

Dig Deeper @Home – “Kingdom Restoration”

Complement to lesson on 2/26/23 – “Responding to Brokenness”

ICE BREAKER – Questions to open dialogue and learn more about those gathered

1. What is the worst news you have ever received? How did you process it?
2. Do you tend to respond impulsively or are you more delayed and contemplative?

MEMORIZE – Nehemiah 1:9

“but if you return to me and keep my commandments and do them, though your outcasts are in the uttermost parts of heaven, from there I will gather them and bring them to the place that I have chosen, to make my name dwell there.”

READ – Read Nehemiah 1

Questions to ponder/discuss:

1. Re-scan the text and consider...
 - a. What did the Holy Spirit cause to “jump off the page” as you read?
 - b. Is anything repeated? Contrasted? Compared? (If so... why might that be?)
 - c. What are the verses revealing about God? About people?
In light of these, what needs to change in your life? What are you already doing well?
2. In verse 3, Nehemiah received some disturbing news concerning those who had survived the exile in Jerusalem! What had happened? How did he respond? How might you have responded?
3. Hanani and the men he traveled with report that Jerusalem’s walls were broken down and its gates destroyed. Many scholars believe that this report is a description of the aftermath of the decree from King Artaxerxes that is relayed in Ezra chapter 4. After reading Ezra 4 for additional context, how does your understanding of the condition of things in Jerusalem change?
4. A large majority of Nehemiah 1 is a recorded prayer. What stands out to you about Nehemiah’s prayer? Are there any aspects of Nehemiah’s prayer you could apply to your own prayer life?

EXPERIENTIAL ACTIVITY – Walk the Wall

Scattered throughout the woods of Bucks and Montgomery counties are countless abandoned stone border walls. If you are aware of the location of one, perhaps at a local park or state game lands (Or even in your own back yard!), make a trip to it and walk alongside it pondering these questions...

- What emotions do you experience as you gaze upon the structure that took such time and commitment to create but now exists largely neglected and un-noticed?
- Nehemiah 1:6-8 (and Deuteronomy 4:25-27, which Nehemiah is referencing) suggest that Jerusalem is in ruins because of the unfaithfulness of God's people. In what ways has your unfaithfulness resulted in ruin and brokenness? Do you see similarities to your own condition in the disheveled stone pile you are walking alongside?
- Despite our weakness and failures, Nehemiah 1 has great hope! In verse 9 we are told that Yahweh will gather His people to the place where He will choose to have His name dwell, and verse 10 reminds us that we are redeemed only by His great power and strong hand. Praise God for the great restoration He is working in you through Jesus Christ!



SING (Suggested songs to sing. Use these, or any favorites of the gathered group, to worship Jesus!)

Nehemiah's Prayer- https://youtu.be/dT3Ltv_UVP0

Graves Into Gardens - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kTvv-9zosPs>

Awesome God - <https://youtu.be/IYIVCAEOow4>

As For Me And My House - <https://youtu.be/173vH5Ncl0g>

PRAY

This is a time to gather around for prayer requests and to share how you have seen God at work. A time to hear where God is showing up in our lives and where we need Him to help us in our lives.

Sending prayer based on the series:

Father God, thank you for keeping your gracious covenant with those who love You.

Holy Spirit, reveal to me the ways in which my sin breaks your heart.

Jesus Christ, thank you for taking my brokenness and trading it for unspeakable, wonderful joy.