

Small Group Guide: Nehemiah - Qualities God Can Use

Opening Question:

What is one area or issue in the world that truly breaks your heart, and how do you think you might be able to make a difference, no matter how small?

Key Takeaways:

1. God uses ordinary people to do extraordinary things when they allow their hearts to be broken for the brokenness around them.
2. Nehemiah was deeply moved by the state of Jerusalem's walls, even though it had been an issue for 140 years.
3. We often become desensitized to the problems around us, but God calls us to remain sensitive and responsive.
4. Prayer and understanding God's greatness are crucial when facing overwhelming challenges.
5. Our greatest burdens often open the door to our greatest blessings.

Bible Study & Discussion Questions:

1. Pastor Dan mentioned that people often accumulate things throughout their whole life, basically becoming "consumers." How can we shift our focus from simply being consumers to making a lasting impact with our lives?
2. **Read Nehemiah 1:4.** This passage describes Nehemiah's deep emotional response to hearing about Jerusalem's condition. How do you think God uses brokenness to prepare us for His work? Can you share an experience where God used a burden in your life to lead you to action?
3. **Read Nehemiah 1:5-6.** Nehemiah prayed and confessed his and the sins of Israel before God. How does Nehemiah's approach to prayer serve as a model for us when we are faced with daunting tasks? What role does confession play in aligning ourselves with God's will?
4. The sermon emphasized that "God plus one always equals a majority." How does this perspective change the way we approach seemingly insurmountable problems?
5. Pastor Dan noted that Nehemiah was an ordinary person whom God used to accomplish great things. **Read Nehemiah 2:4-5.** How do you discern God's calling in your life?
6. Nehemiah lived in comfort far from Jerusalem, yet he was deeply moved by the plight of those in his ancestral city. How do we develop a heart that is sensitive to needs beyond our immediate surroundings or personal comfort zones?
7. **Read Nehemiah 2:2-5.** In this passage, Nehemiah courageously approached the king to request permission to rebuild Jerusalem's walls. Discuss a time when you had to step out in faith for something you believed God was calling you to do. How did you see God's hand at work in that situation?
8. The sermon mentioned that leadership is being "one step ahead." How can this encourage us to mentor or disciple others, even if we don't feel fully qualified?

Practical Applications:

1. This week, intentionally look around your community with "fresh eyes." Note any issues or needs you may have overlooked before.

2. Spend time in prayer asking God to break your heart for what breaks His. Journal, or write down, any impressions or burdens you feel.
3. Identify one “small” way you can make a difference this week based on a burden God has given you. (e.g., reaching out to a single parent, volunteering at a local organization, mentoring a younger believer)
4. As a group, brainstorm ways you could collectively address a need in your church or community that aligns with the burdens God has given you.
5. Commit to praying for each other's “burdens” throughout the week, asking God to provide wisdom and opportunities for you and your fellow Community Group members to act on them.
6. Consider reading through the book of Nehemiah this week to gain more insights into his leadership and faith journey.