

Life Group Homework

For the week of February 18, 2018

MY STORY

- 1) What was your takeaway from last week's study?
- 2) In what ways have you experienced opposition like Nehemiah?

QUICK REVIEW

- 3) Upon reviewing your notes from Sunday's teaching, what caught your attention?

DIGGING DEEPER

Nehemiah 4:7-18 (NLT)

⁷ But when Sanballat and Tobiah and the Arabs, Ammonites, and Ashdodites heard that the work was going ahead and that the gaps in the wall of Jerusalem were being repaired, they were furious. ⁸ They all made plans to come and fight against Jerusalem and throw us into confusion. ⁹ But we prayed to our God and guarded the city day and night to protect ourselves.

¹⁰ Then the people of Judah began to complain, "The workers are getting tired, and there is so much rubble to be moved. We will never be able to build the wall by ourselves."

¹¹ Meanwhile, our enemies were saying, "Before they know what's happening, we will swoop down on them and kill them and end their work."

¹² The Jews who lived near the enemy came and told us again and again, "They will come from all directions and attack us!" ¹³ So I placed armed guards behind the lowest parts of the wall in the exposed areas. I stationed the people to stand guard by families, armed with swords, spears, and bows.

¹⁴ Then as I looked over the situation, I called together the nobles and the rest of the people and said to them, "Don't be afraid of the enemy! Remember the Lord, who is great and glorious, and fight for your brothers, your sons, your daughters, your wives, and your homes!"

¹⁵ When our enemies heard that we knew of their plans and that God had frustrated them, we all returned to our work on the wall. ¹⁶ But from then on, only half my men worked while the other half stood guard with spears, shields, bows, and coats of mail. The leaders stationed themselves behind the people of Judah ¹⁷ who were building the wall. The laborers carried on their work with one hand supporting their load and one hand holding a weapon. ¹⁸ All the builders had a sword belted to their side.

- 4) What kind of pressure were the Israelites facing?
- 5) What was Nehemiah's answer to the threat?
- 6) What did Nehemiah say to encourage the people?
- 7) What was the result when the enemies learned their plan?

TAKING IT HOME

Over the next several verses Nehemiah and the people did some very specific things to stay encouraged. We will be cherry-picking the verses that demonstrate how they did it.

Nehemiah 3:1 (NLT)

Then Eliashib the high priest and the other priests started to rebuild at the Sheep Gate. They dedicated it and set up its doors, building the wall as far as the Tower of the Hundred, which they dedicated, and the Tower of Hananel.

- 8) After each step in this journey they did something significant. What was it?
- 9) What does it mean to dedicate something?

Nehemiah 4:3-4a (NLT)

³ Tobiah the Ammonite, who was standing beside him, remarked, "That stone wall would collapse if even a fox walked along the top of it!"

⁴ Then I prayed, "Hear us, our God, for we are being mocked."

- 10) What did Nehemiah do with Tobiah's statement?

Nehemiah 4:6 (NLT)

⁶ At last the wall was completed to half its height around the entire city, for the people had worked with enthusiasm.

- 11) How did the people work? How can we do that?

Nehemiah 6:2-3 (NLT)

² So Sanballat and Geshem sent a message asking me to meet them at one of the villages in the plain of Ono.

But I realized they were plotting to harm me, ³ so I replied by sending this message to them: "I am engaged in a great work, so I can't come. Why should I stop working to come and meet with you?"

- 12) What did Nehemiah stay focused on, and how can we do the same?

Nehemiah did the following things well:

- He had a clear vision of what God was calling him to do.
- He took the people that were trying to discourage him to God in prayer.
- He celebrated the small victories. He didn't minimize them even though the whole wall wasn't built—he dedicated the small steps.
- He spoke encouragement to the people around him.
- He protected the work by guarding it.
- He let challenge fuel his determination.
- Most of all, he always put God first.

- 13) From the list above, what could you do for your own walk with Jesus?
- 14) What do you need to stop doing to experience encouragement in your own life?
- 15) In thinking about Pastor Craig's example of the Lego set, how can you encourage others to take the next steps?

CHAIR TIME TOOL

Read Nehemiah Chapters 1-6.

- 16) What other ways do you see Nehemiah finding encouragement?
- 17) What other ways does he encourage others?
- 18) Look for opportunities this week to encourage others and take them.

FAMILY RESOURCES

- 19) We all have situations in our lives that are overwhelming, as do your children. Think of a situation right now that is overwhelming for one of your kids. How can you encourage your child?
- 20) What tools can you give your child to break the task into smaller increments and celebrate the small victories?

Read Nehemiah 4: 7-18 with your kids and ask them the following questions:

- 21) How do you think that Nehemiah felt when he was threatened and the people of Judah were complaining?
- 22) How did Nehemiah respond to the threats and complaints?
- 23) Think of a time when you felt mocked by peers or classmates. How did you respond?
- 24) After reading this passage from Nehemiah, how would you respond differently?



TO THE POSSIBILITIES

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Reality Check: To live God's vision, you will have to overcome **more** than the obstacle. You will have to overcome the obstacle and the audience!

Read: Nehemiah 4:1-14

Robbers and raiders of our motivation: *(When we lose motivation, we see an increase of discouragement.)*

Time

Fear

- Known
- Unknown

Words and attitudes of others against God's "great" work in me.

Not counting the cost

Indifference

- "...Meshullam son of Berekiah rebuilt the wall across from where he lived."
Nehemiah 3:30

Gathering strength to overcome discouragement: *(It's my responsibility.)*

What does God want?

KNOW the value of the great work!

- We value what we honor!

WHO am I listening to?

Anchor tighter to Christ.

Encouragement is a gift.

- We receive
- We give

CHALLENGE:

- Who encourages you? Tell them thank you!
- Who can you intentionally encourage?

How are you answering these questions? **Find Pastor Craig on Instagram at SweeneyCraig.** He might share your response with your first name only.