



## ***How To Build A Life:*** ***Session 1:*** ***Life Change Begins Here*** ***Nehemiah 1:1-4***

### *Icebreaker:*

If you could go back in time to pre-Covid 2020 and tell yourself one thing, what would it be.

### *The Study:*

One of the great unsung heroes in the Bible is Nehemiah. (And we mean, *unsung*. No one writes songs or creates VBS's about him!) Yet Nehemiah almost single-handedly put the nation of Israel on his shoulders and carried then into the future that God had for them. But to change Israel, the Lord had to first change Nehemiah. The first part of chapter 1 shows us three attitudes Nehemiah needed to adopt to set his life in a new direction.



### ***Attitude #1: We must feel holy discontent.***

*"I sat down and wept and mourned for days..." – vs.4a*

1. Read Nehemiah. Why do you think Nehemiah responded this way to his brother's news?

2. The Beatitudes are a series of stages or steps that Jesus taught which describe a believer's growth toward spiritual maturity. Read Matthew 5:2-4. What are the first two "steps" of the journey to life?

3. Paul must have been thinking of the Beatitudes when he wrote 2 Corinthians 7:9. To truly repent, what must a person feel first? Why?

4. But it has to be '**godly** grief' and '**holy** discontent'. Is there such a thing as 'ungodly grief'? What's the difference?

5. Nehemiah's holy discontent arose as he asked his brother questions about conditions in Jerusalem (questions he didn't need to ask, because he was living comfortably.) Holy discontent will usually only awaken inside me when I am willing to ask myself honest questions about my life. But most people loathe to do this. Why?

### ***Attitude #2: We must be willing to grow in personal commitment and discipline.***

*"and I continued fasting..." – vs.4b*

6. What is fasting, and why does it show the Nehemiah is willing to give his all to change for the better?

7. Read 1 Timothy 4:7. Why does Paul tell Timothy to "*train himself*" to be godly? Is he saying that growing in godliness is all on him? Talk about the relationship between faith & works / grace & effort? (To help with the discussion, read Ephesians 2:8-10.)

8. The Jews who returned to Jerusalem from exile began well. They rebuilt the temple, and started repairing the city, but then their momentum faded. Ninety years later, Nehemiah finds them living in rubble. Discuss the following quotes from the message:

*If I choose not to work at changing my life, then God will allow me to wallow in the misery I have chosen for myself.*

*Those who just show up and do not also grow up will find their lives eventually blowing up.*

*God never delivered his people without first asking the to put on their armor and take the field.*

What are the spiritual lessons here?

***Attitude #3: We must look to God for his presence and power each step of the way.***

*“and I continued...praying.” – vs.4c*

9. Why do you think continual prayer is necessary if we want to change our life or church for the better?

10. “The Lord helps those who help themselves,” said Benjamin Franklin. Read Philippians 2:12-13, and then make some corrections of Ben’s famous saying.

11. Where is the Lord stirring up holy discontent in your heart right now? Where is the Lord calling you to change or repent right now? Where is he asking you to take the field? What grow goals do you have for yourself this year?

Take some time, and write out a solid paragraph in answer to these questions. Make it a manifesto for your life this year. Share it with others. Pray about it often. Commit to the instructions that the Lord gives you.

***Prayer Requests:***

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