

RESTORED: REFORTIFYING YOUR LIFE IN A HOSTILE WORLD

Message: Why Should I Stand Out?

Nehemiah 9:38-10:39, Luke 19:28-48, Esther 1-10

PALM SUNDAY and PURIM, March 24, 2024

BIG IDEA: Your commitment to God makes you stand out as a WITNESS to the goodness and faithfulness of God.

I WILL STAND OUT AS A WITNESS FOR THE LORD WHEN ...

1. OBEYING GOD IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN FITTING IN.

Nehemiah 9:38-10:31a ³⁸*In view of all this, we are making a **binding agreement in writing** on a sealed document containing the names of our leaders, Levites, and priests. **10** Those whose seals were on the document were the governor Nehemiah ... the priests. ⁹The Levites ... ²⁸The rest of the people—... along with their wives, sons, and daughters, everyone who is able to understand and who **has separated themselves** from the surrounding peoples to obey the law of God—²⁹join with their noble brothers and **commit themselves** with a [curse and a] sworn oath to follow the law of God given through God's servant Moses and **to obey carefully all the commands**, ... of the LORD our Lord.*

³⁰*We will not give our daughters in marriage to the surrounding peoples and will not take their daughters as wives for our sons.*

³¹*When the surrounding peoples bring merchandise or any kind of grain to sell on the Sabbath day, we will not buy from them on the Sabbath or a holy day.*

2 Cor. 6:14 *Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers.*

2. HONORING GOD IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN

MAKING MONEY.

Nehemiah 10:31b-34 *We will also leave the land uncultivated in the seventh year and will cancel every debt (Sabbatical year, Jubilee)*

³²*We will impose the following commands on ourselves:*

*To give an eighth of an ounce of silver yearly for the service of **the house of our God**:³³ the **bread** displayed before the Lord, the **daily grain** offering, the regular **burnt** offering, ... the **sin** offerings to atone for Israel, and for all the work of **the house of our God**.³⁴ We have cast lots among the priests, Levites, and people for **the donation of wood** by our ancestral families at the appointed times each year. They are to bring the wood to **our God's house** to burn on the altar of the Lord our God, as it is written in the law.*

3. MINISTERING/GIVING TO THE LORD IS

MORE IMPORTANT THAN PERSONAL COMFORT.

Nehemiah 10:35-39 ³⁵*We will bring the **firstfruits of our land** and of every fruit tree to **the Lord's house** year by year. ³⁶We will also bring the firstborn of our sons and our livestock, as prescribed by the law, and will bring the firstborn of our herds and flocks to **the house of our God**, to the priests who serve in **our God's house**. ³⁷We will bring a loaf from our first batch of dough to the priests at the storerooms of **the house of our God**. We will also bring the **firstfruits** of our grain offerings, of every fruit tree, and of the new wine and fresh oil. A **tenth** of our land's produce belongs to the Levites, for the Levites are to collect **the one-tenth offering** in all our agricultural towns. ³⁸A priest from Aaron's descendants is to accompany the Levites when they collect **the tenth**, and the Levites are to take a tenth of this offering to the storerooms of the treasury in **the house of our God**. ³⁹For the Israelites and the Levites are to bring the contributions of grain, new wine, and fresh oil to the storerooms where the articles of the sanctuary are kept and where the priests who minister are, along with the gatekeepers and singers. **We will not neglect the house of our God.***

1 Chronicles 29:10-17, vs. 14 *Everything comes from You, and we have given You only what comes from Your hand.*

Malachi 3:6-12, Luke 6:38

ACTION STEP: Make a plan for obedience and giving, and commit to it.