

## Rebuilding with God: Risking for Renewal

Nehemiah 2 || Pastor Shawn Gendall || 03 October 2021

*To CARE for one another in truth and in love,  
To GROW together as followers of Jesus,  
To SERVE those God has placed in our path.  
– CG Mission Statement*

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**Icebreaker:** Do you remember the first time you were put in charge of a big project? What was that like?

**Worship:** [Isaiah 49:15-16](#) (*Remain a few moments in worship with this passage. What is God's invitation?*)

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**Sermon Summary for [Nehemiah 2](#)** (*Read the passage aloud before reading the sermon summary.*)

*“So completely was Jesus bent on saving sinners by the sacrifice of Himself, He created the tree upon which He was to die, and nurtured from infancy the men who were to nail Him to the accursed wood.”*  
– Octavius Winslow

A great king brings honor, security, peace... a focal point of significance to the events of life. A king also brings a sense of permanence, of legacy. We see all of this perfectly in Christ, and we see the same architecture here in Nehemiah's writings. God is preparing His holy city for the arrival of the Great King. The walls were in ruins, its people scattered, but Nehemiah was driven by a hope that Jerusalem's best days were still ahead – that its greatest king had not yet come. We share the same hope... and can see the heart of Jesus in Nehemiah. And through his story, we can gain a deeper appreciation and heart for His lordship over our lives and callings.

**He Went** (v9-11) // Compelled by compassion and covered by the promise of God's protection, Nehemiah set out on a great, 900 mile journey. His heart was filled with confidence in God's call. In this, we see echoes of the coming Christ: a man of honor leaving his security to bring grace and hope where disgrace and hopelessness prevailed. Nehemiah knew and understood his mission to seek the welfare of the people of Israel. May we all feel sent in this way – to wherever it is that God may be calling us.

**He Became** (v17-20) // [Psalm 48](#) was a love song to Jerusalem; but the Israelites assumed it was a part of their past. They had lost their hope for the future. Yes, the city was disgraced, vulnerable, tormented by both present danger and the squandered opportunities of its past. But Nehemiah was convinced of God's promises that the city still had a glorious future. He became a Jerusalemite and in so doing, reminded God's people what they could be and that God's gracious hand was upon them. As Dallas Willard wrote, *“Our task as His people is to discern what God is doing and join with Him. It is not so much that the church has a mission, but that the mission has a church.”* May we therefore embrace and embody the truth that God has placed us where we are, and may we therefore bring a depth of meaning to all the spaces of our lives. Nehemiah sought the welfare of the people; may we do the same.

**He did what God had put in his heart to do** (v13) // It sometimes feels like we are surrounded – hemmed in – on all sides. And it is only those who see the mighty, faithful covenantal God of the Bible who are able to endure the kind of pressures that Moses and Nehemiah faced. May we have this depth of relationship with our Father so we might have hope in such times. Because ultimately, we don't own the story of our lives; we don't fully understand how the story will end. Therefore, when we proclaim and live out our hope in Jesus – through the Gospel – we don't proclaim it and live it with any sort of triumphalism, pride, or unrealistic promises. We proclaim it and live as permanently repentant, permanently trusting, permanently poor in spirit – as ones who have been called out of the darkness and into His marvelous light.

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**Discussion Questions** (You will not be able to discuss all the questions. Pick the ones you like. Some are personal perspective and application questions for life-transforming discussions.)

#### **He Went**

- Nehemiah prayed, planned and prepared for months before God answered his prayer (v1-2). How does Nehemiah initially respond? What did he do? What can we learn about prayer from this?
  - Describe a time when you prayed and planned for a long time before God answered. What did God teach you through this experience?
  - What can we learn from this story about how prayer and careful planning work in concert with one another?

#### **He Became**

- What did Nehemiah confidently know about God? (See v8, 12, 18, 20.) Why do you think he knew this?
  - In what ways is it evident that God's hand was upon Nehemiah?
- What surprises you in Nehemiah's request of the king and the answer he received (v-2-10)?
- Where in your life has God given you influence and an impact on others for His purposes?
  - In what ways do you feel sent to seek the welfare of others like Nehemiah did?

#### **He Did What God Put on His Heart to Do**

- What do you notice about how Nehemiah communicated the problem to the people of Jerusalem? (v17-20)
  - What about the plan motivated the people to want to act?
  - How did Nehemiah (and how should we) respond to opposition?
- How can we (and how do we) know when God is inviting us to build or rebuild something for Him?
  - Why do you think God has located you in LA? How is He inviting you to serve His Kingdom?
- How do you see Jesus in Nehemiah? (*He went. He became. He did what God put in His heart to do.*)

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## **Prayer**

For this week's prayer guide click [HERE](#).

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### **Support one of our ministry partners: Kelley Sanford**

Kelley is on full time staff with RUF UCLA. She works alongside campus pastor, Matt Trexler, discipling UCLA girls in Christ, leading Bible studies, and helping to plan large groups and conferences. Kelley is an active member of PCC and our CG ministry. Please consider supporting Kelley as a CG by praying regularly for her ministry on campus. If you would like to become a financial partner and further support her ministry, click here:

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