

Prepare to Worship

The "Break Through" Series – Part 05

Hook:

A few months ago, it was reported that a doctor saved a woman's life by administering the Heimlich maneuver. This is typically not big news, but the doctor was Dr. Henry Heimlich; who has demonstrated the technique many times but never used it himself in a real emergency. The 96-year-old doctor resided in a retirement home in Cincinnati. He was having dinner with eight or nine others at the retirement dining hall, when an 87 year old woman began to choke on a piece of meat. His Heimlich maneuver quickly dislodged the food. Dr. Heimlich stated, *"I didn't know I really could do it until the other day. Though I invented the Heimlich maneuver in 1974, I had never been called on to do it before."* (Dr. Heimlich died in December, 2016)

Other staff members came to the aid of the woman, but they all believed that no one was better prepared to help her than Dr. Heimlich. Despite the fact that the good doctor, himself, only saved one person from choking in his lifetime, he is credited with saving over 100,000 others lives through his training that prepared people to respond to a choking incident.

What skills do you have that gives you a sense of being prepared for certain situations?

In our "Break Through" series, Pastor Brandon shared with us the great need to worship God. In Nehemiah 8, the people of Israel begin to worship God because of His provision and goodness. The record of their worship continues into Nehemiah 9. Let's read a portion of that account:

Book: Nehemiah 9

Neh 9:1 On October 31 the people assembled again, and this time they fasted and dressed in burlap and sprinkled dust on their heads.

Neh 9:2 Those of Israelite descent separated themselves from all foreigners as they confessed their own sins and the sins of their ancestors.

Neh 9:3 They remained standing in place for three hours while the Book of the Law of the LORD their God was read aloud to them. Then for three more hours they confessed their sins and worshiped the LORD their God.

Neh 9:4 The Levites—Jeshua, Bani, Kadmiel, Shebaniah, Bunni, Sherebiah, Bani, and Kenani—stood on the stairway of the Levites and cried out to the LORD their God with loud voices.

Neh 9:5 Then the leaders of the Levites—Jeshua, Kadmiel, Bani, Hashabneiah, Sherebiah, Hodiah, Shebaniah, and Pethahiah—called out to the people: "Stand up and praise the LORD your God, for He lives from everlasting to everlasting!" Then they prayed: "May Your glorious name be praised! May it be exalted above all blessing and praise!

Neh 9:6 "You alone are the LORD. You made the skies and the heavens and all the stars. You made the earth and the seas and everything in them. You preserve them all, and the angels of heaven worship You.

Look:

We notice that the people prepared themselves for worship. Look at the following actions that they took and then discuss how we might make similar preparations for worship today.

They prepared by fasting.

They prepared by mourning (sackcloth and ashes).

They prepared by making confession of sins.

They prepared by standing at attention when God's word was read.

They prepared by making God-centered prayers.

In our modern worship experience, are any of the above difficult to accomplish when we come to worship?

How might you make preparation for worship...even before you leave the house?

What is your greatest hindrance in being prepared for worship?

Application Question: In what ways is God challenging you to offer worship that is acceptable to him?