

LIFE GROUP LESSON

Prayer on the Run • Week of October 6

“Lord, through all the generations you have been our home” (Psalm 90:1), the words of Moses. From a baby Hebrew placed in a basket by his mother among the reeds of the Nile river, one ‘drawn out of the water’ by an Egyptian princess – raised in Pharaoh’s house – to a 120-year-old servant of God who climbed Mount Nebo to see God’s promise, Moses was the one who received God’s Law and mediated God’s covenant with Jacob’s descendants.

Throughout the Bible we see how God calls servants – Abraham (from Ur to God’s land), Moses (from slaves to a mighty nation), Isaiah (from Uzziah to Hezekiah, prophesied during reigns of four kings), Jeremiah (from Josiah to Zedekiah, spoke truth amidst apostasy), Nehemiah (from cupbearer to wall-rebuilder) – God raises up common individuals for His uncommon purposes. In today’s terms, from ‘walker to walker’ they are His. God never leaves them.

The promise of Immanuel (*God with us*) is proof that God wants to have a personal relationship with you. From the time you are in a baby walker, to the time you are using a senior adult walker, God loves you and is with you. The psalmist declares: “My life is an example to many, because you have been my strength and protection. That is why I can never stop praising you; I declare your glory all day long. And now, in my old age, don’t set me aside. Don’t abandon me when my strength is failing” (Psalm 71:7-9).

Christ calls you to *be on-mission* – and like with Nehemiah, speaking and living God’s truth in a fallen world is difficult. But we don’t give up. We run the race. The apostle Paul says, “Above all, you must live as citizens of heaven, conducting yourselves in a manner worthy of the Good News about Christ” (Philippians 1:27). When you choose to follow Christ, you are identifying yourself with a long line of faithful men and women whose Source of mobility is God Himself (see Hebrews 11, 12-4).

Read Nehemiah 8:1-12

We often want instant faith. But our study in Nehemiah (*Prayer-on-the-Run*) has taught us that in order to know God’s heart, we must know His Word – ‘From walker-to-walker we become a listener and less a talker’. As we kneel before the Lord in prayer, listening and applying His Word to our lives, we learn obedience and understand suffering is part of obedience. We learn that going

in God’s direction will stir up opposition. But we also learn how to run the race, rebuild walls, and reclaim identity in God.

1. What does Isaiah 40:31 say about those who wait upon the Lord, who trust in Him?

Think of a time ‘waiting upon the Lord’ proved to be the right thing to do. How would you encourage someone to stay strong through the waiting?

For over a decade, Pastor Charles has lifted up PREP. He designed PREP as a companion to the ONE YEAR BIBLE (or any Bible study plan). Before you read the Scripture (1) **Pray**. Ask the Holy Spirit to guide you and help you understand what God wants to say *to you* through His Word. (2) **Read** the passage with your heart open to His truth. (3) **Edify** – write down what stands out to you, any thoughts or questions that come to mind. (4) **Practice**. What are you going to put into practice today? What new habits, thoughts, actions is God calling you to put in place?

2. During the time of Nehemiah and Ezra, “All the people listened closely to the Book of the Law... Then Ezra praised the LORD, the great God, and all the people chanted, ‘Amen! Amen!’ as they lifted their hands. Then they bowed down and worshiped with their faces to the ground” (Nehemiah 8:3b, 6). Notice they celebrated ‘with great joy because they had heard God’s words and understood them’ (v12). When have you personally experienced a similar response to a new *understanding* of God’s Word?

The more we avail ourselves to truth, the more we see areas that need improvement or change. To stay on God’s path, we may have to change people, places, and things; and replace with people, places, and things that support the new path. The old way, the self-guided tour, is riddled with land mines. We may not know where (*or where not*) to step. This new way requires a guide who knows the way, who can show us where to step because He walks with us.

3. We stay away from land mines by avoiding self-guided tours. How can following our own path become dangerous, hazardous?

Jesus is the Good Shepherd. He not only knows the way, He IS the way! How does prioritizing Christ’s presence bring clarity and peace to our path? Read John 14:1-21.

Jesus said, "Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you. Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle at heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy to bear, and the burden I give you is light" (Matthew 11:28-30). The God who made you knows you. Yoke up with Jesus and He becomes your Shepherd: "My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they will never perish. No one can snatch them away from me" (John 10:28). While you are yoked with Jesus you can tell Him your problems. Also, you can listen to Him.

4. Out of reverence the people all rose to their feet when Ezra opened the Scriptures. The returned exiles had been without truth for a long time. Now they were returning to God's eternal Word. Nehemiah declares: "...This is a sacred day before our Lord. Don't be dejected and sad, for the joy of the LORD is your strength" (v10b). Name at least three ways TRUTH brings joy, and at least three ways the Lord's JOY brings strength.

"But those who wait on the LORD shall renew their strength; They shall mount up with wings like eagles. They shall run and not be weary. They shall walk and not faint" (Isaiah 40:31 NKJV).

One Year Bible Reading

Oct. 6: Jeremiah 6:16-8:7, Colossians 2:8-23, Psalm 78:1-31, Proverbs 24:26
 Oct. 7: Jeremiah 8:8-9:26, Colossians 3:1-17, Psalm 78:32-55, Proverbs 24:27
 Oct. 8: Jeremiah 10:1-11:23, Colossians 3:18-4:18, Psalm 78:56-72, Prov. 24:28-29
 Oct. 9: Jeremiah 12:1-14:10, 1 Thessalonians 1:1-2:8, Ps. 79:1-13, Prov. 24:30-34
 Oct. 10: Jeremiah 14:11-16:15, 1 Thessalonians 2:9-3:13, Ps. 80:1-19, Prov. 25:1-5
 Oct. 11: Jeremiah 16:16-18:23, 1 Thessalonians 4:1-5:3, Ps. 81:1-16, Prov. 25:6-8
 Oct. 12: Jeremiah 19:1-21:14, 1 Thessalonians 5:4-28, Ps. 82:1-8, Prov. 25:9-10



Text: Nehemiah 8:1-15

PLAIN TRUTH:

From Walker to _____ become more a _____ and less a _____.

1. We have to _____ before we _____.
2. Avoid _____ tours as a life-long _____.
3. We have to _____ before we can _____.
4. Six-fold way to listen to and follow the Shepherd so we may first kneel, then walk, then run and eventually fly in our faith!
 - a. Worship
 - b. Tithing
 - c. Learning
 - d. Praying
 - e. Serving
 - f. Inviting

** The Second Mile Offering this month will go to help with the Trunk or Treat events at each campus.

October 5 & 6, 2019