

REBUILDING A CHURCH FAMILY ON A MISSION NEHEMIAH 1

SERMON DISCUSSION QUESTIONS – SEPTEMBER 12, 2021

LOOK BACK

Discuss how God's Word had an impact last week.

1. Reflecting on the last 18 months, how would you summarize a) the overall changes that have taken place in and around you during that time, and b) the ways in which you saw - and were, perhaps, grown by - God in that time?

LOOK TO GOD'S WORD

Study and apply God's Word as a group.

1. Read this week's passage:

Nehemiah 1:1-2:8 (English Standard Version)

Chapter 1

1 The words of Nehemiah the son of Hacaliah. Now it happened in the month of Chislev, in the twentieth year, as I was in Susa the citadel, 2 that Hanani, one of my brothers, came with certain men from Judah. And I asked them concerning the Jews who escaped, who had survived the exile, and concerning Jerusalem. 3 And they said to me, "The remnant there in the province who had survived the exile is in great trouble and shame. The wall of Jerusalem is broken down, and its gates are destroyed by fire."

4 As soon as I heard these words I sat down and wept and mourned for days, and I continued fasting and praying before the God of heaven. 5 And I said, "O Lord God of heaven, the great and awesome God who keeps covenant and steadfast love with those who love him and keep his commandments, 6 let your ear be attentive and your eyes open, to hear the prayer of your servant that I now pray before you day and night for the people of Israel your servants, confessing the sins of the people of Israel, which we have sinned against you. Even I and my father's house have sinned. 7 We have acted very corruptly against you and have not kept the commandments, the statutes, and the rules that you commanded your servant Moses. 8 Remember the word that you commanded your servant Moses, saying, 'If you are unfaithful, I will scatter you among the peoples, 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.' 10 They are your servants and your people, whom you have redeemed by your great power and by your strong hand. 11 O Lord, let your ear be attentive to the prayer of your servant, and to the prayer of your servants who delight to fear your name, and give success to your servant today, and grant him mercy in the sight of this man."

Now I was cupbearer to the king.

Chapter 2

1 In the month of Nisan, in the twentieth year of King Artaxerxes, when wine was before him, I took up the wine and gave it to the king. Now I had not been sad in his presence. 2 And the king said to me, "Why is your face sad, seeing you are not sick? This is nothing but sadness of the heart." Then I was very much afraid. 3 I said to the king, "Let the king live forever! Why should not my face be sad, when the city, the place of my fathers' graves, lies in ruins, and its gates have been destroyed by fire?" 4 Then the king said to me, "What are you requesting?" So I prayed to the God of heaven. 5 And I said to the king, "If it pleases the king, and if your servant has found favor in your sight, that you send me to Judah, to the city of my fathers' graves, that I may rebuild it." 6 And the king said to me (the queen sitting beside him), "How long will you be gone, and when will you return?" So it pleased the king to send me when I had given him a time. 7 And I said to the king, "If it pleases the king, let letters be given me to the governors of the province Beyond the River, that they may let me pass through until I come to Judah, 8 and a letter to Asaph, the keeper of the king's forest, that he may give me timber to make beams for the gates of the fortress of the temple, and for the wall of the city, and for the house that I shall occupy." And the king granted me what I asked, for the good hand of my God was upon me.

2. Recap what God is saying to all of us through the passage:

- The church is not a building , an event, or a program. **The Church is a family on a mission.**
 - MBC’s mission is this: **We glorify God by making disciples and multiplying churches among all the nations, beginning in greater Washington, D.C.**
 - MBC is a unique family, surrounded by people with urgent need, and we have unprecedented opportunity to spread God’s grace for God’s glory.
 - In this time of rebuilding as an MBC church family —
 1. We are on a mission to **care well for God’s people** (Nehemiah 1:2-4)
 2. We are on a mission to **spread God’s glory among all people** (Nehemiah 2:1-8)
 - Resolve not to just attend a church, but to **commit your life to a local church.** Commit to —
 1. Loving the members of that church;
 2. Following the leaders of that church;
 3. Accomplishing the mission of that church.
3. As you reflect on Sunday’s sermon, what insight was particularly helpful, distinctive, or challenging to you? What insight was difficult to grasp? What aspects of this sermon do you hope we talk about as a group?

LOOK FORWARD

Consider the implications of the passage for His body and His mission in the world..

