

Sermon Discussion Questions

October 30, 2016

Building the Church: Loving Her Divine Law

Nehemiah 8

Pastor Bob Hopper

1. Define the word, "transition." What transition is happening in the Book of Nehemiah between chapters 1-6 and chapters 8-13, and what role does chapter 7 play? What "transition" is happening at CPC? What "transition" is happening in your personal life?
2. Compare and contrast what Pastor Hopper called "organizational competency" and "spiritual vitality." Why are both vital to a healthy church? Discuss *Ephesians 4:11-16*.
3. *Nehemiah* shares his ministry with *Ezra* in this chapter. What is *Ezra's* role? What is your role in sharing the ministry of CPC?
4. When God's people were assembled and *Ezra* read to them the Law, what else was necessary to help people understand that Law? What is meant by the doctrine of the perspicuity of Scripture? What is one primary function of a pastor?
5. What is the first response of God's people to hearing God's Law (*vs. 6, 9b*)? What is the difference between shame and guilt? Why is it appropriate to encounter guilt when you encounter God via His Word? What is meant by "the trauma of holiness"?
6. Do the people remain in a posture of guilt? What are they told to do (*vs. 10-12*)? What is the significance of the statement in *vs. 10: Do not be grieved, for the joy of the Lord is your strength*.
7. Reflect on the significance of the Protestant Reformation in general and the role of Luther and Calvin in particular? Like Nehemiah, God used these men as great leaders. What did Luther discover from Scripture about the intent and use of the Law as he studied the Book of Romans? How did Calvin explain "the three purposes of the Law"?
8. Pastor Hopper explained four views/beliefs that people have about "salvation." Explain and discuss them:

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Discuss: We are saved by faith (Christ) alone but not by a faith that is alone. What is the difference between "decisional regeneration" and actual regeneration?

9. The Westminster Confession of Faith (*Chapter 19*) articulates three kinds of "laws" in Scripture (ceremonial, judicial, and moral). Why are Christians called to love God's Law?

10. This chapter ends by a reinstitution and celebration of the Feast of Booths (vs. 13-18). What is the significance of this “ceremonial” law (*Deut. 31*)? How does all of this point us to the gospel? Discuss: “Christians love God’s Law because it leads us to the cross in perpetual repentance and from the cross in joyful obedience.” How has this message changed your view of and response to God’s law?