

NEHEMIAH



The Integrated Leader

Integrating faith into every area of our lives

WHERE HAVE WE BEEN?

Step 1- Concern (Nehemiah 1:1-3)

Step 2- Communion with God (Nehemiah 1:4-11)

Step 3- Commitment (Nehemiah 2:5)

Step 4- Calendar & Clock (Nehemiah 2:6-8)

Step 5- Capital (Nehemiah 2:8)

Step 6- Commitment of Others (Nehemiah 2:17)

Step 7- Commence (Nehemiah 2:18)

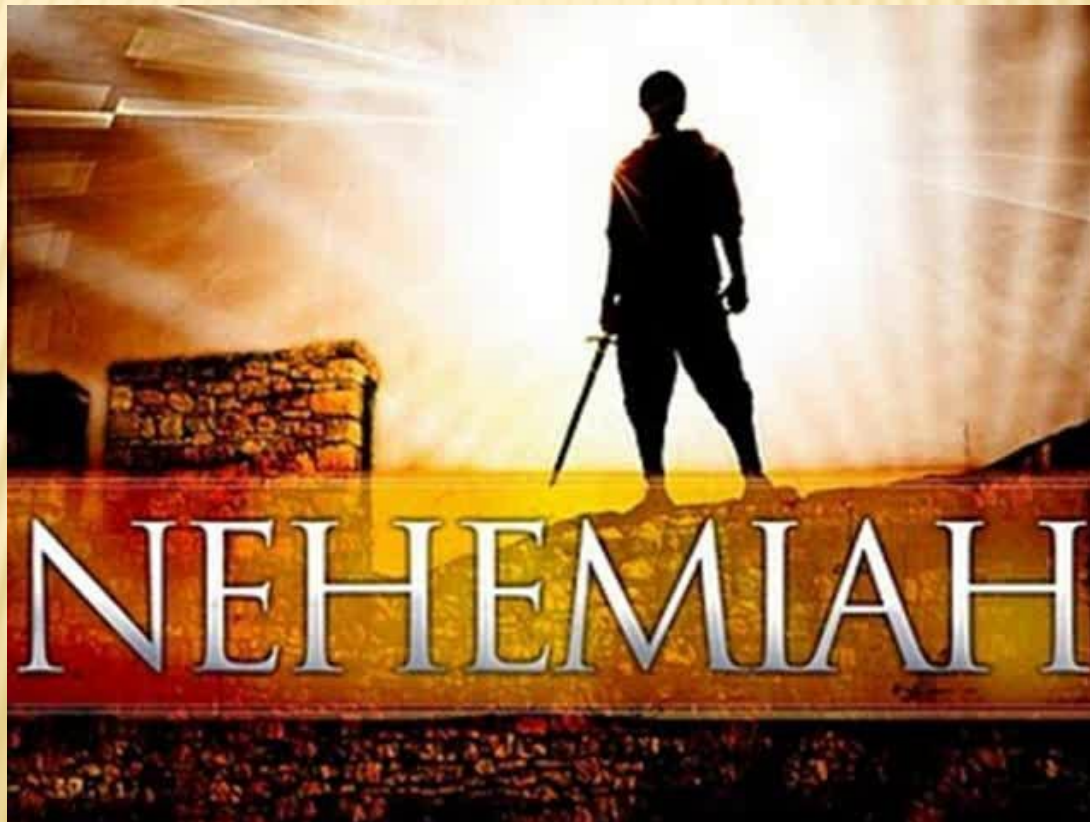
This week- Step 8- Crises, Complications (Nehemiah 4-6)

Step 9- Completion (Nehemiah 6:15-16)

Step 10- Celebration (Nehemiah 7-10)

NEHEMIAH

Session 9- Integrating my Responses to Crises
Step 8- Crises, Complications



LORD OF THE RINGS



“I hate this ring. I wish that it had never come to me.”

CRISES WILL COME!

Nehemiah 4:4- "Hear us, O our God, for we are despised."

Reasons for Crises

- 1) **Increase your faith** (*Exodus 14- Israel and the Crossing of the Red Sea*)
- 2) **Discipline** (*Hebrews 12:5-11- the Lord disciplines those He loves*)
- 3) **Perseverance** (*James 1:12- Blessed is the man who perseveres under trial*)
- 4) **Turf battle- Jesus' kingdom vs. Satan's Kingdom-** (*Matthew 16:18- "I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it."*)

HOW DID NEHEMIAH DEAL WITH HIS CRISES?

- 1) He prayed.
- 2) He dealt with the problem.
- 3) He continued the work.

So also, the process of integration occurs when we deal with crises (which will inevitably occur while we are doing God's work!) in a Godly way!

