

17 MARKS OF A STRONG
SPIRITUAL LEADER
FROM NEHEMIAH

Strong spiritual leadership is greatly needed today in our church, our home, our community, and our workplace. What are the marks of a strong spiritual leader? As much as any man in God's Word, Nehemiah possessed the true marks of a spiritual leader. Let's highlight a few of these important spiritual leadership traits.

#1: Be concerned about the same things God is concerned about.

➤ Nehemiah had a godly agenda.

Neh. 1:2 “² Hanani, one of my brothers, came from Judah with some other men, and I questioned them about the Jewish remnant that had survived the exile, and also about Jerusalem.”

#2: Be sensitive towards others.

➤ Nehemiah was sensitive to the needs of other people and to the will of God.

Neh. 1:4 “⁴ When I heard these things, I sat down and wept. For some days I mourned and fasted and prayed before the God of heaven.”

#3: Be a person of prayer.

➤ Nehemiah knew where to go for wisdom and strength.

Neh. 1:5-11 “⁵ Then I said: “LORD, the God of heaven, the great and awesome God, who keeps his covenant of love with those who love him and keep his commandments, ⁶ let your ear be attentive and your eyes open to hear the prayer your servant is praying before you day and night for your servants, the people of Israel. I confess the sins we Israelites, including myself and my father’s family, have committed against you. ⁷ We have acted very wickedly toward you. We have not obeyed the commands, decrees and laws you gave your servant Moses...”

#4: Be zealous and have a sense of urgency.

➤ Nehemiah was determined and motivated toward his goal.

Neh. 1:11 “¹¹ Lord, let your ear be attentive to the prayer of this your servant and to the prayer of your servants who delight in revering your name. Give your servant success today by granting him favor in the presence of this man.”

I was cupbearer to the king.”

#5: Be a person with vision.

➤ Nehemiah had a holy boldness and a fearless faith.

Neh. 2:5 “⁵ and I answered the king, “If it pleases the king and if your servant has found favor in his sight, let him send me to the city in Judah where my ancestors are buried so that I can rebuild it.”

#6: Be careful to set deadlines.

➤ Nehemiah set a deadline that was acceptable to himself and the king.

Neh. 2:6 “⁶ Then the king, with the queen sitting beside him, asked me, “How long will your journey take, and when will you get back?” It pleased the king to send me; so I set a time.”

#7: Be careful to anticipate needs.

➤ Nehemiah needed letters and was sure to get them.

Neh. 2:7 “⁷ I also said to him, “If it pleases the king, may I have letters to the governors of Trans-Euphrates, so that they will provide me safe-conduct until I arrive in Judah?”

#8: Be well prepared.

➤ Nehemiah did his homework.

Neh. 2:8 “⁸ And may I have a letter to Asaph, keeper of the royal park, so he will give me timber to make beams for the gates of the citadel by the temple and for the city wall and for the residence I will occupy?” And because the gracious hand of my God was on me, the king granted my requests.”

#9: Be given to careful and continuous evaluation.

➤ Nehemiah was thorough and did not take things for granted.

Neh. 2:13 ¹³ By night I went out through the Valley Gate toward the Jackal^[a] Well and the Dung Gate, examining the walls of Jerusalem, which had been broken down, and its gates, which had been destroyed by fire.”

#10: Be a team player and motivator.

➤ Nehemiah led by example.

Neh. 2:17,18 “¹⁷ Then I said to them, “You see the trouble we are in: Jerusalem lies in ruins, and its gates have been burned with fire. Come, let us rebuild the wall of Jerusalem, and we will no longer be in disgrace.”

#11: Be quick to give God the credit.

➤ Nehemiah was anxious to glorify God with every success.

Neh. 2:20 “²⁰ I answered them by saying, “The God of heaven will give us success. We his servants will start rebuilding, but as for you, you have no share in Jerusalem or any claim or historic right to it.”

#12: Be sure to let others play a meaningful role.

➤ Nehemiah was quick to delegate and slow to abdicate.

Neh. 3

#13: Be quick to take all criticism and opposition to God.

➤ Nehemiah left his worries with the Lord.

Neh. 4:4,5 “⁴ Hear us, our God, for we are despised. Turn their insults back on their own heads. Give them over as plunder in a land of captivity.”

#14: Be faithful to combine prayer and work.

➤ Nehemiah prayed, stepped out in good sense and worked hard.

Neh. 4:6-9 “⁶ So we rebuilt the wall till all of it reached half its height, for the people worked with all their heart. ⁷ But when Sanballat, Tobiah, the Arabs, the Ammonites and the people of Ashdod heard that the repairs to Jerusalem’s walls had gone ahead and that the gaps were being closed, they were very angry. ⁸ They all plotted together to come and fight against Jerusalem and stir up trouble against it. ⁹ But we prayed to our God and posted a guard day and night to meet this threat.”

#15: Be a people builder and encourager.

➤ Nehemiah really encouraged and edified his troops.

Neh. 4:14,20 “¹⁴ After I looked things over, I stood up and said to the nobles, the officials and the rest of the people, “Don’t be afraid of them. Remember the Lord, who is great and awesome, and fight for your families, your sons and your daughters, your wives and your homes...²⁰ Wherever you hear the sound of the trumpet, join us there. Our God will fight for us!””

#16: Be a person of high integrity.

➤ Nehemiah did not compromise his integrity for power or riches.

Neh. 5:9-16 “⁹ So I continued, “What you are doing is not right. Shouldn’t you walk in the fear of our God to avoid the reproach of our Gentile enemies? ¹⁰ I and my brothers and my men are also lending the people money and grain. But let us stop charging interest! ¹¹ Give back to them immediately their fields, vineyards, olive groves and houses, and also the interest you are charging them—one percent of the money, grain, new wine and olive oil. ¹² “We will give it back,” they said. “And we will not demand anything more from them. We will do as you say.” Then I summoned the priests and made the nobles and officials take an oath to do what they had promised. ¹³ I also shook out the folds of my robe and said, “In this way may God shake out of their house and possessions anyone who does not keep this promise. So may such a person be shaken out and emptied...””

#17: Be single minded and have a singleness of purpose.

➤ Nehemiah was focused.

Neh. 6:1-3 “When word came to Sanballat, Tobiah, Geshem the Arab and the rest of our enemies that I had rebuilt the wall and not a gap was left in it—though up to that time I had not set the doors in the gates—² Sanballat and Geshem sent me this message: “Come, let us meet together in one of the villages^[a] on the plain of Ono.” But they were scheming to harm me; ³ so I sent messengers to them with this reply: “I am carrying on a great project and cannot go down. Why should the work stop while I leave it and go down to you?”