

05/05/15 - Confessing For Others

RG AUDIO 050515

Nehemiah 1:1-11

When I was a child, it didn't seem fair that the entire class should have to stay after school because a few kids misbehaved. The thought of identifying myself with them never occurred to me.

However, Nehemiah confessed the sins of all Israel as though he himself had committed them. So did Ezra (Ezra 9:6-7), and Daniel (Daniel 9:10-11, 10). They were grieved by their people's sins, and accepted the blame for the sins of many in order to ask God's forgiveness. The Lord Jesus Himself did the same. He "was numbered with the transgressors. For he bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors." (Isaiah 53:12) He was willing to accept the punishment due others for sins He hadn't committed.

It is this quality of compassion that should drive us to intercede for others in our communities. As a child, I was more likely to tell the teacher who the transgressors were, simply to keep myself out of trouble. Now, I realize I must identify myself with them and grieve over their sins, asking God for forgiveness.

Author: Maureen McClain