FIVE CRISES (AND HOW NEHEMIAH DEALT WITH THEM)

Crisis #1- Criticism

Nehemiah 4:1-3- *“When Sanballat heard that we were rebuilding the wall, he became angry and was greatly incensed. He ridiculed the Jews, and in the presence of his associates and the army of Samaria, he said, ‘What are those feeble Jews doing? Will they restore their wall? Will they offer sacrifices? Will they finish in a day? Can they bring the stones back to life from those heaps of rubble--burned as they are?’ Tobiah the Ammonite, who was at his side, said, ‘What they are building--if even a fox climbed up on it, he would break down their wall of stones!’”*

When we live purposefully in a world in which most people think terminally and do not live purposefully, or have purposes which are in conflict with ours, we must be prepared to be an object of their criticism, ridicule and insults.

EXAMPLE- WHEN DAVID FACED THE GIANT, GOLIATH

- ✘ *1 Samuel 16:10-12- He was overlooked by his father*
- ✘ *1 Samuel 17:28- He was insulted by family members*
- ✘ *1 Samuel 17:33- He was insulted by his superior officer*
- ✘ *1 Samuel 17:41-44- He was insulted by his opponent*
- ✘ *1 Samuel 17:45-47- David's response- He ran toward him!*



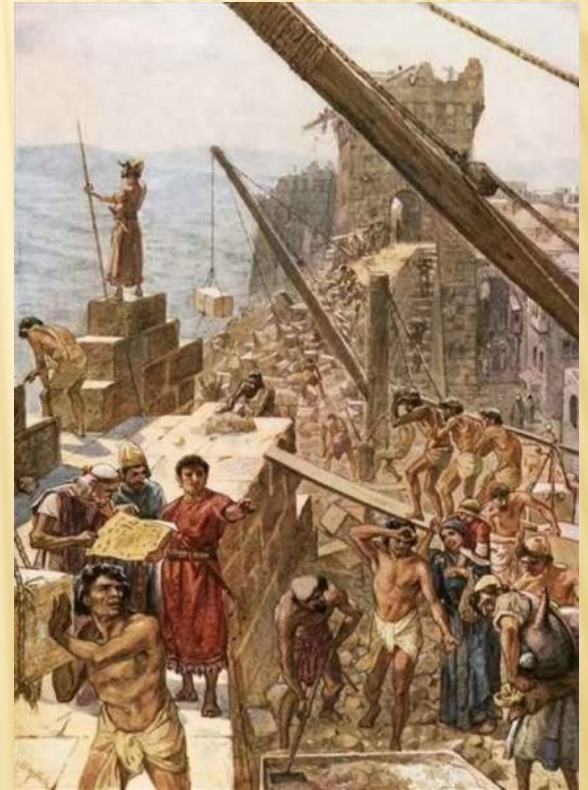
HOW DID NEHEMIAH DEAL WITH THE PROBLEM OF CRITICISM?

He prayed- vs. 4-5- (paraphrased)

“Hear us, O God. They do not just insult us, but You and Your work. You will vindicate us. Let their insults come back on them.”

He dealt with the problem- vs. 6- the people put their heart into the work

He continued the work- vs. 6- the people built half of a wall



APPLICATION QUESTIONS

- ✘ What are some criticisms that I can anticipate as I pursue my dream?
- ✘ How can I deal with these?

FIVE CRISES (AND HOW NEHEMIAH DEALT WITH THEM)

Crisis #2- Conflict- External

Nehemiah 4:7-8- - “But when Sanballat, Tobiah, the Arabs, the Ammonites and the men of Ashdod heard that the repairs to Jerusalem's walls had gone ahead and that the gaps were being closed, they were very angry. They all plotted together to come and fight against Jerusalem and stir up trouble against it.”

When we live purposefully in a world in which most people think terminally and do not live purposefully, or have purposes which are in conflict with ours, we must be prepared for conflict.



EXAMPLE- 2 CHRONICLES 20- JEHOSHAPHAT

- ✘ **Vs. 1-** living in peace; attacked **suddenly**
- ✘ **Vs. 3-4-** Jehoshaphat's 1st response- **Prayer!**
- ✘ **Vs. 12-** "We do not know what to do, but **our eyes are upon you.**"
- ✘ **Vs. 15-17-** *the battle is not **yours**, but **God's**... Take up your positions; stand firm and see the deliverance the LORD will give you*
- ✘ The Result? **Vs. 23-** The enemies of God "**self-destructed**"

HOW DID NEHEMIAH DEAL WITH THE PROBLEM OF EXTERNAL CONFLICT?

He prayed- vs. 9- “We prayed to our God.”

