, Nehemiah had an open and sympathetic ear (**4:10-14; 5:1-6**).

What if each man who is a member of this congregation...

- Prayed for the work we have to do and I mean really pray?
- Really cared about the other members of the congregation?
- Approached the work with careful planning and foresight?
- Was willing to die for the cause?
- Was known for their genuine humility?
- Was immune from “Diotrephes Syndrome?”
- Called for book, chapter, and verse for all that we say and do?
- Refused to leave the front lines of battle for greener pastures?
- Loved each member equally different?
- Would bend an ear to those with needs and concerns?

I can tell you this: if each and every man at Palmer Road would make such things his habitual practice, not only would our congregation not apostatize, but we would really start to see the work flourish.