

## Concern for the House of God

Nehemiah 13:4-14

Stuart W. Bryan

### I. Introduction

*We are not our own; therefore, neither is our own reason or will to rule our acts and counsels. We are not our own; therefore, let us not make it our end to seek what may be agreeable to our [sinful] nature. We are not our own; therefore, as far as possible, let us forget ourselves and the things that are ours. On the other hand, we are God's; let us, therefore, live and die to him. We are God's; therefore, let his wisdom and will preside over all our actions. We are God's; to him, then, as the only legitimate end, let every part of our life be directed! – John Calvin*

### II. Why is the house of God forsaken?

A. We will not neglect the house of our God (10:32-39)

B. Corrupting the House of God (13:4-9)

Notice that the sin takes two forms. The first is internal \_\_\_\_\_ – the service of the Temple itself is being twisted and distorted from its proper function to the personal use of an unbeliever. The second is a failure to pay the \_\_\_\_\_ – the nobles and people were likely so jaded by this internal corruption that they were no longer supporting the Temple system or the Levites.

C. Forsaking the House of God (13:10-14)

### III. Application

#### A. Zeal for God's House (cf. Jn 2:13-22)

Notice, therefore, that the House of God was being used for personal advantage. Rather than using their \_\_\_\_\_ as a means to bless God's House, they were using God's house as a means to bless their \_\_\_\_\_. This defamation of God's name was unendurable.

#### B. Financial Integrity

The funds that are given to the church do not belong to the officers of the church – they belong to \_\_\_\_\_. Consequently, they must be used with integrity, honesty, faithfulness, and charity – for the maintenance of worship, the support of church officers, the care of the poor, etc. Deciding who gets to handle and disperse the funds of the Church is an important decision that should not be made lightly.

#### C. Necessity of Tithing (cf. Mal 2:1-9 with 3:8-12)

The \_\_\_\_\_ of what God's people produce does not belong to them but to God Himself and to His Church. The \_\_\_\_\_ is not ours to do with what we will but is God's to do with as He will, as He has decreed in His Word – for the maintenance of worship, the provision of elders or deacons who are worthy of double honor, the care of the poor, etc. Hence, you are responsible to give Him the \_\_\_\_\_ and support the ministry of the House of God, your local church. Others are responsible to make sure that that \_\_\_\_\_ is being used in a godly fashion; you are responsible to give it. And the unfaithfulness of those using it is no excuse to refrain from giving it. They will be held accountable for their folly and their unfaithfulness – but you will be held accountable for yours – don't join them in disobedience.

### IV. Conclusion (cf. Ps 69:9)