

Small Group Study Guide

Help Along the Way

Series: Nehemiah Rebuilding a Life of Faith

Nehemiah 3:1-33

From Sunday October 11, 2020 (Thanksgiving)

Appetizer:

Activity: Take a moment to tell stories where you tried to build something by yourself that you KNEW required more people, but you did it anyway, and failed miserably.

Reflection: Scot McKnight once said “God’s idea of redemption is community shaped.”

Question: What do you think this means? How does that go against some of our individualistic views of salvation?

Read: Have everyone read Nehemiah 3:1-32 by themselves. It’s actually a hard passage to read out loud due to all of the names mentioned!

Main Course:

The bottom line of this week’s sermon was this: we rise and we fall on those who help us with our call.

This statement may rub against us in that it sounds like others play more of a role in our lives than the Holy Spirit. Obviously, we recognize that we ultimately need to rely on God, even when we are alone and we don’t have a community. But it rings true: who we surround ourselves with, influence us. And they can influence towards all that God is up to in our lives, or they can influence us away from following the Jesus way.

Question: The passage demonstrated the immense variety of people that helped build the wall. It was mentioned in the sermon that the same help that goes into rebuilding a wall, is the same help that goes into building a life of faith. **What does this tell us about the dynamics of a healthy church?**

Read Nehemiah 3:5 Out loud. Sometimes, in Christian community, people do not play their role well. In this passage, the nobles of Tekoa did not want to participate or follow orders in rebuilding the wall. Why do you think they were hesitant?

Question: What happens when the church becomes the “individuals of Christ” rather than “the body of Christ?”

Question: One of the struggles with helping others fulfill their calling is that it is hard work. It sometimes seems in North American Christianity that we prefer activities and person preferences than the hard work of seeking God’s kingdom and loving our neighbours. We enjoy spiritual conversations (in fact, we get pretty riled up over spiritual conversations!) but when it comes time for the work, it seems like only a few people sign up for the cause. **Why is this so?**

To quote Scot McKnight again, we are to “Love one another strenuously because it’s hard work.” **Why is loving one another such hard work?**

Dessert:

One of our core-values at Emmanuel is to be an intergenerational family. In what ways can you help engage with generations in order to help them rise in their faith?

Activity: Write down the names of five people who have encouraged you in the faith over the years. Share your list with the group. Explain how these people have impacted your life.

Prayer challenge: Who do you think might have put you on their list? How will you live a life of “self-sacrifice for the greater good” in order to see other’s shine? Have someone pray for the courage and strength and power of the Holy Spirit to help enable us to be those that help others with their call.