

The Spirit of Involvement

In the Book of Nehemiah we are introduced to people who had "a mind to work." This is the same as saying that they had the spirit of involvement. It takes involvement to get a job done (Nehemiah 2:17-18). It takes involvement for the church to grow.

The spirit of involvement demonstrated here is opposed to the spirit of laziness, fear, contentedness, hopelessness, apathy and indifference. Enemies try to provoke a spirit of hopelessness in us just as they did in Nehemiah's day (4:1-3), but, we can respond to discouragement by praying (4:4).

Interest and enthusiasm are contagious commodities as are their opposites, stagnation and non-involvement. Leaders can lead, urge, encourage and provide the example for greater involvement in the Lord's work, but, until people "catch fire" with interest and zeal there is little else they can do.

One of the problems we face in the church today is spectator mentality. Someone has suggested that most congregations are composed of people who are "100% willing"--10% are willing to work and 90% are willing to let them. No doubt, all of us want to see the Lord's work prosper and grow, but what are we doing to help? We want to see the lost taught the Gospel, the sick visited, the needy relieved, the weak encouraged and the body of Christ edified, but who is personally involved in any of these areas? Are you? We have no aversion to being involved in clubs, sports, scouts, organizations, social interests and hobbies; however, how much will we commit ourselves to being involved in the greatest cause on earth?

The spirit of involvement, or the "mind to work," comes from the following areas:

- *Everyone feeling the need to be involved.* That doesn't come from one sermon being preached on involvement. It comes from the spirit of Christ being in us (Matthew 20:28). There is no reason for anyone to feel that he is not a part of the work of the church (Romans 12:4-5).
- *Everyone willing to do his part in the work.* After the dispensers of discouragement had done their work in Nehemiah's day, the Jews returned "everyone unto his work" (4:15). Often members of the church are not willing to do the work of which they are capable. What do we need to make us willing workers?
- *Everyone realizing the seriousness of his task.* How often do we think that any contribution that we might make is of minimal significance? We are all in this work together and we need the mind to work rather than the mind to fight, argue and tear down.

When people work together, they grow together. The church that is busy at work is busy growing. How busy are we?

By Dennis Gullede