



How To Build A Life: Session 2: Advancing On Our Knees Nehemiah 1:4-11

Icebreaker:

How do you decorate your house after the holidays? Or do you?

The Study:

The bulk of the first chapter of *Nehemiah* is the transcribed summary of a prayer Nehemiah prays to God after learning about the miserable conditions back in Jerusalem. This speaks volumes to us about the importance of prayer for Nehemiah, and how he views it. There are 4 sections to his prayer, each with a lesson about why we should pray.



Lesson #1: Nehemiah prays because he knows he is lost without God. (vs.5)

“O Lord God of heaven, the great and awesome God...” – vs.5

1. The Bible teaches two truths about humanity which need to be kept in balance. The first truth is that we are very great, given incredible power by God. What do the following Scriptures say?

Genesis 1:27-28

Genesis 11:1-6

Psalms 8:4-6

2. Yet what do the following Scriptures say?

Psalms 103:14-16

John 15:5-6

How do you harmonize these two sets of verses? Are we great or small? Are we powerful or weak?

What does this teach us about why we should pray? Read Psalm 63:1-4.

Lesson #2: Nehemiah prays because he knows that he is broken and sinful. (vss.6-7)

“We have sinned against you, even I and my father’s house have sinned.” – vs.6

3. If you know the historical timeline of when Nehemiah lived, it should strike you as odd, even startling, that Nehemiah prays these particular words. Why?

4. “Cancel culture” is a word used to describe people today who tear down statues, scrub names off of buildings, etc. of famous people from the past who did not hold the same views of life as we do today. (e.g. if a Founding Father owned slaves, he shouldn’t be honored.) What does Nehemiah’s understanding of his own sin contribute to this conversation?

5. Read Romans 3:23, then John 2:23-25. How might remembering the biblical doctrine of sin be useful to you? And to society at large?

Lesson #3: Nehemiah prays because he knows he needs God's Word to guide him through his confusion. (vss.8-9)

"Remember the word that you commanded your servant Moses..." – vs.8

6. In this part of prayer, Nehemiah calls to mind promises that God has made Israel in the past, written down in Scripture, then asks God to fulfill them. The point can't be lost: *Nehemiah knows God's Word*. If I don't know Scripture the way I should and I've not yet developed the habit of the "daily quiet time", what things do I risk?

Psalm 119:11

John 8:31-32

2 Timothy 3:16-17

7. Talk about the joys and struggles you experience when it comes to your "quiet times" or "devotions". Are there a couple things you could do this year to step up your devotional game?

Lesson #4: Nehemiah prays because he knows that God is calling him to make a difference in the world for good. (vss.10-11)

"Give success to your servant today." – vs.11

8. Even as he's praying, Nehemiah is mulling over an idea that God is birthing in his heart about how he can help his people back in Jerusalem. (Spoiler: he's going to ask the king to authorize him to go to Jerusalem and help the Jews rebuild their walls. And...*drum roll*...he's going to ask the king to help pay for it!) This is why he is praying for God to give him success.

Let's not forget that Nehemiah is set up for life as the cupbearer to the king. He's found security, comfort, ease and a worry-free life.

So why in the world would he even entertain this thought?

9. Most of us spend our days just trying to get to where Nehemiah is at. How is Nehemiah inspiring you (or frightening you) to see your life in a different way? Read Acts 20:24, then talk about it.

10. Write down three ways that you can "make a difference in the world for good" in 2021.

Lesson #4: Nehemiah prays because he knows that God is calling him to make a difference in the world for good. (vss.10-11)

“Give success to your servant today.” – vs.11

8. Even as he’s praying, Nehemiah is mulling over an idea that God is birthing in his heart about how he can help his people back in Jerusalem. (Spoiler: he’s going to ask the king to authorize him to go to Jerusalem and help the Jews rebuild their walls. And...*drum roll*...he’s going to ask the king to help pay for it!) This is why he is praying for God to give him success.

Let’s not forget that Nehemiah is set up for life as the cupbearer to the king. He’s found security, comfort, ease and a worry-free life.

So why in the world would he even entertain this thought?

9. Most of us spend our days just trying to get to where Nehemiah is at. How is Nehemiah inspiring you (or frightening you) to see your life in a different way? Read Acts 20:24, then talk about it.

10. Write down three ways that you can “make a difference in the world for good” in 2021.



**How To Build A Life:
Session 2:
Advancing On Our Knees
Nehemiah 1:4-11**

Icebreaker:

How do you decorate your house after the holidays? Or do you?

The Study:

The bulk of the first chapter of *Nehemiah* is the transcribed summary of a prayer Nehemiah prays to God after learning about the miserable conditions back in Jerusalem. This speaks volumes to us about the importance of prayer for Nehemiah, and how he views it. There are 4 sections to his prayer, each with a lesson about why we should pray.



Lesson #1: Nehemiah prays because he knows he is lost without God. (vs.5)

“O Lord God of heaven, the great and awesome God...” – vs.5

1. The Bible teaches two truths about humanity which need to be kept in balance. The first truth is that we are very great, given incredible power by God. What do the following Scriptures say?

Genesis 1:27-28

Genesis 11:1-6

Psalms 8:4-6

2. Yet what do the following Scriptures say?

Psalms 103:14-16

John 15:5-6

How do you harmonize these two sets of verses? Are we great or small? Are we powerful or weak?

What does this teach us about why we should pray? Read Psalm 63:1-4.

Lesson #2: Nehemiah prays because he knows that he is broken and sinful. (vss.6-7)

“We have sinned against you, even I and my father’s house have sinned.” – vs.6

3. If you know the historical timeline of when Nehemiah lived, it should strike you as odd, even startling, that Nehemiah prays these particular words. Why?

4. “Cancel culture” is a word used to describe people today who tear down statues, scrub names off of buildings, etc. of famous people from the past who did not hold the same views of life as we do today. (e.g. if a Founding Father owned slaves, he shouldn’t be honored.) What does Nehemiah’s understanding of his own sin contribute to this conversation?

5. Read Romans 3:23, then John 2:23-25. How might remembering the biblical doctrine of sin be useful to you? And to society at large?

Lesson #3: Nehemiah prays because he knows he needs God’s Word to guide him through his confusion. (vss.8-9)

“Remember the word that you commanded your servant Moses...” – vs.8

6. In this part of prayer, Nehemiah calls to mind promises that God has made Israel in the past, written down in Scripture, then asks God to fulfill them. The point can’t be lost: *Nehemiah knows God’s Word*. If I don’t know Scripture the way I should and I’ve not yet developed the habit of the “daily quiet time”, what things do I risk?

Psalm 119:11

John 8:31-32

2 Timothy 3:16-17

7. Talk about the joys and struggles you experience when it comes to your “quiet times” or “devotions”. Are there a couple things you could do this year to step up your devotional game?