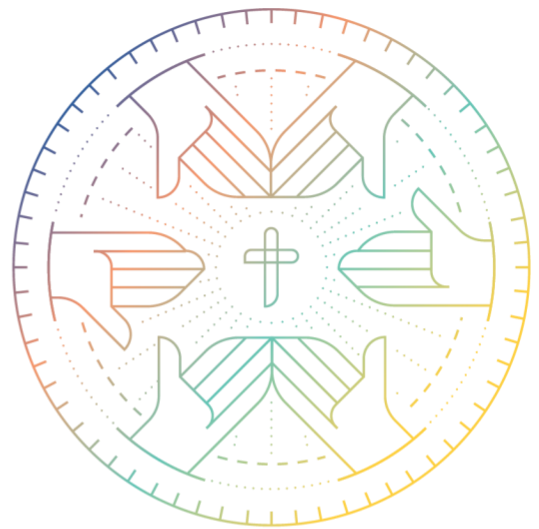


# Group Life.

WE ARE BETTER TOGETHER



## ICEBREAKER (10 MINUTES)

Nehemiah was living a lavish experience in the palace of the King. What's the most lavish place you've ever stayed: perhaps a vacation resort, a hotel, a particular city or home? What do you remember about it?

OR

Nehemiah was capable of dramatic displays of emotion. He wept and he mourned in front of others. Are you a crier? What kinds of things usually bring you to tears?

## INTRODUCTION (5-10 MINUTES)

What stood out to you from this week's sermon?

Is Nehemiah's story familiar to you? Is there something that stood out to you? Is there something new you learned about Nehemiah or the other characters in the story that you didn't previously know?

## INTO THE WORD (25 MINUTES)

**Read Nehemiah 1:11.** Specifically the last sentence of the verse reveals Nehemiah's role in the King's government. What do you know about the role of the cup-bearer and what does this role point to regarding Nehemiah as a person?

**HOST Guidance:** The role of cup-bearer is a prestigious role and vital to the King. The cup-bearer tasted the wine before the King drank it to prevent any attempt at assassination and to be sure the wine was up to standard. Obviously, Nehemiah was trusted by the King at the highest level. This speaks to his integrity and character.

**Read Nehemiah 2:17-20 and 4:1-3.** What stands out to you about the opposition Nehemiah faced? How would you characterize his enemies? What specifically did Sanballat and his allies hope to accomplish beyond stopping the work?

**HOST Guidance:** The opposition was persistent, day by day, and it ran the gamut from casual criticism to threatening his life. His enemies must have had a significant stake in wanting to make sure that the city stayed defenseless. The enemies were interested not only in stopping the work, but in demoralizing the people so that they could continue to dominate them.

**Read Nehemiah 2:5-9.** How many evidences of Nehemiah's capable leadership can you find in that passage? Specifically, what did he do or say that showed leadership?

**Read Nehemiah 2:17-18.** What did Nehemiah say that encouraged or inspired the people to take this work upon themselves?

**Read Nehemiah 4:15-20.** What do you learn about Nehemiah and the Jews who were with him from this passage? Particularly regarding their organization, their commitment and their courage?

**HOST Guidance:** They were well organized and prepared for any kind of an attack. Even though their preparations for conflict slowed them down, they still finished the wall in 52 days! Nehemiah was not only visionary, he was prudent and practical. The people had great courage and responded so well to Nehemiah's organization and direction.

**Read Nehemiah 8:1-3 and 9:1-3 and Hebrews 4:12.** How would you describe what is happening in Nehemiah's story and the effect that God's Word was having?

**HOST Guidance:** The reading of the law caused the Israelites to want to grow closer to God and be more obedient to his word. God's word is quick and powerful, sharp, and able to penetrate our hearts in ways that we can't even see. The daily reading of the law had an effect on the hearts of the people that led them to greater obedience and revival.

### **APPLICATION (10 MINUTES)**

How does a person know if their heart is tender? How might a person go about pursuing a more tender heart before God?

Pastor Paul said we can grow in our virtue by listening to Jesus, imitating Jesus and loving Jesus. Discuss the various ways a person can listen to, imitate and love Jesus. Which of the three areas present the greatest challenge to you in this season of your life? What specifically can you put into practice tomorrow to get the process started?

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What's an area of life where you like to be more tenacious? What might be different in your faith if you were more tenacious about it?

What's one thing from this study you want to focus on in the next week?

## PRAYER (10 MINUTES)

*Dear Heavenly Father, thank you for the example of Nehemiah. There is so much about him that we aspire to in our own lives. We desire to make a difference, not only for ourselves and those closest to us, but for people far from us. Please give us your grace to grow in tenderness and compassion, virtue and truth, and tenacity in our pursuit of the Kingdom of God. Amen.*