THE 52 · WEEK 6 · A PLACE OF CHANGE MINISTRY

THE CATACLYSMIC SHIFT

SPEAKER
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SERIES
The 52 · Nehemiah

DATE
Week 6

We study the book of Nehemiah. Pastor Tyus introduced to us that before the 52 was four. Before the 52 was four months. The man of God, Nehemiah, spent four months in the presence of God.

Listen to me. This isn't just a sermon. This is a strategy. God through Nehemiah is giving us a strategy. God is saying, "Before I build the wall, I must build the man." God is saying if you want to build anything external, you have to start internally first. It's a strategy. It is a divine plan. It is divine order. God never starts out — he always starts in. God never starts with the fruit. He always starts with the roots.

I'm going to say it one more time. If you're starting with the fruit, just know it's going to collapse. If you're starting with the outside, just automatically know it's going to collapse.

He said, "Man of God, I showed you all my sons. I showed you every one of my sons, and you told me that one of my sons was supposed to be anointed as the next king." Samuel said, "Talk to me, Jesse. Do you have one more? Is there another?" He said, "Oh, you talking about the one outside?" He's talking about the one that's got deep roots with God. Not deep training, not deep legacy, not deep history. Deep roots. Deep roots in Jesus. And he goes outside and he sees him and says, "That's the one right there." Man looks on the outward appearance. Man looks at the fruit. But when God gets ready to move, when God's getting ready to build, when God's getting ready to restore, he does not start with the fruit. He starts with the root.

God has an order. And God begins his order with Nehemiah as he begins his order with all his men. Moses, you need to go into the wilderness for 40 years. I've got to fix your roots. Saul turned to Paul — I'm going to need you to go away, because I need to speak to your heart before I do anything in you externally. I've got to change you internally.

I want to show you the scripture real quick. Psalm 139:23-24. It says, "Search me, O God." This is a divine strategy. If you want to be successful, don't start with the bricks. Don't start with the mortar. Don't start with the business plan. Don't start with the blueprint. Start with the man in the mirror. And the first thing you need to do is go to God and say, "God, search me, O Lord, and know my heart. Try me and know my thoughts, and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting."

The reason we're starting here is because of the word: cataclysmic shift. God told me to tell you the reason he's starting with the heart. Because when you start with the heart, there's a cataclysmic shift that happens. Let me give you the definition. It is a sudden, violent upheaval that brings total, permanent change.

The reason we start with the heart and we don't start with the toe — the reason we start with the heart, because there's no way to start with the heart and not have a cataclysmic shift. Four months. For four months, Nehemiah, I'm going to search your heart. We're going to do open surgery. Why? Because when we do open heart surgery, there is a cataclysmic shift.

And somebody needs a cataclysmic shift — in your finances, in your marriage, with your children, in your health, in your self-worth, in your identity. Somebody needs it in their mind. And God says, "Let me do heart surgery, because what I don't want to do is spend four months on you and there be no change."

A cataclysmic shift. God says, "I'm ready to do something quick, fast, in a hurry. I want to do a quick work on your credit report. I don't want it to take a year. I want to do a quick work on your bank account. I want to do a quick work on your mind, on your soul, on your heart." Why? Because out of the heart are the issues of man. So if I don't fix your heart, whatever you do, whatever you gain, whatever you get, God said it's going to be in vain.

When we do this reset, we're not trying to do this reset to unreset the reset. We're not making all these changes just to return like a dog to his vomit. That's not Eric Thomas — that's the scriptures. The Bible says, "If you're not careful, you will be like a dog returned to his vomit."

Jeremiah 17:10 says, "I the Lord search the heart. I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings." God says, "I'm trying to change the fruit, but I can't change the fruit unless I can get to the root. Because if I change anything and I don't change your heart, you're going to go back."

God has said, "I'm starting with the heart so that it's permanent." It's a sudden change. Why? Because God says, "I'm trying to shift you. I'm trying to change you. I'm trying to give you what you've been praying for." Four months of God searching your heart will turn into 52 days of rebuilding what took 140 years. We're trying to rebuild what took 140 years of ruin — and we're trying to rebuild that without being rebuilt. So God said, "Let me rebuild you first. Let me search your heart first."

