

# ***"First Things First"***

**Scripture:** Nehemiah 10  
(01-18-26 Pastor Tony Hao)

After the people of Israel confessed their sins to God in chapter 9, they decided to formally commit themselves to faithfully love and serve him by making an agreement together. It was put in writing to make absolutely clear what was agreed to and to identify those who had agreed to follow these commitments. Nehemiah and the people of Israel made an oath, a commitment to follow and obey God – went on to specify in what way, to put first things first in their lives.

God's people are committed to priorities in three areas: (1) Commitment to RELATIONAL Purity; (2) Commitment to SPIRITUAL Integrity; (3) Commitment to MATERIAL Responsibility. Here, we admit 'man does not live by bread alone.' Our success does not rest on our efforts, talents, but from the hand of God. If we honor God and obey His commands, He will bless and provide.

The issue is who is your master? If it's God, we will fulfill our obligation and responsibility to give Him our best. Is God the Lord over our possessions, does it glorify Him? Whatever you do, what you eat or drink or anything should be for His glory (1 Cor 10:31).

## **GROWING DEEPER (Reflection & Application)**

1. Recall the first significant agreement you put your name in writing: applying for a driver's license? Obtaining a library card? Getting married? In each instance, did it matter whether the agreement was in writing or not?
2. What subjects are covered by the provisions of the covenant in Nehemiah 10? What rationale can you see for the prohibition in v. 30? For the prohibition and duties in vv. 31-33? For the duties in vv. 35-36?
3. Is personal stewardship a reliable index of commitment to God and His work? Why and why not? What else might serve the purpose for you?