

COMMITMENT

Nehemiah's commitment - externally gets a team – and fights (2:4-11, 17-20)

The commitment of my hands flow from the motivation of my heart.

Because Nehemiah was internally motivated to obey God and His vision in his life, he will now follow-through on the plan. Again, when the king asked what Nehemiah needs, his first response isn't to present the great plans he's been working on. No, his first response was to pray!

Our temptation is to focus on the commitment stage first. We want to get to work and prove that we're worthy. Nehemiah followed the burden-vision-motivation process to get to his commitment, which is grounded in the Spirit's leading. It will be a struggle to keep this burden-vision-motivation in God's domain, and resist taking matters into our own hands. Nothing will derail God's plan faster than a selfish take-over.

When God provides the burden, vision and motivation, our response is a strong personal commitment to follow-through! External actions must reflect the internal motivations.

(Philippians 3:12-21).

Reaching your potential requires focus. There can be no success without sacrifice. The two go hand in hand. If you desire to accomplish little, sacrifice little. But if you want to accomplish great things, be willing to sacrifice much (Maxwell 1997, 14).

When you set goals and want to develop new habits, you are striving for behavioral change. It would then seem natural to attempt behavior change as a first step. The reason that the same lifestyle goals (losing weight and starting and maintaining and exercise program) hit the top two on so many people's New Year's resolution list year after year is because what seems natural (getting into action) is not the answer.

The first step to change is not to get into action. The first step involves reflection and assessment. It's important right from the start to consider: (1) why you want to get into action, (2) how you will successfully do that, (3) with whom, and (4) how you will navigate the obstacles that will attempt to get in your way (Larsen 2007, 23).

And—most important—ask yourself: **What's missing that will make a difference?** This is a whole different question from asking what's needed and wanted—that question leads to limited and specific answers such as time, money, or whatever. Asking what's missing will get you to the factors that will produce what's needed and wanted (Hargrove and Renaud 2004, 44).

Your commitment...

- **Is your determination and dedication**
- **Must be external, not internal**
- **Involves pure actions, through God's heart to mine and into my hands**
- **Is made to those things that motivate you**
- **Is strong, powerful, and contagious – both good and bad!**

The commitments I have made to serve God in my personal life:

The commitments I have made to serve God in my church:

The commitments I have made to serve God in my community:

The commitments I have made which I need to reconsider – and trust God:
