Jesus in Nehemiah

5.9.10

(Nehemiah 13)

Recap the story

Two Problems

1. The problem of Chapter 13. What do we do with . . .
   - The statements about the temple?
   - The statements about the Sabbath?
   - The statements about intermarriage?
2. The problem with the book of Nehemiah
   - A pretty pathetic way to end
   - "Remember me oh God . . ." (*Neh 13:15; 13:22; 13:31*)

To solve the problems we have to read Nehemiah in a distinctly *Christian* way
The New Testament tells us how to do this. A few examples . . .

- *1 Corinthians 10:11*
  - The events of the Old Testament have relevance for us
  - They are for our instruction
- *Matthew 5:17-19*
  - The Old Testament still has authority
  - It has the kind of authority Jesus says it has
  - We must read the Old Testament as finding its fulfillment in Christ
- *Hebrews 7:11-12*
  - We have a different priest—Jesus
  - We follow a new law—the law of Christ

How can we understand Nehemiah in general and Nehemiah 13 in particular in a way that sees Christ fulfilling what happens?

Let's examine the three sections . . .

Part One: Failure Regarding the Temple (*Neh 13:4-14*)

- Nehemiah grounds his account in the beginning of God's story.
- How should Christians see the account pointing to the fulfillment of God's story?
  - Jesus is greater than the temple (*Matt 12:6*)
  - The triune God comes to make his home in believers (*John 14:23*)
  - It is in this sense that believers are "temples" (*Eph 2:19-22*)
  - The Old Testament temple finds its fulfillment in the Spirit of Christ indwelling his people (*1 Cor 3:16-17*)

Part Two: Failure Regarding the Sabbath (*Neh 13:15-23*)

- Nehemiah grounds his account in the beginning of God's story.
- How should Christians see the account pointing to the fulfillment of God's story?
  - Jesus is greater than and Lord of the Sabbath (*Matt 12:8*)
  - The Sabbath principle in Old Testament points to the need people have to rest from their works in Jesus (*Heb 4:8-10*)

Part Three: Failure Regarding the Purity of the People (*Neh 13:23-30; 1-3*)

- Nehemiah grounds his account in the beginning of God's story.
- How should Christians see the account pointing to the fulfillment of God's story?
  - Jesus' purpose is to secure a holy people (*Titus 2:14*)
  - In Christ, Believers are the holy people of God called to give testimony to the name of Jesus (*1 Pet 2:9-12*)

5 Implications of all this

1. We must read the parts of the Bible in light of the whole Bible.
   - The Bible is not a series of disconnected stories
   - It is one, large story with many parts progressing over centuries
2. We must read the whole Bible in light of Christ
   - We must read the whole Bible as Christians
   - Every part of the Bible points to him in some sense
3. Our bodies are the temple of God and we ought not defile them, but use them for his service and glory.
4. The Christian Sabbath is not Sunday, but Jesus and we rest from our works in him.
5. We must guard the people of God from threats outside the Church
   - Be careful who you marry
   - Be careful who you let in the church
   - Be careful who you keep in the church