

NEHEMIAH: Consecration Celebration

DISCUSSION GUIDE

UNDERSTANDING THE SEASON: Nehemiah is all about rebuilding the ruins of the work of God in our world. God's people had grown distracted and disconnected from God's plan for them to be the expression of His Kingdom in the Earth.

Jerusalem had been in ruins since the Babylonian invasion in 586 B.C. Nehemiah led the third of three returns to Israel after 70 years of exile in Babylon. Even in a state of ruin God was still at work looking for someone who would have a heart to respond to what God was about to do.

This is the condition of the Western church today. Much can be gained by a close examination of Nehemiah's response in his day. God woke up a fresh movement that brought life but it was met with great challenges. No matter how challenging it was God was always seeing his work through.

God's work is a work within us as we learn to respond to Him. It is God's plan is for us to spend time drawing close to his heart and hearing his voice together as a family. This is why we start each meeting with this question first:

DISCUSSION QUESTION:

1. Where are you reading in your Bible and what are you sensing from God?

FOR GROUP LEADERS: **The focus of the day** is how we are called to live a life that is consecrated to God. This is a life-style of service and worship to God. God changes our desires from within but then we must walk that out before God and in community. Consider starting your conversation by asking each person to describe a time in their faith journey when they became aware that Jesus was active in their life?

Nehemiah 12:27-43 *And at the dedication of the wall of Jerusalem they sought the Levites in all their places, to bring them to Jerusalem to celebrate the dedication with gladness, with thanksgivings and with singing, with cymbals, harps, and lyres...31 Then I brought the leaders of Judah up onto the wall and appointed two great choirs that gave thanks...43 And they offered great sacrifices that day and rejoiced, for God had made them rejoice with great joy; the women and children also rejoiced. And the joy of Jerusalem was heard far away. **ESV***

God's people had been awakened and God's work had been restored and they were celebrating with gladness. This celebration was about consecration and dedication which simply means set apart first and foremost to God.

The Temple of God is consecrated and holy:

1 Corinthians 6:19-20 *Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, 20 for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body. **ESV***

Acts 3:19 *Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord. **NIV***

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

2. **DISCOVER:** Have each person give a simple 60 second summary of what these verses are saying, Encourage people to try not to add insights or application yet. Just simply summarize.
3. **DEVELOP:** What do you sense God may be speaking to you personally as we focus on these verses?
4. **DEPLOY:** We are to be doers and not hearers only. What will you do this week in response to what you sense God is revealing in this time together?

God's plan all along has been for us to be consecrated, cleansed and joyful in his presence where there is fulness of joy.

Everywhere we go, we bring...

GP2RL: Take some time before the Lord this week asking Him what one area He wants to take complete charge of within your heart.