

What HABITS will you follow through on to cover your unprotected places?

- **CHAIRTIME**
- **LIFE GROUPS**
- **SERVING** others
- **FINANCES** under God's control
- **ENCOURAGEMENT**, where will it come from?
- Next step...

2. Remember the **Strength of the Lord** – “Remember the Lord, who is great and glorious...”

3. Carry both a **Shovel and a Spear** – “All the builders had a sword belted to their side.”

4. Plan to **Join Together** – “When you hear the blast of the trumpet, rush to wherever it is sounding. Then our God will fight for us!”

The rest of the story

"During those fifty-two days, many letters went back and forth between Tobiah and the nobles of Judah. ¹⁸For many in Judah had sworn allegiance to him...¹⁹They kept telling me about Tobiah's good deeds, and then they told him everything I said. And Tobiah kept sending threatening letters to intimidate me." (Nehemiah 6:16)

Challenge:

1. How will I change my thinking to dream with God more?
2. What habits will I pursue to accomplish God's dreams for my life?
3. What has God inspired you with today?

Check out these FREE online studies from Doug Britton for further study:

Live Life as an Adventure

dougbramptonbooks.com/resources/live-adventure

You Have a Purpose in Life

dougbramptonbooks.com/resources/you-have-purpose

Depend on God's Power

dougbramptonbooks.com/resources/depend-on-god

Life Group Homework

For the week of January 12, 2020

MY STORY

- 1) What fun thing happened over the holiday break?
- 2) What are you hoping to get out of this study?

QUICK REVIEW

- 3) Upon reviewing your notes from Sunday's teaching, what caught your attention?
- 4) What are some of the things Pastor Craig mentioned that God wants us to be dreaming about?

DIGGING DEEPER

We will be breaking this passage into sections and discussing them one at a time. I encourage you to read through Nehemiah 1-4 to get the context for the story.

Ridicule - "You're not worthy"

"Sanballat was very angry when he learned that we were rebuilding the wall. He flew into a rage and mocked the Jews, ²saying in front of his friends and the Samaritan army officers, 'What does this bunch of poor, feeble Jews think they're doing? Do they think they can build the wall in a single day by just offering a few sacrifices? Do they actually think they can make something of stones from a rubbish heap—and charred ones at that?' ³Tobiah the Ammonite, who was standing beside him, remarked, 'That stone wall would collapse if even a fox walked along the top of it!'" (Nehemiah 4:1–3 NLT)

- 5) How does Sanballat communicate "you're not worthy"?
- 6) Have you ever had someone make a similar claim about you, and if so, will you share your experience with the group?

Fear- "You're going to fail"

"³Tobiah the Ammonite, who was standing beside him, remarked, 'That stone wall would collapse if even a fox walked along the top of it!'" (Nehemiah 4:3 NLT)

- 7) How could Tobiah's statement create the fear of failure?
- 8) Have you ever experienced this, and if so, how?

Intimidation - "You're not allowed"

"At last the wall was completed to half its height around the entire city, for the people had worked with enthusiasm. ⁷But when Sanballat and Tobiah and the Arabs, Ammonites, and Ashdodites heard that the work was going ahead and that the gaps in the wall of Jerusalem were being repaired, they were furious. ⁸They all made plans to come and fight against Jerusalem and throw us into confusion." (Nehemiah 4:6–8NLT)

- 9) How did Sanballat plan on intimidating the plans?
- 10) Have you ever had someone intimidate you or threaten violence against you? How do those threats impact your plans?

Threats/Fear - "You will be punished"

"Meanwhile, our enemies were saying, 'Before they know what's happening, we will swoop down on them and kill them and end their work.' ¹²The Jews who lived near the enemy came and told us again and again, 'They will come from all directions and attack us!'" (Nehemiah 4:11–12 NLT)

- 11) What was Sanballat's plan to punish the Jews?
- 12) Would a death threat stop you from working?
- 13) Would it be different if you knew that what you were doing was God's plan for you?

Nehemiah - IF he had not prayed . . .

- 14) What would have happened if Nehemiah had not prayed and sought God?
- 15) Have you ever failed to pray and missed an opportunity God was wanting to lead you into?

