

Connecting Through the Faces of Justice I

“An Inquiring Face”

Nehemiah 1 is one of the faces we wear!

There are all kinds of faces we wear. Some “smile in your face and all the time they want to take your place.” Some people are said to be “two-faced.” Some always have a :-) smiling face. Athletes are known for “the game face.” When you’ve been around long enough, Preachers are known for “their preacher face.” Justice also has many faces.

One of the first ways to connect is through facial contact.

Some call this “eye contact” as well.

Eye contact is different in different cultures.

There are some cultures where subordinates never make eye contact with a superior.

There are some cultures where making eye contact can be threatening.

There are some cultures, making eye contact is a sign of being attentive.

There are some spaces where lack of eye contact is a sign of guilt, shame, embarrassment, or avoidance.

The truth is facial contact and eye contact may lead to further inquiry.

^{KJV} ***Nehemiah 1:1*** The words of Nehemiah the son of Hachaliah. And it came to pass in the month Chisleu, in the twentieth year, as I was in Shushan the palace, ² That Hanani, one of my brethren, came, he and certain men of Judah; **and I asked them concerning the Jews that had escaped, which were left of the captivity, and concerning Jerusalem.** ³ And they said unto me, The remnant that are left of the captivity there in the province are in great affliction and reproach: the wall of Jerusalem also is broken down, and the gates thereof are burned with fire.

⁴ And it came to pass, when I heard these words, that ***I sat down and wept, and mourned certain days, and fasted, and prayed before the God of heaven.***

I

Nehemiah 1 is an inquiring face. **Vs 2**

- Nehemiah 1 is the listening process. **Vs 2**

^{KJV} **James 1:19** Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be **swift** to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath: ²⁰ For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God.

Listening, and inquiring can produce anger!

^{KJV} **Ephesians 4:26** Be ye **angry**, and **sin not**: let not the sun go down upon your **wrath**: Neither give place to the devil.

Direct action and nonviolent action can bring community change.

II

The first way to seek justice for our community is through **inquiry**.

Justice wants to hear, listen, see, and **research** what's really going on, in our city and in our region and among us people.

Nehemiah finds himself 2600 miles away from his city and his country.

- Even though we are far away from a community problem, it does not mean that we are not impacted.

“If they come for me in the morning, they will come for you at night!” Angela Davis

Nehemiah never disconnected in his heart and inquired about the state of the city and this country.

Justice always seeks to **understand** before it seeks to be **understood**.

It's one thing not to know; it's another thing not to want to know!

- Nehemiah inquired about the condition of the city!

III

What can we do?

Be silence! This is not an option!

Do nothing! This is cowardly!

Disagree with actions! This is complacency!

- Take action and invite three others to help and participate!

Dr Martin Luther King

“Letter from a bird Birmingham jail.”

“But more basically, I am in Birmingham because **injustice** is here. Just as the prophets of the eighth century B.C. left their villages and carried their "thus saith the Lord" far beyond the boundaries of their hometowns, and just as the Apostle Paul left his village of Tarsus and carried the gospel of Jesus Christ to the far corners of the Greco Roman world, so am I compelled to carry the gospel of freedom beyond my own home town. Like Paul, I must constantly respond to the Macedonian call for aid.”

What will direct action produce?

Nothing happens on the Earth until somebody does something!

Nothing will happen in our city unless **somebody** does something!

^{RSV} **Ezekiel 22:30** And I sought for anyone among them who would repair the wall and stand in the breach before me on behalf of the land, so that I would not destroy it; but I found no one. ³¹ Therefore I have poured out my indignation upon them; I have consumed them with the fire of my wrath; I have returned their conduct upon their heads, says the Lord GOD.

BREAD has had 37 victories in 27 years!

There are still community **problems**, and the Lord is still looking for **someone** to stand on behalf of the land in the community.

Will you stand with us on Tuesday, May 21, 2024, at 6:40 pm.? The pre-meeting will start at 7 o'clock, and the Nehemiah action will begin!

- Childcare will be provided!
- Food and concessions will be sold!

The Nehemiah Action
Tuesday, May 21, 2024
The Ohio State Fairgrounds
The Celeste Center 6:40 pm pre-meeting
7:00 pm, We Begin!

*Rhema Christian Center
Bishop La Fayette Scales
Saturday & Sunday, April 20 & 21, 2024
9:30 am*