

Teamwork Makes the Dream Work!

RECAP

This week's focus: Accomplishing the mission of God requires commitment, unity, and hard work.

The first two chapters of Nehemiah were during extraordinary days. Nehemiah was deeply burdened by God and given fresh vision to rebuild Jerusalem so that God's people could live safely and worship freely. His detailed plan was miraculously granted by the king after months of fasting and praying. Chapter three reports on normal days, regular people doing regular tasks like most people on most days. Nehemiah has moved from Susa to Jerusalem with the plans in hand, the long days of hard work commence.

After ordinary days of hard work (digging holes, shoveling dirt, hauling, and stacking stones) were more extraordinary days that included a revival among God's people in response to Spirit-filled Bible teaching and worship leading. What makes those extraordinary days possible are by the ordinary days where humble, faithful, and hardworking servants of God get practical things done. This is the heart of Nehemiah 3. God's way of honoring faithful servants is by naming the leaders and their teams in His Word to commemorate their ordinary ministry.

As we examine this chapter, considered by many to be the most boring and irrelevant chapter in the entire book, it is curious to note that some Bible commentaries skip it altogether. If you are willing to read chapter three carefully and prayerfully, there is much that God will show you because if something is written in the Bible, it must be significant. 2 Timothy 3:16-17 "All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work." Sometimes, our "good work" involves hard days of labor, just like our Lord who spent 90% of his life swinging a hammer.

As you read Nehemiah 3, stop for a moment, and imagine that your name was in that chapter, along with your family and friends who served with you in a tedious ministry task. This chapter would likely become your favorite in the entire book, if not among your favorite chapters in the entire Bible. The lengthy list of names and projects includes 38 people along with numerous others whose names are not listed; 42 separate teams laboring to complete various assigned aspects of the work, spread across seven neighborhoods in the city marked by their corresponding gates. In this enormous city and ministry project, we learn the timeless principles regarding people and their leaders.

Nehemiah's journal entry highlights the characteristics of ordinary people doing extraordinary work. Their God-given mission to rebuild the walls required strong personal commitment, hard work, focused leadership, a unified team, cooperation, motivation, service, and sacrifice.

God is still using ordinary people to accomplish extraordinary things and every person has a role to play. It will take a strong personal commitment, hard work, a unified team, and clear leadership. So, get ready, He is calling us to come together to rebuild, restore, and renew the lives of people; one heart, one family, one neighborhood, and one city at a time.



Nehemiah
REBUILD, RESTORE, RENEW

Teamwork Makes the Dream Work!

SHARE (5-10 min)

Icebreaker Question: Who comes to mind when you think of a faithful, and humble person who serves without prestige or praise?

STUDY (about 30 min) Read Nehemiah 3

1. What stood out to you about the message on Sunday? Is there anything that was unclear, or that you have questions about?
2. In Nehemiah 3, notice the descriptions of those who worked side by side in the difficult labor of rebuilding the wall. Besides their names, what other notable information is given about those people in the following verses?
3. How is the work in Nehemiah an illustration of the principle in Colossians 3:23? Why do you think hard workers are hard to find?
4. Which attitudes the builders displayed in chapter 3 are worthy examples for Christians to adopt when working together? Which of their attitudes in chapter 3 are those we should avoid?
5. What words and details in chapter 3 emphasize the unity of God's people in this task of rebuilding? How does 1 Corinthians 12:12-31 help us think about the unity of God's people in the present context of the church?
6. When you think about their commitment to the work, why do you think some went "all-in" and others refused? What keeps us from going "all-in" with God's mission?
7. God's church has a mission (Matt. 28:18-20). What are we doing at GateWay to rebuild, restore, and renew the lives of people? What is your part in the mission?
8. Ordinary things like commitment, hard work, leadership, unity, sacrifice, and service are key requirements to accomplish the mission to rebuild. Which of these characteristics are your strengths? Areas of growth?
9. What does it mean that "God redeems the rubble to rebuild the broken"? How do you see Him doing that in your life or others?

SUPPORT (15 min)

Break up into groups of 2 or 3. Pray for personal needs and areas of growth. Pray for increased involvement of rebuilding, restoring, and renewing lives at GateWay and all believers in Santa Cruz County.