He dealt with the problem- vs. 13-14- “We posted a guard...” ½ of the people guarded, while ½ worked.

He continued the work- vs. 15, 17- “We returned to the wall...a trowel in one hand, a sword in the other.”



APPLICATION QUESTIONS

- ✘ What are some external conflicts that I can anticipate?
- ✘ How can I deal with these?

FIVE CRISES (AND HOW NEHEMIAH DEALT WITH THEM)

Crisis #3- Conflict-Internal

Nehemiah 5:1-5- "Now the men and their wives raised a great outcry against their Jewish brothers. Some were saying, 'We and our sons and daughters are numerous; in order for us to eat and stay alive, we must get grain.' Others were saying, 'We are mortgaging our fields, our vineyards and our homes to get grain during the famine.' Still others were saying, "We have had to borrow money to pay the king's tax on our fields and vineyards...Some of our daughters have already been enslaved, but we are powerless, because our fields and our vineyards belong to others."

When we live purposefully in a world in which most people think terminally and do not live purposefully, or have purposes which are in conflict with ours, we must be prepared for internal conflict as well as external conflict.

EXAMPLE- NUMBERS 13:30-14:4

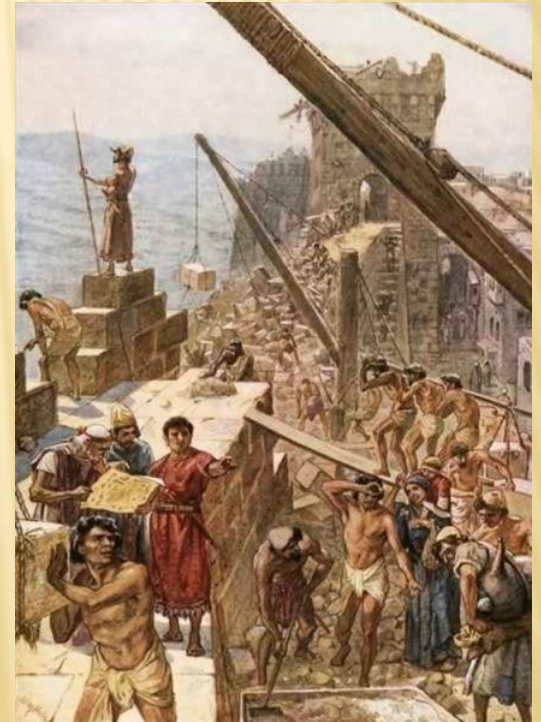
“Then Caleb silenced the people before Moses and said, ‘We should go up and take possession of the land, for we can certainly do it.’ But the men who had gone up with him said, ‘We can't attack those people; they are stronger than we are.’...the whole assembly said to them, ‘If only we had died in Egypt! Or in this desert! Why is the LORD bringing us to this land only to let us fall by the sword? Our wives and children will be taken as plunder. Wouldn't it be better for us to go back to Egypt?’ And they said to each other, ‘We should choose a leader and go back to Egypt.’ ”

HOW DID NEHEMIAH DEAL WITH THE PROBLEM OF INTERNAL CONFLICT?

He prayed- vs. 13, 19- “The people agreed in prayer, and praised the Lord...”
(Nehemiah) “Remember me with favor, O my God.”

He dealt with the problem- vs. 6-11, 14-15, 18-
Nehemiah demanded that they stop their usury and return the property. The people agreed; Nehemiah held them to their promise before God.

He continued the work- vs. 16- Nehemiah did not take any land for himself; lived humbly and simply, despite his high station (set the example). He devoted himself to the building of the wall.



DEALING WITH INTERNAL CONFLICT IN THE CHURCH

Matthew 18:15-17- “If your brother sins against you, go and show him his fault, just between the two of you. If he listens to you, you have won your brother over. But if he will not listen, take one or two others along, so that `every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.’ If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, treat him as you would a pagan or a tax collector.”

DEALING WITH INTERNAL CONFLICT IN THE CHURCH

Matthew 18:15-17-

- ✘ Step 1- **Go tell him yourself** (the goal- "...you have won your brother")
- ✘ Step 2- **Bring someone else with you** (confirm by witness- goal- "...you have won your brother")
- ✘ Step 3- **"Tell it to the church"** (usually- Elders; warn in a letter- goal- "...you have won your brother")
- ✘ Step 4- **"Treat him as you would a pagan or tax collector"** (again, our goal? "...you have won your brother.")

APPLICATION QUESTIONS

- ✘ What are some possible sources of division and discouragement that I can anticipate?
- ✘ How can I deal with these?

