

Build The Future

Part 5 — Build With Sacrifice

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Warm-Up

1. After last week's group meeting, how were you able to pour into the lives of the next generation?
2. What stood out to you from the message on Sunday?
3. How has the book of Nehemiah inspired you in pursuing God and the vision he has for you?



Encourage your group to talk about things they are passionate about. Let the conversation flow and allow space for people to get excited about what the Lord is calling them to.

Know It

Nehemiah 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." 18 I also told them about the gracious hand of my God on me and what the king had said to me. They replied, "Let us start rebuilding." So they began this good work.

1. What was the risk, price and sacrifice Nehemiah made to act on the vision God gave him?

Nehemiah left a life of comfort and made sacrifices to live out the mission and vision God called him to. It was not always easy for Nehemiah or the people working alongside him. Read Nehemiah 5

2. Discuss some of the hardships the Jews faced, how they overcame and how Nehemiah responded.

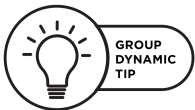
Nehemiah not only spoke out, but led by example. We see this theme throughout the book of Nehemiah. What does it look like for us to lead with integrity today?

Own It

1. Vision does not come to life without sacrifice and action. We see that in Neh. 5. What sacrifices or risks have you taken in order to pursue God's vision for your life?

2 Corinthians 9:6-15

What examples have you seen of people "sowing" generously and cheerfully? What impact did that make?



Allow this to be a time of joy and glory as you share about others' giving sacrificially and honoring the Lord through their giving. Don't be afraid to set aside more time for this question so that you can lift one others up, especially if they are people you all know.

2. In Nehemiah 2 and 5 we see Nehemiah's leadership, love for the Jews and his generosity to care for others. He acted out of obedience, his love for God and for the Jews. He then speaks of "the gracious hand of God" being on him. How have you experienced God's hand guiding you? What happened?

Matthew 6:21

Giving is not about what God wants from you, but what He wants for you. What do you believe God wants for you? How can generosity shape your faith?

Next Steps

1. What does it look like for you to give the Lord your firstfruits both financially and in other areas of life?

What, if anything, is an objection that is holding you back from engaging with God's calling on your life? This could be a decision you are trying to make, serving, giving or moving forward in any capacity that God is calling you to.



If most people in your group haven't given this much thought, take time right now to process and pray. Join in prayer as a group and ask the Lord to press on each heart how He would like them to respond.

2. What is one bold step you feel led to take this week?

Whether it looks like trying something new or continuing in a long-established practice of giving, the Lord has a next step for all of us. Also remember that He desires to be Lord of our whole life.

Prayer

Nehemiah consistently prays to God. He shows gratitude, seeks wisdom and direction, prays for others, provision and shows his trust in God. This week, seek God together in prayer. One easy way to do that is for everyone to simply share in prayer these two things...

Lord, I am grateful for....

Lord, I trust you with....

Digging Deeper

Throughout the book of Nehemiah we see that pursuing God's vision does not mean life will be easy. Rebuilding the wall came with sacrifice and challenges. If you want to dig in, take a look at some of the conditions the Jews faced before and during this time of rebuilding.

1. Physical Conditions

Broken walls and burned gates: Jerusalem's defenses were ruined since the Babylonian destruction (586 BC). This meant insecurity from enemies, bandits, and hostile neighbors (Neh. 1:3; 2:17).

Ruins and rubble: Much of the city was still in shambles; people had to live among ruins and rebuild slowly (Neh. 4:2, 10).

Sparse population: Many Jews remained scattered in Persia, Babylon, or rural areas. Jerusalem itself was underpopulated and needed repopulating (Neh. 7:4; 11:1-2).

2. Economic Conditions

Widespread poverty: Many returned exiles were poor farmers struggling to reclaim land. Droughts, famine, and poor harvests made survival difficult (Neh. 5:2-3).

Heavy taxation: Persia imposed taxes on its provinces, burdening the people further (Neh. 5:4).

Debt slavery: Some Jews had to sell their land or even their children into servitude to pay debts (Neh. 5:5).

Wealthy elites vs. struggling majority: A small group of nobles grew rich, while the majority suffered, causing social tension (Neh. 5:7).

3. Social and Political Conditions

Constant opposition: Enemies like Sanballat (Samaritans), Tobiah (Ammonite), and Geshem (Arab) mocked and threatened the Jews' rebuilding efforts (Neh. 2:19; 4:1-3, 7-8).

Fear and insecurity: Without walls, Jerusalem was vulnerable to attack. Workers rebuilt with one hand on tools and the other on weapons (Neh. 4:17).

4. Spiritual Conditions

Religious neglect: The Temple had been rebuilt (completed in 516 BC), but worship, tithing, and Sabbath-keeping were inconsistent (Neh. 13:10-18).

Need for renewal: Nehemiah and Ezra worked together to bring revival—reading the Law, renewing the covenant, and calling the people back to holiness (Neh. 8–10).

Struggle with identity: The people wrestled with what it meant to be God's covenant people in a hostile world, while under foreign rule.