TAKING IT HOME

"So I placed armed guards behind the lowest parts of the wall in the exposed areas. I stationed the people to stand guard by families, armed with swords, spears, and bows. 14 Then as I looked over the situation, I called together the nobles and the rest of the people and said to them, 'Don't be afraid of the enemy! Remember the Lord, who is great and glorious, and fight for your brothers, your sons, your daughters, your wives, and your homes!' 15 When our enemies heard that we knew of their plans and that God had frustrated them, we all returned to our work on the wall. 16 But from then on, only half my men worked while the other half stood guard with spears, shields, bows, and coats of mail. The leaders stationed themselves behind the people of Judah 17 who were building the wall. The laborers carried on their work with one hand supporting their load and one hand holding a weapon. 18 All the builders had a sword belted to their side. The trumpeter stayed with me to sound the alarm. 19 Then I explained to the nobles and officials and all the people, 'The work is very spread out, and we are widely separated from each other along the wall. 20 When you hear the blast of the trumpet, rush to wherever it is sounding. Then our God will fight for us!'" (Nehemiah 4:13-20 NLT)

From the passages above, Pastor Craig taught us that there are four things Nehemiah did to protect the dream God had put into his heart. These are as follows:

Cover the unprotected areas

- 16) How did Nehemiah do this, and how can you do something similar in your life?

Remember the strength of the Lord

- 17) How did Nehemiah do this, and what can you do to remember God's strength?

Carry both a shovel and spear

- 18) Why did Nehemiah do this, and how can we do this in our lives?

Plan to join together

- 19) How did Nehemiah do this with his people, and how can you plan on staying connected to the community of believers?
- 20) How would these practices help you "Reset" in order to stay connected to God-sized dreams?

CHAIR TIME TOOL

This week read Nehemiah 1-4 and become familiar with the context of the story. Answer the following questions:

- 21) What broke Nehemiah's heart which then caused him to dream about helping Israel?
- 22) What is God wanting to reset in your heart to connect you to His dreams?
- 23) What traps from the *Digging Deeper* section have you fallen into?

"Reset: New Decisions Won't Change You, But New Action Will"

Dream Again

PASTOR CRAIG SWEENEY

January 12, 2020

Thread: The time to **dream with God is today.**

"When I heard this, I sat down and wept. In fact, for days I mourned, fasted, and prayed to the God of heaven." (Nehemiah 1:4 (NLT))

Opposition to the Dream

- **Ridicule** - "You're not worthy" (Nehemiah 4:1-3)
- **Failure** - "You will fail" (Nehemiah 4:1-3)
- **Intimidation** - "You're not allowed" (Nehemiah 4:6-8)
- **Threats/Fear** - "You will be punished" (Nehemiah 4:11-12)
- **Nehemiah - IF he had **not** prayed...** (Nehemiah 1:4)

Fulfilling the Dream

"So I placed armed guards behind the lowest parts of the wall in the exposed areas. I stationed the people to stand guard by families, armed with swords, spears, and bows. 14 Then as I looked over the situation, I called together the nobles and the rest of the people and said to them, 'Don't be afraid of the enemy! Remember the Lord, who is great and glorious, and fight for your brothers, your sons, your daughters, your wives, and your homes!' 15 When our enemies heard that we knew of their plans and that God had frustrated them, we all returned to our work on the wall. 16 But from then on, only half my men worked while the other half stood guard with spears, shields, bows, and coats of mail. The leaders stationed themselves behind the people of Judah 17 who were building the wall. The laborers carried on their work with one hand supporting their load and one hand holding a weapon. 18 All the builders had a sword belted to their side. The trumpeter stayed with me to sound the alarm. 19 Then I explained to the nobles and officials and all the people, 'The work is very spread out, and we are widely separated from each other along the wall. 20 When you hear the blast of the trumpet, rush to wherever it is sounding. Then our God will fight for us!'" (Nehemiah 4:13-20)

Nehemiah's Four Effective "Resets"

1. **Cover the **Unprotected Places**** - *"So I placed armed guards behind the lowest parts of the wall in the exposed areas."*