FIVE CRISES (AND HOW NEHEMIAH DEALT WITH THEM)

Crisis #4- Corruption, Conspiracy

Nehemiah 6: 2, 5-7- Enemies (Sanballat and Geshem) wanted to meet with Nehemiah, but Nehemiah refused; so, they sent a letter to the king- “Nehemiah is building this wall so that he can proclaim himself king, and attack the surrounding nations.”

When we live purposefully in a world in which most people think terminally and do not live purposefully, or have purposes which are in conflict with ours, we must be prepared to be misunderstood, misquoted, and questioned about our motives.

EXAMPLE- PSALM 56- A PSALM OF DAVID

“When I am afraid, I will trust in you.

In God, whose word I praise, in God I trust;

I will not be afraid. What can mortal man do to me?

*All day long they **distort my words**; they are always plotting to harm me...*

*This I know, that **God is for me**. In God, whose word I praise, in the LORD, whose word I praise--In God I trust; I will not be afraid. What can man do to me?”*

HOW DID NEHEMIAH DEAL WITH THE PROBLEM OF FALSE RUMORS?

He prayed- vs. 9- “So, I prayed, ‘Now, strengthen my hands.’”

He dealt with the problem- vs. 3, 8- He declared sharply and concisely that this rumor was not true.

He continued the work- vs. 3- “Why should the work stop while I leave it to answer your false charge? I am carrying on a great project, and cannot leave it”

DEALING WITH FALSE RUMORS

- ✦ **1 Peter 3:15-** “But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to **give an answer** to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with **gentleness** and **respect**.”

APPLICATION QUESTIONS

- ✘ What are some misunderstandings and misinformation that I can anticipate?
- ✘ How can I deal with these?

FIVE CRISES (AND HOW NEHEMIAH DEALT WITH THEM)

Crisis #5- Counterfeit Friends

Nehemiah 6:10- “Come into the temple w/ me, and protect yourself.” (Nehemiah recognized Shemaiah as a false prophet who wanted to discredit Nehemiah and to bring an evil report in order to reproach him).

Psalm 55:12-14- “If an enemy were insulting me, I could endure it; if a foe were raising himself against me, I could hide from him. But it is you, a man like myself, my companion, my close friend, with whom I once enjoyed sweet fellowship as we walked with the throng at the house of God.”

When we live purposefully in a world in which most people think terminally and do not live purposefully, or have purposes which are in conflict with ours, we must be prepared for distractions from false teachers and false teachings attempting to distract us from our focus.

EXAMPLES- EZRA- EZRA 4:1-3

- ✘ “When the enemies of Judah and Benjamin heard that the exiles were building a temple for the LORD, the God of Israel, they came to Zerubbabel and to the heads of the families and said, ‘Let us help you build *because, like you, we seek your God and have been sacrificing to him since the time of Esarhaddon king of Assyria, who brought us here.*’ But Zerubbabel, Jeshua and the rest of the heads of the families of Israel answered, ‘You have no part with us in building a temple to our God. We alone will build it for the LORD, the God of Israel, as King Cyrus, the king of Persia, commanded us.’ ”

EXAMPLES- ELIJAH- 1 KINGS 18:17-18

- × “When he (Ahab) saw Elijah, he said to him, ‘Is that you, you **troubler of Israel**?’ ‘I have not made trouble for Israel,’ Elijah replied. ‘But you But **you and your father’s family** have. You have abandoned the **Lord’s commands** and have followed the **Baals**.”

JESUS- WARNING AND PREPARATION

Matthew 10:16-20- “I am sending you out like sheep among wolves. Therefore be as wise as serpents and as innocent as doves. But when they arrest you, do not worry about what to say or how to say it. At that time you will be given what to say, for it will not be you speaking, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you.”

Matthew 26:41- (Jesus said to His disciples), “Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.”

Paul- Ephesians 5:11- “Have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness, but rather expose them.”

HOW DID NEHEMIAH DEAL WITH THE PROBLEM OF COUNTERFEIT FRIENDS?

He prayed- vs. 14- “God, you deal with my enemies.”

He dealt with the problem- vs. 11-13- Nehemiah recognized that he was a false prophet, hired to discredit and intimidate him; answered- “I will not go.”

He continued the work- vs. 11- “I will not run away from my responsibility.”

APPLICATION QUESTIONS

- ✘ **What are some possibilities of false teachers and false teachings that I can anticipate?**
- ✘ **How can I deal with these?**
- ✘ **What goals am I afraid to set because of the fear of failing to achieve them?**
- ✘ **What are the primary obstacles to me accomplishing my dreams at this point?**
- ✘ **What steps can I take to overcome these obstacles?**

NEHEMIAH



The Integrated Leader

Integrating faith into every area of our lives