



How To Build A Life: Just Another Brick In The Wall Nehemiah 3

Icebreaker:

What object in a museum do you most want to see?

The Study:

In Nehemiah chapter 3, Nehemiah lists dozens of the people who helped contribute to the rebuilding of Jerusalem's walls. He knew that his vision and plan was just a pipedream without God putting good people around him. If you're trying to change your life – or church – for the better, it matters whose company you keep. Here's a sampling of five lessons chapter 3 teaches about the power of community.



Look For Leaders Who Lead By Serving

1. Read verse 1. The priests back then were considered the top leaders of society. What do you notice about them?

2. Read Mark 10:43-45. Everyone loves to talk about “servant leadership” these days, but how often do you actually see it on display today? Talk about what your experience has been.

3. Read verse 5. What did the nobles of Tekoa do, or not do?

4. Five centuries later, when a great Jewish general asked the men of Tekoa to join them in battle, they refused. Talk about how bad habits and behavior get passed along in a family or culture from generation to generation. How does this awful chain get broken?

Hang Out With People Who Show The Desire To Serve More Than Their Self Interest

5. Read verses 7-8. The people described in verse 7 lived far north of Jerusalem in another governor's jurisdiction. In verse 8, Uzziel the goldsmith and Hananiah the perfumer rolled up their sleeves and joined the work. Why do you think they all did this?

6. In his book “God and Government”, Charles Colson describes the reaction when President Jimmy Carter reinstated the draft. Newspapers showed a young man holding up a sign in protest that read, “Nothing is worth dying for.” Discuss your thoughts about the young man's message.

7. In a column about happiness, Nicholas Kristof reported that “People who focus on achieving wealth and career advancement are less happy than those who focus on good works, spirituality, or friends and family. If you want to be happy, the most selfish thing you can do is to help other people.” Read Matthew 16:25, then talk about why you think this is.

Hang Out With A Community That Places A High Value On The Family

8. Read verses 10, 23 and 28. What do you notice is the same in each of these verses? That Nehemiah allowed people to do this was tactically brilliant. Why?

9. What resources does Christianity offer that can help, even heal, someone who grew up in a broken or dysfunctional family? For clues, read Ephesians 3:14-15, and 1 Timothy 5:1-2.

Hang Out With People Who Serve God With A Humble Heart

10. In verse 14 we find a ruler named Malchijah repairing the Dung Gate, which was quite literally the place where the city sewage was removed. What lesson is to be found here in Malchijah's example?

11. If I'm only willing to accept the "plum" assignments, how might that impact my spiritual growth? Read Luke 16:10 and share your thoughts.

To Get Anywhere In Life We Must Value People, Period

12. Look at random throughout the rest of Nehemiah 3, and read some of the names out loud that we left out.

What can we definitely say is true about each and every one of them when it comes to what Nehemiah thinks of them? How about when it comes to what God thinks of them? How about when it comes to what God thinks about you? (If it helps, read Matthew 6:25-26).

Your Homework For The Week:

Write out your own "Nehemiah Chapter 3". Write down a list of as many people you can think of whom God has used to help build your life up for the better. Say a prayer of thanks for them. Maybe write out an actual note of thanks and send it to some of them. Then promise God that from here on out you will not use, or manipulate, or overlook, or stick your nose up at anyone the Lord has placed in your life.

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