1. Re-read Nehemiah 1:2-4. Nehemiah was resolved to care well for the people of God in Jerusalem. He intentionally asked about their wellbeing and showed genuine care and concern when he heard they were in “great trouble and shame.” What did Nehemiah first do when he heard of the plight of God’s people? (v.4) Do we respond to needs by going to God in fervent prayer? Following the example of Nehemiah, how might we as a group resolve to care well for God’s people?
2. Even when Nehemiah heard that God’s people were in need, he acknowledged that our God is a covenant God whose love is steadfast. He prayed and asked God to remember His promises to His people. How might we, as a group, point each other to steadfast truth during trials and suffering? What are some promises from Scripture that we can share to encourage and edify our group? Take some time right now to share truths from Scripture that remind us of our God who always keeps His promises.
3. Nehemiah wasn’t a priest or a king – he was a cupbearer. Yet, he was courageous and led the needed efforts to help rebuild the city walls when he saw a need. And, when he was leading the effort to rebuild the walls God was using this time to rebuild His people for His glory. Are there areas where we can see a need in our group, church, or city where we can jump in and serve and help build or rebuild, for the glory of God?
4. Nehemiah was on a mission to spread God’s glory among all people and that meant redirecting his plans for his life. How might we need to adjust our plans this very week so that we can bring God glory among all people?
5. Read Matthew 22:36-40, John 13:12-17, John 13:34-35, and Colossians 3:15-17. Being members of God’s family (i.e., His body) means sharing life together, being in authentic relationship with one another, speaking into one another’s lives for our mutual edification, growing deeper in Christ together, and making disciples of all nations together. If you are a believer, how does your life reflect the fact that you, through salvation and faith in Jesus, have become a member of Christ’s body? What does your



engagement in and commitment to the local church say about your membership in Christ?

6. Read Ephesians 4:11-13, 1 Thessalonians 5:12-13, and Hebrews 13:17. God distributes spiritual gifts to His people. He specifically prepares and provides church leaders to guard the doctrine of the Church, equip the saints for works of service, and build up His body in the knowledge of Christ, all for the glory of His name.
- Why is it important for church members to follow the faithful, sound leaders that God establishes to shepherd His church family? What impact does the obedience of church members have on a) the church member themselves, b) the church leaders, c) the broader church family, and d) the church's witness to the world?
 - Considering the 'one another' passages in the Scriptures (see below), how might these passages uniquely apply to and play out in the relationship between church leaders and church members?

59 ONE ANOTHER COMMANDS FROM SCRIPTURE

1. "...Be at peace with each other." (Mark 9:50)
2. "...Wash one another's feet." (John 13:14)
3. "...Love one another..." (John 13:34)
4. "...Love one another..." (John 13:34)
5. "...Love one another..." (John 13:35)
6. "...Love one another..." (John 15:12)
7. "...Love one another" (John 15:17)
8. "Be devoted to one another in brotherly love..." (Romans 12:10)
9. "...Honor one another above yourselves. (Romans 12:10)
10. "Live in harmony with one another..." (Romans 12:16)
11. "...Love one another..." (Romans 13:8)
12. "...Stop passing judgment on one another." (Romans 14:13)
13. "Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you..." (Romans 15:7)
14. "...Instruct one another." (Romans 15:14)
15. "Greet one another with a holy kiss..." (Romans 16:16)
16. "...When you come together to eat, wait for each other." (I Cor. 11:33)
17. "...Have equal concern for each other." (I Corinthians 12:25)
18. "...Greet one another with a holy kiss." (I Corinthians 16:20)
19. "Greet one another with a holy kiss." (II Corinthians 13:12)
20. "...Serve one another in love." (Galatians 5:13)
21. "If you keep on biting and devouring each other...you will be destroyed by each other." (Galatians 5:15)
22. "Let us not become conceited, provoking and envying each other." (Galatians 5:26)
23. "Carry each other's burdens..." (Galatians 6:2)
24. "...Be patient, bearing with one another in love." (Ephesians 4:2)
25. "Be kind and compassionate to one another..." (Ephesians 4:32)
26. "...Forgiving each other..." (Ephesians 4:32)
27. "Speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs." (Ephesians 5:19)
28. "Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ." (Ephesians 5:21)
29. "...In humility consider others better than yourselves." (Philippians 2:3)
30. "Do not lie to each other..." (Colossians 3:9)
31. "Bear with each other..." (Colossians 3:13)
32. "...Forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another." (Colossians 3:13)
33. "Teach...[one another]" (Colossians 3:16)
34. "...Admonish one another (Colossians 3:16)
35. "...Make your love increase and overflow for each other." (I Thessalonians 3:12)
36. "...Love each other." (I Thessalonians 4:9)
37. "...Encourage each other..." (I Thessalonians 4:18)
38. "...Encourage each other..." (I Thessalonians 5:11)
39. "...Build each other up..." (I Thessalonians 5:11)
40. "Encourage one another daily..." Hebrews 3:13)
41. "...Spur one another on toward love and good deeds." (Hebrews 10:24)
42. "...Encourage one another." (Hebrews 10:25)



43. "...Do not slander one another." (James 4:11)
44. "Don't grumble against each other..." (James 5:9)
45. "Confess your sins to each other..." (James 5:16)
46. "...Pray for each other." (James 5:16)
47. "...Love one another deeply, from the heart." (I Peter 3:8)
48. "...Live in harmony with one another..." (I Peter 3:8)
49. "...Love each other deeply..." (I Peter 4:8)
50. "Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling." (I Peter 4:9)
51. "Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others..." (I Peter 4:10)
52. "...Clothe yourselves with humility toward one another..." (I Peter 5:5)
53. "Greet one another with a kiss of love." (I Peter 5:14)
54. "...Love one another." (I John 3:11)
55. "...Love one another." (I John 3:23)
56. "...Love one another." (I John 4:7)
57. "...Love one another." (I John 4:11)
58. "...Love one another." (I John 4:12)
59. "...Love one another." (II John 5)



