

## Life Group Lesson - Week of August 13

### Read Psalm 32:1-11

Our biggest cultural fear today is shame. People are absolutely riveted by the thought of their reputation somehow being misrepresented on social media and ruining their projected image. Fear paralyzes and the fear of failure is universal. It goes beyond our own cultural mindset and exposes the core issue, our pride. Sadly, even followers of Christ will bow to fear over living our faith to save our reputation. Fear is the unknown and taking risks for Christ will surely drive us into uncharted waters. Too often, we are more concerned about our reputation than doing good and taking risks for the Kingdom of God.

What if our heroes in the Bible had bowed to fear? For example, think of Abram, Jacob, David, and Nehemiah. Abram would have never left Ur of the Chaldeans (Genesis 11:31 – 12:7), Jacob would have buckled under the shame of his sons' murders in Shechem (Genesis 34:30 – 35:3), David would have set on the sidelines while Goliath and the Philistines triumphed (1 Samuel 17:41-51), and Nehemiah would have remained in Susa serving wine instead of rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem (Nehemiah 2:1-5). But as God's people we cannot back down because of shame or buckle under opposition and lies. If we are going to honor God, we must move forward in spite of our fears and face the God-sized assignments before us.

### Read Nehemiah 6:1-16

1. Nehemiah had a God-sized task before him. Although many of the returned exiles stood with him, the threat of opposition was also in place (Nehemiah 2:16-20). What does Ephesians 6:12 say about flesh-and-blood enemies? Why is it important to understand the real enemy behind lies and threats?
2. Remarkably it took Nehemiah and the returned exiles a mere 52 days to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem! All took ownership of the project since they repaired the wall directly beside their homes or business (Nehemiah 3). Why is it impossible for a leader to do all the work? Why is it not smart for a leader to do all the work? How can we at Christ Church partner with our leadership as we enter this new season of commitment and construction?
3. The Plain Truth states: Fear paralyzes, shame dehumanizes, but God's grace legitimizes us as heirs with Christ. We must remember that although salvation is free (Ephesians 2:8), discipleship is costly (Mark 8:34). If we are going to share in Christ's glory we must also suffer with him (Romans 8:17). How can we find true joy in the middle of opposition and suffering? (Refer to J-O-Y acronym in the message outline)

Luke 9:51 says "As the time drew near for Jesus to ascend to heaven, He resolutely set out for Jerusalem." Of all people, our Lord shows us how to remain forward-moving in the face of opposition. Perhaps fear and shame have been a Credo Killer for you. How are you more determined to lay these obstacles at the feet of Jesus? Close by reading Psalm 32:3-7. Let's confess our sin and receive His forgiveness.

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**Text:** Psalm 32, Nehemiah 6:1-3

**Plain Truth:**

Fear \_\_\_\_\_, shame \_\_\_\_\_,  
but God's grace \_\_\_\_\_ us as heirs  
with Christ.

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_ grace legitimizes us as heirs with Christ
- 2) \_\_\_\_\_ that our worth comes from Christ so we can live into God's redemptive potential
- 3) \_\_\_\_\_ supremely to \_\_\_\_\_ and loving our neighbors brings lasting joy!



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