Watch this. You can be moved and still be the same.

So God is saying, "I've got to fix your heart, because if your heart ain't fixed, then your ways are not fixed. And according to the fruit of his doings, I want to make sure that your fruit is blessed. So I've got to start with the root."

Listen to me very closely. In my marriage, if my wife and I continue having the same conversations over and over again, it gets frustrating for her, it gets frustrating for me. And God is saying, "Why are y'all still having the same conversation? You're having the same conversation because you want to fix it — but you're trying to fix it and you haven't fixed your heart. So if you haven't fixed your heart, it may take 30 days for it to come up again. It may take six months. It might take nine months. But I promise you, if your heart ain't fixed, it's going to come up again."

The only way to stop the madness, the only way to stop going back and forth, is to change the heart. Because when the heart is changed, the situation is totally changed. David said, "Create in me, O God, a clean heart, and renew a right spirit within me." He knew that the situation that took his son's life — the death of Uriah, the union with Bathsheba — he knew that was created because of his heart. And he knew it would happen again if God didn't create in him a clean heart.

Anybody in the room want a total, permanent change? Anybody tired of going back and forth with the old man? God says, "I don't want you to go back. I want you to have a total, permanent change." Not a tweak. Not an adjustment. A different world on the other side of it.

Everybody's talking about their gift. "I've got my gift. The gift of prophecy." Watch what it says about a gift. "Many will say to me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? And in thy name cast out demons, and in thy name done many wonderful works?'" God's like, "I'm not worried about your works. I'm worried about your heart. And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you. Depart from me, ye that work iniquity."

So for those of you in the body of Christ bragging about your gifts: you can have a gift and go to hell. You can have a gift enough to preach and go to hell. You can prophesy and go to hell. You can have a singing gift and go to hell. You can have a praying gift and pray your way to hell. God said there's only one way to get a total, permanent change — and that's to change your heart.

"Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing."

So let's break it down. You can prophesy and never change. You can speak in tongues and stay the same. You can get goosebumps and walk out unbothered — and not forgive folks. A gift is not a guarantee.

"Pastor, I had an experience." Did it change you? "Pastor, I felt something." Did you surrender to God? "Pastor, I got goosebumps." Did you get new behavior? I don't want you to be moved and still be the same.

So here's the formula. "I the Lord search the heart. I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings." You're coming right now saying, "God, I've got all these gifts, I'm known for all this stuff in the community, I've got the degrees, the PhD — but is my heart cleansed?" David said, "Create in me a clean heart, and renew a right spirit in me."

Every single time I go back and forth like a dog returned to his vomit, it just means I was trying to fix the stuff in my strength. I was trying to fix it in my gift. I didn't fix it in my heart.

If you're ready today — you need a cataclysmic shift. You need everything uprooted and turned and disturbed. You need a total, permanent change. And it's only one way to get it: the heart. So before I move forward, before I or Pastor do another sermon, I want you to spend the week saying, "God, search my heart. Create in me a clean heart. Because I keep doing the same thing even though I know it's wrong. Professionally I keep doing the same thing and coming up short. Academically I keep doing the same thing and I keep failing. Let me show you why you keep getting the fruit that you're getting. Let me show you how corrupt the root is before you take out another loan, before you buy another car." God is saying, "I'm not against any of that. I actually want you to have it — but I want you to have it totally free and permanently, forever."

"God, create in me a clean heart." Father, in the name of Jesus Christ, search my heart. Put me to sleep, Lord — do the type of open heart surgery where I don't even have to fight, I don't even feel it. Just put me to sleep and get it all out. Uproot all of it, totally and forever and permanently. Create in me a clean heart, and renew a right spirit within me. I don't want to be like a dog returned to his vomit. I don't want to go back anymore. Create a new creature in me.

Today, God is asking you — while you're not physically at church — give me an hour. Give me two hours. Let me search your heart. Let me fix whatever is wrong. Let me make you stronger, so as you move forward you will not continue to see the same ruin for 140 years — so it won't be passed on from generation to generation. Create in us, and in our babies, a clean heart, and renew a right spirit within us. In Jesus' name. Amen.