



## PART 6: THE CYCLE OF SIN

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### Sermon Notes

**Text: Nehemiah 9:1-38**

#### Intro:

The people of Jerusalem begin their cultural, religious and moral reform with a prayer of confession and repentance.

The prayer is largely a re-telling of the entire Old Testament narrative.

What do we see in this prayer?

#### 1. A reminder of the purpose of Bible stories

Stories offer more than information; they invite us in so that we can know and enjoy the characters.

God was making a name for himself (Neh. 9:5b, 10) so that we can know him and enjoy him.

The Westminster confession: "The chief end of humankind is to glorify God and enjoy him forever"

#### 2. An example of confession and repentance

The main theme of chapters 9 & 10 is confession and repentance

Definition of confession & repentance: Admitting that what you did was wrong, agreeing with God on what is right, and making the necessary adjustments to your life.

[www.betheltab.ca](http://www.betheltab.ca)

As the prayer reflects on Israel's history, it gets very honest about the failures of its people.

Nehemiah 9:31, 33 - God remains faithful, merciful and gracious even when Israel does not.

v. 38 & 10:28-29 - The people make a commitment to obey the Law.

#### 3. An unanswered question

The Old Testament leaves the reader hanging...was Israel able to uphold their recommitment to the Law?

There is a tension at the end of the Old Testament. How will God respond to the failures of his people?

1) God will continue to be gracious and merciful, hoping that they've eventually figure it out.

2) In God's righteousness, he will say "that's enough" and exercise just judgement

The Old Testament doesn't solve this problem, but Jesus does.

Romans 3:25

Ezekiel 36:26-27

God shows mercy to us while pouring his judgement on Jesus.

#### Conclusion:

**Brick #6:** Jesus breaks the cycle of sin

Bethel Church Penticton - Sunday October 16, 2016 - Pastor Dave Funk

## Life Group Discussion

### Warm up:

1. Do you have any weird or funny habits that are hard for your family or friends to put up with? If you're not sure, ask your spouse;)

### Study & Discussion:

1. Take time as a group to read Nehemiah 9:6-37. What stands out to you in this prayer? What themes are represented? Why would the people pray a prayer that includes the history of their people? Should we pray prayers that summarize our own past?
2. God does not just reveal himself with lists of his attributes and abilities; he reveals himself through stories. The Bible stories of the Old Testament are there to help us get to know God personally, and learn how to have an enjoyable relationship with him. What stories have impacted you the most? Why?
3. Discuss the statement of the Westminster Confession: "The chief end of humankind is to glorify God and enjoy him forever" What do you think it means? How does it apply to your life? How can God be "enjoyed"?
4. Read Romans 3:21-26. This is a very important passage in the Bible. It outlines the means by which God makes his people righteous - not by our ability to obey the law, but by the work of Jesus who took God's righteous judgment upon himself. What things do we try to make ourselves righteous? Why don't they work? How does "faith" make us righteous? What does faith look like *practically*?

### Application:

1. What will you do this week to *enjoy* God more?

2. What acts of faith are required in your life to help break the cycle of sin?

### Prayer:

1. Pray for Jesus to break the cycle of sin in your life.

2. Other Requests

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