I. Study of the books of Ezra and Nehemiah is a study in Ministry Partnerships.

A. The PATTERN of ministry partnerships is seen in creation’s story in Genesis.

1. The man and the woman are the first partners.

a. She is his helpmeet/helpmate.

B. The pattern continues in Exodus

1. Moses and Aaron

2. Moses and Joshua

C. The pattern continues in 1 and 2 Kings

1. Elijah and Elisha

D. The pattern of partnerships is revealed in the Godhead.

1. The Trinity is the ultimate partnership and defines “Oneness.”

a. Oneness is not Sameness in the scriptures.

II. Ezra and Nehemiah weren’t singing the same note – that’s unison. They sang harmony.

A. Oneness, as declared in Ephesians 4, is not getting everyone to sing the same note.

1. Instead of unison, we are asked to sing the same song in HARMONY.

B. Principle: Spiritual Oneness is Harmonious.

C. Spiritual Gifts enable this harmony to occur.

1. 1 Peter 4 applies this harmony in our service.

III. Jesus utilized the partnership principle when he sent out the disciples in pairs.

A. Mark 6:7; Luke10:1 – He sent them out “two by two.”

1. Solo Christianity has never been Biblical.

IV. Luke records ministry partnerships in the Book of Acts.

A. Peter and John: Acts 3:1; 8:14

B. The first deacons: Acts 6

C. Paul, Barnabas, John Mark, Timothy, Silas: Acts13, 16

D. Priscilla and Aquila: Acts 18

V. The storyline of Nehemiah 8-13 follows this pattern of ministry partnerships.

A. The celebration of their differences establishes a timeless principle.

B. The principle of “Celebrating Diversity” isn’t culture bound or gender directed.

C. Unity in the midst of Diversity is the Harmony God wants us to sing.