



Week 2 | Nehemiah | August 14

Key Focus: “Justice flounders because I exclude the poor and vulnerable from the community of humans even as I exclude myself from the community of sinners.”

Opening Up:

- In an argument do you have quick comebacks or does it take you a while to respond? Explain.
- When was the last time someone intimidated you? How did you respond?
- Name a time when have overcome a fear? How did it feel?

Reference: Nehemiah 3 and 4

Discuss:

1. We should be making God famous for God’s mission to fix a broken world. What broken thing in the world should the church be addressing? Why do you think so? How should the church respond?
2. Your mission is at the intersection of God’s plan, your place, and the worlds pain. Nehemiah rose up for his mission, he prayed for others to rise up (1:11), and the priest rose up with him (3:10). What qualities do you see in people have risen up and engaged the worlds pain through God’s plan? What keeps people from rising up?
3. Micah 6:8 calls us to seek justice. Jesus is a justice worker (Luke 4:17-19, 21). In 2 Corinthians 8:9 we see that Jesus left the riches of heaven and became poor to save us. Jesus came not to be served but to serve (Matthew 20:28). Nehemiah saw himself as a social servant (Nehemiah 1:11). Yet, in Nehemiah 3:5 some people in power did not “stoop to serve.” Why do some people view serving as stooping? How does the ministry of Jesus effect the way we view service?
4. All of us our guilty of letting other people suffer to persevere our pleasures. (Think about how poor wages over seas effects or doesn’t effect you purchases.) Justice flounders because I exclude the poor and vulnerable from the community of humans even as I exclude myself from the community of sinners. How do we preserve our compassion for the most vulnerable? Why makes our hearts hard?
5. One commentator writes that Sanballat (Nehemiah 4:2-3) was using the techniques of a demagogue. The techniques are fear, intimidation, doubt, and humiliation. Have you ever had these techniques used on you? How so?
6. Nehemiah responds to his adversaries by praying about it Nehemiah 4:4-5. How does prayer serve you when faced with fear, intimidation, doubt and humiliation? Nehemiah prays and the does the next good thing (Nehemiah 4:6). How does making the next right decision keep you focused?
7. When the opposition shows up again in Nehemiah 4:7-8 the direct response of Nehemiah was to pray and be on guard (Nehemiah 4:9). When reading through 1 Peter 5:7-9 we are told to watch for and resist the devil, and to cast our anxieties on God who cares for us. How do you keep watch for the devil? How do you resist the devil? How do you cast your anxieties on God?
8. Nehemiah made it clear that he was not a leader who led from far away, but as the leader he would be in proximity to the toughest place to be (Nehemiah 20:5). Why is it important to have courageous and faithful leaders who share the burden and are willing to pay the price for the mission?
9. Pray.