

## Rebuilding with God: Group Work

Nehemiah 3 || Pastor Paul Hahn || 10 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:** How did you feel about group projects in school? Or if you work in groups still, how do you feel about group projects now?

**Worship:** [Ephesians 4:4-7, 12-13](#) *(Remain a few moments in worship with this passage. What is God's invitation?)*

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**Sermon Summary for Nehemiah 3** *(Read the passage aloud before reading the sermon summary.)*

Engaging in the renewal that Jesus calls us toward isn't a solo exercise; it's an "us" enterprise. Renewal in the Kingdom of God needs entire communities of Christ followers to repair and rebuild broken places so they might once again become havens of protection, welcome and blessing. Nehemiah teaches us that this "mending of walls" will require working together as a church. Here's how:

Renewal with a Diverse Group // The disparate group listed by Nehemiah speaks of all walks of life. We too need this kind of congregational diversity if we are to engage in the life and work of the Kingdom. We should look for it rather than run from it. Such diversity reminds us that what truly gathers and unites us is Jesus, His gospel, His kingdom work (rather than how we view ourselves, our value, or our agenda). The Gospel frees us from fearing our differences so that we might embrace and learn from those whose backgrounds are different from our own. The "diversity" also applies to where God will call us – whether that is in our home, across town, or on the other side of the world – as well as what "amount of wall" we are to help repair. Meaning we cannot do the work of Kingdom renewal if we want recognition. It's not going to work that way. Ultimately, it is about us decreasing and Christ increasing, as John the Baptist said so poignantly.

Renewal with a Weak Group // An often daunting truth about serving God's Kingdom is that we will not always be working out of our strengths. Yes, sometimes we will play to our strengths and experiences and gifting as we serve Christ's kingdom. But sometimes we won't. Sometimes – oftentimes – we will be pressed to operate out of weakness. Because the more we work in weakness, the more room there is to exalt the Spirit of Christ. When we are weak, He is strong! As Bonhoeffer wrote in Life Together, "*Christian community is like the Christian's sanctification. It is a gift of God which we cannot claim. Only God knows the real state of our fellowship, of our sanctification. What may appear weak and trifling to us may be great and glorious to God.*"

Renewal with a Connected Group // All of the people Nehemiah speaks of are connected to each other in the work. A group of people who have no business communing or working together have been united in their service to God. Maybe their shared sense of weakness helped them. Maybe the connections helped solidify their bond. Certainly the persecution that was coming would bind them together. But, there was a great task, and they embraced it as God's people. As the hands and feet of Jesus called to repair this world, we are to speak and live out of the Gospel.

It is in shared worship, hearing that we are forgiven and loved, redeemed together, being instructed and challenged together, singing praise together, making sacrificial offerings together – it is all of this which reminds us of the greater realities of our connectedness. We see how we are literally bound together, as the body of Christ, continuing to engage His mission of renewal in the world.

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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.)*

#### **A Diverse Group**

- What do you think was God's point in having Nehemiah record all the information in this chapter?
  - Do the groups and communities you find yourself in reflect the diversity seen in this group?
- One of the questions not addressed by the passage is: how did all of these people from so many different walks of life and cities all come together for this project? How do you think it came to be?
- What leadership skills did Nehemiah use as the people were organized to start the rebuilding?
  - What lessons can we learn?

#### **A Weak Group**

- How do you see the people building the wall as both humble and weak? Compare Philippians 2:5-8
  - Name a time when you served God in your weakness. What was it like for you? Compare 2 Corinthians 12:10
- How is this idea of "leading from weakness" viewed by our current culture today?
- It's clear that God used people who had very different skill sets than the obvious construction background that would be hugely beneficial. What does this reveal about who God is?
  - What does it, or might it look like for you, to make leading from weakness a practice?

#### **A Connected Group**

- What connects all Christians together? What is their common mission?
  - Name times when we experience this connectedness. Name times when we do not experience this connectedness.
- Has the Lord laid any projects on your heart that require group work?
  - What can your group do to "rebuild the wall" of the church right now?
  - Where might your group (or you) start?

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## **Prayer**

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

## **Engage & Experience: Generous Service**

### **Support one of our Ministry Partners: Justin Williams**

Pray for our Global Outreach partner and PCC member, Justin Williams, as he ministers to those in the orphan system in Vinnitsa, Ukraine. Justin uses sports ministry to reach the youth and seeks to build meaningful relationships so that he can share the gospel.

Consider supporting Justin as a CG by adopting him as your Global Outreach partner in 2022. A partnership could look like praying for him on a regular basis, sending encouraging notes/emails or supporting him financially. For more information and to support Justin click here: <https://www.missiondispatch.org/justin-williams-ywam-ukraine>