

NEHEMIAH: Casual Casualties

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?

Before reading, please encourage everyone to consider the deeper encounter of the God of the Word as you read the Word of God together. We are believing for the Holy Spirit to awaken his conversational nature as a result.

FOR GROUP LEADERS: The **focus of the day** is how we cannot afford to be casual about our faith journey. **Consider starting your conversation by asking each person to describe a time when being casual about something came with a cost.**

We cannot afford to be casual about the fight of faith. It is a fight and if you grow casual in any fight you suffer loss.

"Casual" means relaxed and unconcerned (casual Fridays), while "casualty" speaks of the loss of life. The Amplified Bible says, "...Jesus came so we might have and enjoy life in abundance (to the full, till it overflows)." John 10:10b

Nehemiah had restored the work of God and this community was flourishing. Nehemiah then had to go back to fulfill duties with the king and when he returned to Jerusalem the people had become casual and their faith became a casualty.

Nehemiah 13:10-12 (God's people had turned away from worship). I also found out that the portions of the Levites had not been given to them, so that the Levites and the singers, who did the work, had fled each to his field. 11 So I confronted the officials and said, "Why is the house of God forsaken?" And I gathered them together and set them in their stations. 12 Then all Judah brought the tithe of the grain, wine, and oil into the storehouses. ESV

Nehemiah 13:30-31 I cleansed them from everything foreign, and I established the duties of the priests and Levites, each in his work; 31 and I provided for the wood offering at appointed times, and for the firstfruits.

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?

Everywhere we go, we bring...

GP2RL: Purpose to connect with someone over coffee or a meal this week.