

Leader Guide

Reimagine.

Fall 2026 | Week 2

Message Date 9/20/2026

THE GOAL

I hope you had an amazing first week, Life Group leaders. Last week we began Reimagine: The Blessing of God is Within Your Reach by reading about Nehemiah taking an honest, unhurried look at Jerusalem's broken walls before he ever picked up a stone. This week we return to his story to find the wall already climbing — completed to half its height — because the people worked with enthusiasm. But progress had also invited opposition. In Nehemiah 4:1–6, Sanballat and Tobiah mock the builders' efforts, calling their work fragile and worthless, and Nehemiah's response is to pray rather than retaliate, entrusting the injustice to God before returning to the work.

Our goal for this week is that every person would recognize the opposition — spoken by others or whispered in their own mind — that tries to convince them their “wall” isn't worth rebuilding and would respond the way Nehemiah did: taking it to God in prayer, releasing the outcome to Him, and taking the next faithful step anyway. We also want to celebrate real progress already made — even work that's only half-finished is still worth thanking God for — and to keep every person leaning into the 30-Day Prayer Challenge, asking God for eyes to see, ears to hear, and faith to believe what He is doing on their part of the wall.

MY STORY

- 1) If you were building a real wall around your house tomorrow, what's one completely unnecessary feature you'd insist on — a moat, a drawbridge, a secret door?
- 2) What's a home or DIY project you started with total confidence that's still sitting half-finished right now?

QUICK REVIEW

- 3) What caught your attention from Sunday's message?

DIGGING DEEPER / TAKING IT HOME

Scripture: Nehemiah 4:1–6 (NLT)

“Sanballat was very angry when he learned that we were rebuilding the wall. He flew into a rage and mocked the Jews, ² saying 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?’

³ Tobiah the Ammonite, who was standing beside him, remarked, ‘That stone wall would collapse if even a fox walked along the top of it!’

⁴ Then I prayed, ‘Hear us, our God, for we are being mocked. May their scoffing fall back on their own heads, and may they themselves become captives in a foreign land! ⁵ Do not ignore their guilt. Do not blot out their sins, for they have provoked you to anger here in front of the builders.’ ⁶ At last the wall was completed to half its height around the entire city, for the people had worked with enthusiasm.”

- 4) Sanballat and Tobiah didn’t just criticize Nehemiah’s plan — they mocked whether the work would even hold up (“*a fox would collapse it*”) and whether the workers were capable at all (“*this bunch of poor, feeble Jews*”). What’s the version of that mockery you hear — from others or in your own head — when you try to rebuild something in your life?

Opposition rarely stays polite. It tends to go after the two things we need most to keep going: our confidence that the work matters, and our belief that we’re capable of doing it. If you’ve heard a voice — someone else’s or your own — say your effort is too little, too late, or too fragile to hold, you’re in good company. Nehemiah heard the same thing about a wall that God still helped him finish. The mockery was real, but it was never the final word.

- 5) The older I get the more deeply I understand that many times so much of the opposition I experience is my own personal self-talk. It may have started once as something someone had said to me, but it has taken root in my life. So many times I have conversations with people who are so hard on themselves and speak so poorly to themselves that they would never say it to me or anyone else. Is there a thought in your life that you speak to yourself that is actually greater opposition than anything outside of your life? If so, what is it?

For me (Justin) It’s truly the fear of rejection. Many times I don’t ask because I don’t like the word no. But the honest truth is, it actually goes much deeper than that. Years ago, I felt incredibly rejected by my parents. I internalize that and the enemy twisted it. So, the

fear grew. The way I talked to myself about this particular issue was pretty rough. I am currently in the process of untangling this belief system and speaking truth into my life.

- 6) Instead of arguing back, Nehemiah “*prayed*” (v. 4) and kept building. Why might taking our frustration to God first, rather than to our critics, actually be the stronger move?

