

Study Guide
Nehemiah Chapters 2 & 3
Big Idea: Be honest with yourself

1. Read Nehemiah 2:1-3. Describe how Nehemiah feels about being honest about his sadness with the King. Why do you think he is afraid? Why are we often afraid to be honest with others? What are the risks?

2. Read Nehemiah 2:4-8. On our journey to renewal, we will need to ask for help. How have you felt when you have needed to ask for help? Are there areas in your life now where you need to ask for help?

3. Discuss the idea that the letters from the King represent the fact that Christ has cancelled our debt and given us all we need.

Col. 2:14a *"...by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands."*

1 Cor. 11:24

"This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

How does that encourage you on your journey to renewal? In what way does God really do the heavy lifting for us?

4. Read Nehemiah 2:9-10. Discuss the idea that there is an enemy to discourage any attempts once you go out to "cross the river" into renewal. Share some of your experiences? What are the dangers of underestimating or overestimating the enemy?

5. Read Nehemiah 2:11-16. What are some great tools to help us inspect our own brokenness (*i.e. meditation, journaling, counseling, geno-grams, feedback from others, mentors*)? Discuss.

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Application

Take some time to pray quietly and reflect on whether there are parts of you that you are afraid to open up. Ask God for direction on how you can be sure to live in community and find the help you need

Message Slides

Big Idea: Be Honest with Yourself!

I. Don't live in denial (v.1-3)

In the month of Nisan, in the twentieth year of King Artaxerxes, when wine was before him, I took up the wine and gave it to the king. Now I had not been sad in his presence. ²And the king said to me, "Why is your face sad, seeing you are not sick? This is nothing but sadness of the heart." Then I was very much afraid. ³I said to the king, "Let the king live forever! Why should not my face be sad, when the city, the place of my fathers' graves, lies in ruins, and its gates have been destroyed by fire?"

Romans 7:15- "I don't really understand myself, for I want to do what is right, but I don't do it. Instead I do what I hate."

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II. Ask for help! (v.4-8)

⁴Then the king said to me, "What are you requesting?" So I prayed to the God of heaven. ⁵And I said to the king, "If it pleases the king, and if your servant has found favor in your sight, that you send me to Judah, to the city of my fathers' graves, that I may rebuild it." ⁶And the king said to me (the queen sitting beside him), "How long will you be gone, and when will you return?" So it pleased the king to send me when I had given him a time. ⁷And I said to the king, "If it pleases the king, let letters be given me to the governors of the province Beyond the River, that they may let me pass through until I come to Judah, ⁸and a letter to Asaph, the keeper of the king's forest, that he may give me timber to make beams for the gates of the fortress of the

temple, and for the wall of the city, and for the house that I shall occupy." And the king granted me what I asked, for the good hand of my God was upon me.

Col. 2:14a "...by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands."

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III. Understand the Enemy (v.9-10)

⁹Then I came to the governors of the province Beyond the River and gave them the king's letters. Now the king had sent with me officers of the army and horsemen. ¹⁰But when Sanballat the Horonite and Tobiah the Ammonite servant heard this, it displeased them greatly that someone had come to seek the welfare of the people of Israel.

Be honest with yourself!

1. Don't live in denial
2. Ask for help
3. Understand the Enemy

IV. Inspect your Broken Walls (v.11-16)

¹¹So I went to Jerusalem and was there three days. ¹²Then I arose in the night, I and a few men with me. And I told no one what my God had put into my heart to do for Jerusalem. There was no animal with me but the one on which I rode. ¹³I went out by night by the Valley Gate to the Dragon Spring and to the Dung Gate, and I inspected the walls of Jerusalem that were broken down and its gates that had been destroyed by fire. ¹⁴Then I went on to the Fountain Gate and to the King's Pool, but there was no room for the animal that was under me to pass. ¹⁵Then I went up in the night by the valley and inspected the wall, and I turned back and entered by the Valley Gate, and so returned. ¹⁶And the officials did not know where I had gone or what I was doing, and I had not yet told the Jews, the priests, the nobles, the officials, and the rest who were to do the work.

Show image of brokenness

V. Start to rebuild (2:17-3:31)

¹⁷Then I said to them, "You see the trouble we are in, how Jerusalem lies in ruins with its gates burned. Come, let us build the wall of Jerusalem, that we may no longer suffer derision." ¹⁸And I told them of the hand of my God that had been upon me for good, and also of the words that the king had spoken to me. And they said, "Let us rise up and build." So they strengthened their hands for the good work. ¹⁹But when Sanballat the Horonite and Tobiah the Ammonite servant and Geshem the Arab heard of it, they jeered at us and despised us and said, "What is this thing that you are doing? Are you rebelling against the king?" ²⁰Then I replied to them, "The God of heaven will make us prosper, and we his servants will arise and build, but you have no portion or right or claim in Jerusalem."

Image of Rebuilding

**Note, please show the image of rebuilding and add to the same slide the following text on recovery.*

Recovery...

>each on mouse click<

... happens in community.

... requires faith in God.

... will bring mockery.

... is for everyone!

Image of the completed walls *(with below text)*

"And next to them the Tekoites repaired, but their nobles would not stoop to serve their Lord."
Nehemiah 3:5

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1. Don't live in denial
2. Ask for help
3. Understand the Enemy
4. Inspect your Broken Walls
5. Start to Rebuild

