



DISCUSSION GUIDE

NEHEMIAH 1 – Facing What Needs Fixing

GETTING STARTED

What is your initial/gut reaction to bad news? Why?

Why is change difficult for us, especially when it involves something within us?

If you were going through a difficult time, what would you want others to do for you? Why?

QUICK REACTIONS FROM THE MESSAGE

How would you summarize/paraphrase the message in your own words?

What point/idea resonated most with you? Why?

What is significant about Nehemiah not being a prophet, priest or king?

Dave gave us 3 steps to re-build what needs fixing from Nehemiah 1...

1. You will never re-build what you won't acknowledge needs fixing. How can denial be our biggest downfall or biggest enemy to change?
In what way is it difficult to face the things that God is asking us to change? How does Nehemiah deal with bad news?
2. Re-building starts with compassion, not courage
What was Nehemiah's reaction to bad news?
In what way can we overlook how compassion moves us to re-build or change what needs fixing in our lives or in the places we live? (home, work, church)
In what area of your life have you grown callous and need God's compassion?
READ Mark 6:34; Matthew 9:36 and John 10:35 – what moved Jesus to compassion? How does this inform us?
3. Change Begins in Prayer
How did Nehemiah pray? What can we learn about his prayer that could help us pray for change or re-build what needs fixing rather than just complaining about what needs fixing?
How have you seen prayer change you?

EXPLORE THE PASSAGE [Nehemiah 1:1-11]

(Yes, these questions can seem silly, however, good discussion and interpretation of the Bible begins with having a proper understanding of the basic facts; who, what, when, and where in the text.) Work through this quickly, the answers are fairly obvious.

When did the events of this passage take place? (1:1)

Why did Nehemiah question his brother? (1:1-2)

What report did Hanani and his men give to Nehemiah? (1:3)

How did Nehemiah react to the news about Jerusalem and the exiles? (1:4)

How did Nehemiah describe God in his prayer? (1:5)

According to Nehemiah, with whom does God keep His covenant of love? (1:5)
What made Nehemiah more aware of his own sinfulness? (1:5-6)
What is the major theme of Nehemiah's prayer? (1:5-11)
On whose behalf did Nehemiah pray and fast? (1:6)
Of what sins were the Israelites guilty? (1:7)
What instruction did the Lord give to Moses? (1:8)
What promise of the Lord could the Israelites claim, according to Nehemiah? (1:9)
How did Nehemiah describe the people of Israel in his prayer? (1:10)
What specific request did Nehemiah ask God to grant him? (1:11)

QUESTIONS THAT HELP US UNDERSTAND THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE TEXT

What admirable traits do you see demonstrated by Nehemiah?
What did Nehemiah's prayer accomplish?
What are the benefits of focusing on the attributes of God?
What role does prayer play in your life?
How do you think you need to change your prayer habits?
Why does God want Christians to pray?
In what circumstances do you think it would be wise to fast and pray?
What can we learn from Nehemiah's example about how to deal with despair?
With what disappointment or challenge are you struggling?
In light of this story, how can we overcome the problems we face?

APPLY THE PASSAGE

What do we learn about God and about ourselves in this passage?
What do you need to stop, start or do differently as a result of reading this passage?
How can we pray for each other?