



How To Build A Life: Without This Something In Me Dies

Nehemiah 2:1-8

Icebreaker:

Say the words “Summer Vacation” and what place immediately comes to mind?

The Study:

Nehemiah’s conversation with the Persian king in this story is a perfect illustration of the power of vision. “Without vision, people perish,” says Proverbs 29:18. This study will help you think more deeply about what vision is, and how when it grows in your heart, it can change your life for the better.



Lesson #1: To Change Our Lives (Or Churches) For The Better, We Must Find A New Vision For Our Lives, Which Is The Ability To See A New Future For Yourself.

1. What is vision? Read the two definitions below, and see if you can identify 3 or 4 elements that are found in true vision.

“Vision is a picture of the future that produces passion.” ~ Bill Hybels

“Vision is an ideal and unique picture of the future.” James Kouzes & Barry Posner

A vision...

Why is it important that a vision...

Paints a picture?

Is future-oriented?

Inspires passion?

Is ideal and unique?

2. Why do people “perish without vision”? Write a sentence out as your answer. If you’re in a group, share it with them.

3. Jesus was the most visionary speaker who ever lived. What’s so compelling about these statements? Read them one after another, then discuss them.

Matthew 4:19, Matthew 13:31-32, John 6:35

4. We said in the teaching that people with true vision like Nehemiah can see two things: they can see what is (the reality of the situation), and they can see what can be (the possibilities the future holds). Why are both important?

5. Nehemiah was the cupbearer to the king. Little did he know but there was also a future city-builder inside of him. And a governor as well. What future versions of you do you think God has hidden within you right now, that you might only scarcely be aware of?

Lesson #2: To Change Our Lives (Or Churches) For The Better, We Must Allow Time For Vision To Gestate Inside Of Us.

6. Nehemiah waited at least 4 months after first hearing about conditions back in Jerusalem before he approaches the king with his audacious request. What was he waiting for?

7. Why do most people fall short on their resolutions to change?

8. Read Luke 14:25-30. Jesus instructed people to “count the cost” of following him, before deciding to do it. What sort of things need to be thought through before becoming a Christian? Is this how most churches “do it” today? If you were on Jesus’ PR staff, would you have counseled him to “dial it back” a bit?

Lesson #3: To Change Our Lives (Or Churches) For The Better, Our Vision Must Give Birth To A Meaningful Plan.

“Vision without a plan is a mirage.” ~ John Maxwell

9. When the king asked Nehemiah logistical questions about his proposed trip, Nehemiah didn’t just say, “Dunno, your Majesty! I’m just making it up as I go along!” Why is planning important to vision?

10. Some believe that planning is an unspiritual exercise. Read Proverbs 16:3 and share your thoughts.

11. How did God demonstrate in both our Creation and our Redemption that he is a God who plans things out? Read Acts 2:22-23 and Acts 3:18-21.

12. We discussed in the teaching the difference between a “fixed mindset” and a “growth mindset”. Here are some possible questions to kick around:

What is your understanding of the difference between them?

How is fear an example of a fixed-mindset? Can you think of people in Scripture who had fixed mind-sets?

How is Christianity a growth-mindset faith? (Read 2 Corinthians 5:17.)

In what ways do you struggle with a “fixed mindset”? What things could you change to move toward a growth-mindset?

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