

LIFE GROUP LESSON

Prayer on the Run • Week of October 20

The LORD's words through His prophet, Ezekiel, resound still today. Hear the haunting echo:

"I looked for someone who might rebuild the wall of righteousness that guards the land. I searched for someone to stand in the gap in the wall so I wouldn't have to destroy the land, but I found on one" (Ezekiel 22:30).

The life of Nehemiah is a study on prayer and faithfulness! Nehemiah's memoirs were written *after* the 70-year Babylonian Exile. Today's opening text from Ezekiel was written *during* the exile (between 605 – 538 BC). In week one of PRAYER-ON-THE-RUN, Nehemiah left his post as cupbearer to King Artaxerxes (around 445 BC) to rebuild Jerusalem's walls. Though Nehemiah and Ezekiel were not contemporaries, their lives juxtapose a truth for us: God is not bound by time. God answers Ezekiel's prayer for 'someone to stand in the gap in the wall' many years later through Nehemiah. God may answer your prayers after you have passed on.

Read Ezekiel 22:23-30

Ezekiel says the LORD is looking for someone to rebuild the 'wall of righteousness' – someone of integrity who will serve, lead, and care for God's people. The leaders in Ezekiel's day were 'like wolves who tear apart their victims... for money' (v27). Notice how Ezekiel's words reveal the cry of his heart. Are we willing to stand, take our place, and if necessary, *become* the wall for our spouse, family, neighbors? No matter what role we find ourselves in, God expects us as Christ-followers to shepherd well the flock in our care.

1. Standing on the wall opens the door for transformation. When has someone stood 'in the gap in the wall' for you?
2. When leaders lead well, positive change follows. What comes to mind as you think about 'standing in the gap'? In what ways does Ezekiel 22:30 speak to you regarding—

Standing for your family (your home) and leading your children to honor God
Standing for your church, for truth and remembering that God is holy
Standing for your neighbors; living the truth in your community and workplace
Standing for your country where deep divisions are causing destruction

Read Nehemiah 5:14-19, 6:1-9

Nehemiah reminds us that progress and problems go hand-in-hand. But notice, the more discouragement and obstacles Nehemiah encounters, the more he continues to work 'with even greater determination' (Nehemiah 6:9).

3. Read together Christ Church's Mission Statement:
To reach millions of unchurched persons by developing thousands of fully-devoted followers of Jesus Christ.

Christ Church is about (a) Reaching and (b) Developing. We REACH (locally and globally) because that is what Christ commanded us to do in Matthew 28:18-20. And we DEVELOP because we must remain in the Vine in order to bear fruit. Jesus challenged everyone He encountered—for example, the disciples when He said, "You feed them" (Luke 9:12-13), the woman at the well who needed to hear the truth (John 4:17b-18), the accusatory religious leaders (John 8:7), even His own family distracting from His mission (Luke 8:21).

4. To be connected to a church is to be connected to Jesus Christ. When Christ returns, He is coming for His Bride, the Church (Revelation 21:1-2 and 22:17, see also Ephesians 5:27,32). How has the six-fold covenant of Christ Church blessed you and your family?
 - a) Worshiping
 - b) Learning via Life Groups & One Year Bible
 - c) Serving in Ministry
 - d) Tithing your Income to CC
 - e) Praying for unchurched, Leaders
 - f) Inviting 5 people to Worship

On a scale of one – to – ten, where is your level of commitment? In what areas of mission and ministry is the Lord calling you to serve in 2020? How will your family begin more intentionally serving together? (Children will never forget serving others in Jesus' Name! Remember, they will soon be young adults leading the next generation to Christ.)

Years before Nehemiah and Ezekiel, there was a man by the name of *Joshua son of Nun*. The name "Joshua" means *Savior* and is the Hebrew equivalent of the Greek name *Jesus*. As a young man, Joshua served Moses in the wilderness by leading a battle once with the Amalekites (Exodus 17:8-13), assisting at Mt. Sinai (Exodus 24:13), as well as being one of the twelve spies sent out to scout the land (Numbers 13:8,16). Joshua eventually became Moses' successor and led the Israelites into Canaan. Joshua knew all-too-well, that God's people—including himself—repeatedly stand in need of a second chance (see Exodus 32:17-20, also Joshua 9:14-16).

5. At the end of his life Joshua stands at Shechem, recalls God's victory over His people, and challenges the Israelites with these words:

“So fear the LORD and serve Him wholeheartedly. Put away forever the idols your ancestors worshiped when they lived beyond the Euphrates River and in Egypt. Serve the LORD alone. But if you refuse to serve the LORD, then choose today whom you will serve. Would you prefer the gods your ancestors served beyond the Euphrates? Or will it be the gods of the Amorites in whose land you now live? But as for me and my family, we will serve the LORD” (Joshua 24:14-15).

We either forget or undervalue the power of simple, yet consistent acts of obedience. We are all leaving a legacy behind. Nehemiah said four times:

“I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down. Why should the work cease while I leave it and go down to you?” (Nehemiah 6:3 NKJV)

Whose life would be impacted if you came down from the wall and ceased to be faithful?



Text: Ezekiel 22:23-30, Joshua 24:15, 25-28, Nehemiah 5:14-19, Malachi 3:8-10

PLAIN TRUTH:

Will anyone _____ on the _____?

1. Standing on the wall opens the door for _____.

Joshua Menu:

- A. _____ regularly.
- B. _____ through the One Year Bible and Life Groups.
- C. _____ in ministry.
- D. _____ for leaders, unchurched and friends.
- E. _____ into the storehouse of the Lord.
- F. _____ at least five people to church each month.

2. _____ and _____ go hand in hand.

3. When you _____ you _____ others up.

One Year Bible Reading

Oct. 20: Jeremiah 35:1-36:32, 1 Timothy 5:1-25, Psalm 89:14-37, Prov. 25:25-27
Oct. 21: Jeremiah 37:1-38:28, 1 Timothy 6:1-21, Psalm 89:38-52, Proverbs 25:28
Oct. 22: Jeremiah 39:1-41:18, 2 Timothy 1:1-18, Psalm 90:1-91:16, Prov. 26:1-2
Oct. 23: Jeremiah 42:1-44:23, 2 Timothy 2:1-21, Psalm 92:1-93:5, Proverbs 26:3-5
Oct. 24: Jeremiah 44:24-47:7, 2 Timothy 2:22-3:17, Psalm 94:1-23, Prov. 26:6-8
Oct. 25: Jeremiah 48:1-49:22, 2 Timothy 4:1-22, Psalm 95:1-96:13, Prov. 26:9-12
Oct. 26: Jeremiah 49:23-50:46, Titus 1:1-16, Psalm 97:1-98:9, Proverbs 26:13-16

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