

6. Nehemiah's inspection wasn't about finding excuses to give up — he was looking for a way forward. Where might God be inviting you to take an honest look at something you've been avoiding, not to feel defeated by it, but to find your next step?
7. This passage shows both personal responsibility (Nehemiah's own resolve) and a corporate one (the whole community rebuilding together). How have you experienced the blessing of both your own obedience and being part of something bigger than yourself?

READ: John 10:10–11 (NLT)

8. Jesus contrasts the thief's purpose — to steal, kill, and destroy — with His own purpose: a rich and satisfying life for us. How does that promise reshape the way you think about the "blessing" you're hoping God will bring?
9. Jesus calls Himself the Good Shepherd who lays down His life for the sheep. How does remembering that His sacrifice already secured your place with Him free you to pursue obedience out of gratitude rather than pressure?

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 one "wall" in your life right now — a relationship, habit, dream, or fear — that He's inviting you to rebuild with Him this week. Sit quietly and simply listen.
2. Ask God: What do You want me to see, hear, and believe about this situation? Write down anything that comes to mind, even if it feels small or unclear.
3. Thank God for one specific way His hand has already been on your life — even in something small — and ask Him for courage to take your next step of obedience this week.

Reimagine

The Blessing of God is Within Your Reach

Pastor Craig Sweeney | September 13, 2026

Blessing—When we experience the hand of God.

Thread: Reimagine, or the blessing may not come.

"So I arrived in Jerusalem. Three days later, I slipped out during the night, taking only a few others with me. I had not told anyone about the plans God had put in my heart for Jerusalem. We took no pack animals with us except the donkey I was riding. After dark I went out through the Valley Gate, past the Jackal's Well, and over to the Dung Gate to inspect the broken walls and burned gates. Then I went to the Fountain Gate and to the King's Pool, but my donkey couldn't get through the rubble. So, though it was still dark, I went up the Kidron Valley instead, inspecting the wall before I turned back and entered again at the Valley Gate. The city officials did not know I had been out there or what I was doing, for I had not yet said anything to anyone about my plans. I had not yet spoken to the Jewish leaders—the priests, the nobles, the officials, or anyone else in the administration. But now I said to them, 'You know very well what trouble we are in. Jerusalem lies in ruins, and its gates have been destroyed by fire. Let us rebuild the wall of Jerusalem and end this disgrace!' Then I told them about how the gracious hand of God had been on me, and about my conversation with the king. They replied at once, 'Yes, let's rebuild the wall!' So they began the good work. But when Sanballat, Tobiah, and Geshem the Arab heard of our plan, they scoffed contemptuously. 'What are you doing? Are you rebelling against the king?' they asked. I replied, 'The God of heaven will help us succeed. We, his servants, will start rebuilding this wall. But you have no share, legal right, or historic claim in Jerusalem.'"

Nehemiah 2:11-20 NLT

This passage describes Nehemiah's going through his process again but at a deeper level.

Inspection

Sitting with God gives me vision to reimagine.

- I have to **see** what you see.
- I have to **hear** what you would say about it.
- I have to **believe** what you believe.

Nehemiah did not inspect to make excuses; He was looking for ways to overcome the **circumstances**.

The people of God **HAD** accepted defeat, weakness and vulnerability.

Assessment

- What is the real scope of the problem?
- What strong and decisive measures will need to be implemented?

What's TRUE?

- He reminded them of what God had committed to.
- God wants to **Bless them**.

How to Build a Strong Wall

STEP 1: Decide where to start?

- We start on our doorstep.
- My house, life, family. (No-one else is responsible for my family.)
- My Church. We are asking people to REIMAGINE their financial commitment to our church. (It's no-one else's responsibility but ours.)

STEP 2: Remove the rubble.

- Everyone starts where they are.
- What's your next step?
- Confession to a trusted person.
- Admission of a wrong belief about God or yourself.
- Letting go of something painful that has left you defeated and unmotivated.

STEP 3: Stack your next stone.

- Everyone has a stone to place.
- Every stone is stacked with and by faith.
- Tell someone about the stone you're stacking.
- How you stack your stone matters.

"For no one can lay any foundation other than the one we already have—Jesus Christ." 1 Corinthians 3:11

Challenge:

- Will I sit with God? To see, hear and believe what He does?
- Will I call for the inspection at my doorstep?
- Will I reach for the obedience that brings about the hand of God?
- Who will I invite to encourage me for the work on my part of the wall?

For practical, cross-cultural Bible studies related to sermon topics, visit Dougbramptonbooks.com/resource.

HOMEWORK

Reimagine.

Fall 2026 | Week 1

Message Date 9/13/2026

MY STORY



1. What's the most over-ambitious project you've ever started — a home renovation, a garden, a New Year's resolution — and how did it actually turn out?
2. If you could instantly become an expert builder of ONE thing — LEGO sets, sandcastles, IKEA furniture, blanket forts — what would you pick, and why that one?

QUICK REVIEW



What caught your attention from Sunday's message?

DIGGING DEEPER / TAKING IT HOME



READ: Nehemiah 2:11–20 (NLT)

3. Nehemiah inspected the broken walls quietly, at night, before telling anyone his plans. What's the value of taking time to honestly assess a situation with God before we act on it or announce it to others?
4. In verse 18, once Nehemiah shared how "the gracious hand of God" had been on him, the people immediately responded, "Let's rebuild!" Why does naming what God has already done for us tend to stir up faith and action in the people around us?
5. When Sanballat, Tobiah, and Geshem mocked Nehemiah's plan, he didn't argue — he simply said, "The God of heaven will help us succeed." What might it look like for you to answer doubt or discouragement with that same quiet confidence?