**INSPIRING OTHERS TO REFOCUS**

**Nehemiah 2:1-20**

**THE BIG IDEA: If we are to be faithful in God’s Kingdom work, we must rely on Him completely and inspire others to join the mission.**

**ENGAGING IN GOD’S KINGDOM WORK REQUIRES TOTAL RELIANCE ON HIM**

* *“Then the king asked me, ‘What is your request?’ So I prayed to the God of the heavens and answered the king.”* (Neh. 2:4-5a)
* **When we acknowledge our complete dependence on the Lord we position ourselves to see and experience His divine hand at work.**
* *“The king granted my requests, for the gracious hand of my God was on me.”* (Nehemiah 2:8b)

**ENGAGING IN GOD’S KINGDOM WORK WILL BE MET WITH OPPOSITION**

* *“When Sanballat the Horonite and Tobiah the Ammonite official heard that someone had come to pursue the prosperity of the Israelites, they were greatly displeased.”* (Nehemiah 2:10)
* **The strategy of Satan and his followers is to discourage, derail, and disqualify God’s people from accomplishing God’s work.**
* *”* *When Sanballat the Horonite, Tobiah the Ammonite official, and Geshem the Arab heard about this, they mocked and despised us, and said, ‘What is this you’re doing? Are you rebelling against the king?’”* (Nehemiah 2:19)
* **Knowing that opposition will come against God’s faithful, we can be prepared with the power and presence of the Lord through prayer!**

**ENGAGING IN GOD’S KINGDOM WORK INVOLVES EXERCISING DISCERNMENT**

* *“After I arrived in Jerusalem and had been there three days, 12 I got up at night and took a few men with me. I didn’t tell anyone what my God had laid on my heart to do for Jerusalem.”* (Nehemiah 2:11-12a)
* **Not everyone needs to know the plans God is giving you until it is necessary for them to know.**
* *“The officials did not know where I had gone or what I was doing, for I had not yet told the Jews, priests, nobles, officials, or the rest of those who would be doing the work.”* (Nehemiah 2:16)
* **A wise and faithful follower of the Lord will be sensitive to the Spirit’s leading when it comes to carrying out God’s work.**

**ENGAGING IN GOD’S KINGDOM WORK NECESSITATES INSPIRING OTHERS TO BE INVOLVED**

* *“So I said to them, ‘You see the trouble we are in. Jerusalem lies in ruins and its gates have been burned. Come, let’s rebuild Jerusalem’s wall, so that we will no longer be a disgrace.’ 18 I told them how the gracious hand of my God had been on me, and what the king had said to me. They said, ‘Let’s start rebuilding,’ and their hands were strengthened to do this good work.”* (Nehemiah 2:17-18)
* **When opposing forces and people come against you, the best response is to trust the Lord and inspire others to join with you in accomplishing Kingdom work.**
* *“…for I had not yet told the Jews, priests, nobles, officials, or the rest of those who would be doing the work.”* (Nehemiah 2:16b)
* **Great leaders are people of prayer who cast a compelling vision, and empower a diverse group of people to accomplish the goal.**

**CONNECT GROUP DISCUSSION**

**Ice Breaker:** Who is the person who has most inspired you in life? Why?

**Start thinking:**

* What do we learn about God from Nehemiah 2:1-20?
* Why was it normally a bad thing for people to be “sad” in the King’s presence?
* Why didn’t Nehemiah mention that his hometown that was in ruins was Jerusalem? (See also Ezra 4)
* Why didn’t Nehemiah tell anyone in Jerusalem, including his own people (Jews), what his plans were when he arrived?

**Start sharing. Discuss in depth to create openness.**

* Nehemiah feared the King’s response to his saddened demeanor, and his subsequent request, so he prayed a quick prayer. In what circumstances has fear affected you? How do you overcome it?
* What is the best way to deal with opposition to your faithfulness?
* How do you ensure you are relying on the Lord and not yourself?
* What is discernment? How do you exercise it? (Be specific)
* How can you specifically inspire others to join in the work of God?
* What is your “Big Takeaway” from this message?

**Pray**

* Share prayer requests and pray for each other.
* Pray for our community to be open to the Gospel.
* Pray for our church, and leadership.
* Pray for our government leaders, and local leaders.
* Pray about anything else the Holy Spirit leads you to pray for.