It’s tempting to think prayer is the passive option and arguing back is the strong one, but Nehemiah shows us the opposite. Bringing our hurt to God first doesn’t mean we’re avoiding the problem — it means we’re handing it to Someone who can actually do something about it. When we lead with prayer, we’re free to keep building instead of getting stuck defending ourselves. That’s not weakness; that’s wisdom.

- 7) Verse 6 tells us the wall reached the halfway point “*because the people worked with enthusiasm*” — even while being mocked. What’s one piece of progress in your own life right now that’s worth pausing to thank God for, even though the work isn’t finished?

It’s easy to only notice how far we still have to go, especially when the finish line feels far off. But God delights in the half-built wall just as much as the finished one — because He sees the faithfulness it took to get there. Whatever you’ve already rebuilt, even if it’s just one course of stones, that’s worth celebrating. Take a moment this week to actually say it out loud to God: thank You for how far we’ve come.

- 8) (Remember this is about something in your life God wants to rebuild) The message named two beliefs that have to be in place before anyone will build: believing the wall CAN be rebuilt and believing you have the RIGHT to be the one rebuilding it. Which of those is harder for you to believe right now, and why?

Both of these can be quietly stolen from us long before we ever notice they’re gone. Some of us doubt God can actually restore what feels too broken; others of us believe He could do it for someone else, just not for us. Either way, the invitation is the same: the blessing of God really has been within your reach the whole time. You’re allowed to believe both that it can be rebuilt, and that you’re exactly the person God wants rebuilding it.

Scripture: Romans 12:17–21 (NLT)

“¹⁷ Never pay back evil with more evil. Do things in such a way that everyone can see you are honorable. ¹⁸ Do all that you can to live in peace with everyone. ¹⁹ Dear friends, never take revenge. Leave that to the righteous anger of God. For the Scriptures say, ‘I will take revenge; I will pay them back,’ says the LORD. ²⁰ Instead, ‘If your enemies are hungry, feed them. If they are thirsty, give them something to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals of shame on their heads.’ ²¹ Don’t let evil conquer you, but conquer evil by doing good.”

- 9) Paul writes, *“Never take revenge. Leave that to the righteous anger of God”* (v. 19). How does Nehemiah’s prayer in the passage above put this verse into action, and what would it look like for you to do the same with someone who’s opposing or discouraging you right now?

Nehemiah could have spent his energy proving Sanballat and Tobiah wrong. Instead, he handed the injustice to God and kept stacking stones. That’s exactly what Paul is describing here — not passivity, but a deliberate choice to let God hold what we can’t fix ourselves. If there’s someone in your life right now who keeps discouraging or opposing you, this verse is an invitation, not a burden: you’re free to let God handle the score-keeping.

- 10) Paul ends with, *“Don’t let evil conquer you, but conquer evil by doing good”* (v. 21). As you think about the wall God is inviting you to rebuild this season, what would it look like to let this verse shape how you respond to whatever — or whoever — stands in the way?

Nehemiah never let Sanballat and Tobiah decide whether the wall got built. Their mockery was real, but it never had the final say — his obedience did. That’s the posture Paul is describing here: refusing to let opposition set the terms of your obedience. Whatever stands in the way of your wall this season — a person, a fear, a habit, a history — you get to keep building anyway, trusting that good outweighs evil every time God is the one holding the trowel alongside you.

CHAIR TIME TOOLS

Reflection Questions for Chair Time: think about the following questions and pray through them with Jesus.

- 1) Ask God to show you where the “half-built” places are in your life right now — progress you’ve already made that’s easy to overlook because the work isn’t finished. Sit quietly and thank Him specifically for it.
- 2) Ask God: Where am I tempted to argue back or settle the score myself instead of bringing this to You? Sit with whatever comes to mind, even if it’s uncomfortable.
- 3) Ask God to help you believe two things this week: that this area of your life can be rebuilt, and that you have permission to be the one He rebuilds it with. Write down anything that stirs in you as you pray.