

Do you feel any responsibility for our church community as a whole or just for yourself? How is that evident?

Do we lack mutual accountability in our church family?

9. Do we need to be more repentant in our life together as a church or has Jesus changed all that?

Is it ever appropriate for us as a group of Christians to pray as Nehemiah did in v7. When?

10. Nehemiah bases part of his prayer on the promises of God. v8-10 See 2 Chronicles 6.36-39 Deut. 30.4; 1 Kings 8.48-49

Do you ever use God's promises to us in Christ as a basis for your prayers? What sort of promises do you think we could use?

11. Author John White 'Excellence in Leadership' p23, suggested that there are three prerequisites for our pleading with God:
- i. Jealousy for God's reputation
 - ii. Love for one's fellow believers
 - iii. An indifference to one's own life and destiny. **Discuss.**

12. Nehemiah lived in exile but his face was set to Jerusalem We too live in exile but where is our face set (Jerusalem = KOG) or Babylon (Kingdom of this world)?

What can we do to guard against having our face (prayers and lives) focused on Babylon? What needs to change?



'Building out of Brokenness'

A series of studies in the Old Testament book of Nehemiah

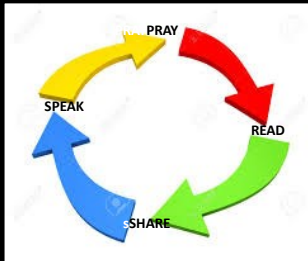
Term 1, 2018

St Alban's Press

Our Vision:
Building Christian Community



A Vision for Personal Spiritual Growth (MP3's)



ACCOUNTABILITY: Expectations – Evaluation - Consequences

Personal Challenge: Be a mission partner

- Pray for 5 non-believers specifically (weekly)
- Prayerfully seek to have a gospel conversation with 1 non-believer (1 x week)
- Once a month commit to have lunch/dinner/coffee with 1 person on prayer list.
- Meet monthly with 2 others in a MP3 support group to pray! (Build accountability)
- Seek to read gospel 1-2-1 with non-believer (disciples making disciples!)

Discuss this quote from the sermon:

'You pray as your face is set – towards Jerusalem or Babylon. The very egotism of craving life is prayer. The great difference is the object of it. The man whose passion is habitually set upon pleasure, knowledge, wealth, honour, power is in a state of prayer TO these things or FOR them. He prays without ceasing. These are his real Gods on whom he waits day and night...he prays to an unknown God for a selfish boon... Beware lest the whole trend of the soul fix on a deity that turns a doom.' p89-90

P.T. Forsyth in his book, 'The Soul of Prayer'

5. What strikes you most about Nehemiah's prayer & why?

What was his request? v6; v11 Does it seem unusual in any way?

6. When you recognize the God of the Bible as 'Lord of heaven' & 'great & awesome' how should that affect your:
- a. prayers
 - b. daily living
 - c. your relationships

7. Nehemiah demonstrated a real solidarity with his people and identified with them as a whole, even in their sin.

Do we today as the people of God suffer from a lack of a sense of corporate responsibility and identity. Why? Why not?

8. Is our experience and practice of Christianity too individualized and lacking in corporate identity?

Study 1. Nehemiah: Building out of Brokenness

PRAYER OF THE BROKEN HEARTED
Nehemiah 1.1-11

1. What coping mechanisms come into play for you in the challenges of life? Where do you turn for comfort or escape?

What part does prayer realistically play?

What does your daily practice of prayer say about its importance in your life as a Christian?

2. **Read 2 Chronicles 36.15-23**

This is helpful background to the books of both Ezra & Nehemiah. What do we learn about God and his people?

3. **Read Nehemiah 1.1-11**

Nehemiah was in Susa and cup bearer to the King. Consider what his life and circumstances may have been like?

In contrast, how would you describe the conditions for God's people back in Jerusalem? v3-4

How do you think they may have felt towards God? The remaining exiles in Babylon, Susa etc.

4. What does Nehemiah's response in v4 reveal about him? When was the last time you wept or fasted about some aspect of your Christian life or experience? Our church? Or over the trials of other Christians? The Kingdom of God?

Nehemiah: 'Building out of Brokenness'

Study 1. Prayer of the Broken-Hearted
Nehemiah 1.1-11

Study 2. Building out of Brokenness
Nehemiah 2.1-3.31

Study 3. The God who fights for Us!
Nehemiah 4.1-23

Study 4. The Battle Within
Nehemiah 5.1-19

Study 5. Power to Persevere
Nehemiah 6.1-19

Study 6. Walking in God's Words
Nehemiah 8-9.12

Study 7. A Time to Celebrate!
Nehemiah 12.27-44

Study 8. When the Temple has Termites
Nehemiah 13.1-30

Introduction

Nehemiah's name means, 'The Lord comforts'. His parents in giving him this name were expressing their deep hope in God, and that perhaps in some small way the Lord might use their son to achieve this desire.

The life and ministry of Ezra the Priest & Nehemiah overlap as they each play a significant part in the restoration of Jerusalem and her people.

Ezra was committed to rebuilding the Temple and the establishment of the law, while Nehemiah was instrumental in the rebuilding of the walls and re-establishing community within the city.

Whilst this book focusses on the actions of a man named Nehemiah, it is a glorious narrative that is really about the greatness of God, and his faithful, steadfast love to a wayward people.

It also speaks of the possibilities for the people of God to have a significant impact in their community when they truly walk in faith and obedience.

The book focuses on the renovation of the city walls in Jerusalem, but God's real concern is for the renovation of the hearts of his people. God is indeed the one who not only rebuilds city walls but the lives of all who trust in his promises.

It is a book about building out of brokenness and points us forward to the ultimate building/restoration work done through the Lord Jesus, God's final & everlasting comforter.

Michael

Dates

The events in this book occur at a time of the Exile. The following dates and charts place them in their Biblical and historical context.

2000 BC Abraham

1300 BC Moses & Exodus

1000 BC King David & King Solomon

922 BC Divided Kingdoms (Israel & Judah)

721 BC Northern Kingdom conquered by Assyria

597 BC Jerusalem captured—First deportations

586 BC Jerusalem falls—further deportations to Babylon

538 BC First exiles return by edict of Persian King, Cyrus

537 BC Temple rebuilding starts; not completed till 516 BC

458 BC Ezra returns to Jerusalem (7th year of Xerxes reign)

445 BC Nehemiah returns by edict of Artaxerxes