



## Where is Your Place at the Wall? Chad Ezelle

In the opening chapters of Nehemiah, we see a man who was consumed with God's plan for his life. His zeal for God's work was evident in the way he handled himself before the king, the way he responded when told about the state of Jerusalem and the planning he did while waiting for the right opportunity. Further, it was because of that zeal that Nehemiah accomplished such great things in God's kingdom.

His zeal led him to the walls and gates of a tattered city. When Nehemiah reached his beloved town, he found a place in ruins and people who did not care one way or another. Their city—God's city—was in terrible shape, and no one was doing anything about it. Nehemiah inspected, was honest in his assessment of the city, and got to work on organizing the necessary rebuilding of the wall.

If we are honest with ourselves about God's kingdom today, it's not in much better shape than Jerusalem in Nehemiah's day. The walls of the church (not the buildings) are broken and the gates are burned—and maybe that is the big reason that we do not see many people these days entering the gates of the kingdom.

It is about time we fixed the city—the church. It is time that we inspect the walls and figured out where we can do some renovation and rebuilding on God's city, the church, Jesus' body. The walls are broken and the gates are burning—have you found your place to renovated and rebuild yet?

We are a congregation of the Lord's people looking for you. We desire to love our community and neighbors as our Lord has taught us to do. Please allow us to be an encouragement to you as you are an encouragement to us by visiting with us today.

If you have any questions about anything you see or hear today, please stop someone and ask questions. We are seeking to be New Testament Christians, and as such we desire to share what we have been given. We want to be ready to give you an answer for what we do and say (1 Peter 3:15)

*But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear:*

Thank you for being our Guest today!

## FOOD FOR THOUGHT

“How much time he gains who does not look to see what his neighbour says or does or thinks, but only at what he does himself, to make it just and holy.”

— Marcus Aurelius,

### Meditations

“In small towns, news travels at the speed of boredom.”

— Carlos Ruiz Zafón

“No one gossips about other people’s secret virtues.”

— Bertrand Russell, On Education

## Idle Words Cleon Lyles

***“But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment”*** (Matt. 12:36).

The term “idle words” here signifies wicked, malicious, injurious, slandering, impious words. This does not refer to innocent talk on subjects secular and social. It gets before us a very serious matter that should be understood, because innocent people are going into the judgment without realizing they have been guilty of this crime. Some people who would shudder if obscene language should be used in their presence are guilty of this crime. The Lord condemned it as severely as He did any use of the tongue in an improper manner. It involved the same thought as expressed by the Lord through James in James 4:11. ***“Speak no evil of one another, brethren.” In other words, “speak nothing to the injury of any one.”***

The most common method of doing harm to people and nations is the practice of using idle words. By means of propaganda many countries have been divided and lost. In fact no more effective means have been discovered than the use of words. A false statement will lead to a false conclusion. The statement itself may have enough truth in it to make it sound good, but it may have enough falsehood to make it all false. A little leaven spoils the whole lump. A little error mixed with truth will destroy the truth. “He that keepeth the whole law, yet offends in one point, is guilty of all.”

This is not only a common evil among people of the world, but it is satan’s most effective weapon against the church. He can usually find someone who possesses a heart filled with envy who is willing to be his agent in passing out false propaganda. This agent will look for followers.

Continued on page 3

Usually he has his own method of securing hearers, maybe through appeals to sympathy. When followers are found, or some weak brother is located, small statements are dropped. He in turn takes them to others. In this way satan has divided many churches and hopes to continue to do so. Simple minds can be used in this way to spread a doctrine that was false from the beginning. The creator of the false doctrine draws back into the shadows and allows someone else to do his dirty work. In this way congregations have been destroyed, false doctrines allowed to creep in, and satan has taken over where the Lord once reigned.

These are serious matters that thinking people can see where many cannot. When a church prospers, grows stronger and larger, treats its preacher right, preaches the gospel without fear or favor, stays out of political matters and runs its own business, satan is not pleased. Hence he will see that someone comes to town and plants a few rumors in places he considers weak in order to stop the progress of the church. All growing churches have had this experience and will continue to have it. Those that love the Lord, do what is right, remain united and run their own business will grow stronger and be a credit to the cause of Christ. Others will finally be destroyed.

May the Lord help us to be neither the giver nor receiver of idle words. May He help us to continue to press forward in His service, ever mindful of His will and unmoved by the ways of the world as we accomplish great things for Him. He has brought us this far because we listened to Him only, and He will continue to bless us if we continue to listen to Him.

## This Week's Q&A

**Q: What was a "mess"?**

A: A serving or portion of food, in Genesis 43:34 and 2 Samuel 11:8.

Context: It was a custom in ancient times for a host to send special choice servings of food to guests from his own table. Even though all guests had sufficient food, those tidbits from the host suggested special honor to those who received them, as in the case of Joseph's offerings to Benjamin in Genesis 43. A mess from a host could sometimes be used to coerce one, as King David's efforts in 2 Samuel 11:6-9 with Uriah. Esau lost his birthright for a morsel of meat (Hebrews 12:16).

Aside: Be careful what messes you bring to the table and what/whose messes you eat!

It is better to keep out of a quarrel than to make it up afterwards.

# I Know Something Good About You

Wouldn't this old world be better  
If folks we meet would say,  
"I know something good about you"  
And treat us just that way?

Wouldn't it be fine and dandy  
If each handclasp, warm and true,  
Carried with it this assurance,  
"I know something good about you"?

Wouldn't life be lots more happy  
If the good that's in us all  
Were the only thing about us  
That folks bothered to recall?

Wouldn't life be lots more happy  
If we praised the good we see?  
For there's such a lot of goodness  
In the worst of you and me.

Wouldn't it be nice to practice  
That fine way of thinking, too?  
You know something good about me;  
"I know something good about you."

--Selected

An open mouth and an open mind are not usually found in the same head.

**Second Street**  
Church of Christ

**P.O. Box 126**  
**260 Second Street**  
**Belmont, MS 38827**  
**662-454-9429 building**

Mail me to  
someone  
who might  
read me!