

*Committed to the Common Good*

**Rebuild**

Nehemiah 2:17-18

**EXPLORING THE SERMON**

- \* What did you hear?
- \* What did you think or feel about what you heard?
- \* What is one thing you can take away from the sermon this week?

**KEY VERSES**

*Then I said to them, "You see the trouble we are in, how Jerusalem lies in ruins with its gates burned. Come, let us rebuild the wall of Jerusalem, so that we may no longer suffer disgrace." I told them that the hand of my God had been gracious upon me, and also the words that the king had spoken to me. Then they said, "Let us start building!" So they committed themselves to the common good.*

**REFLECTION**

Last week, we explored how Nehemiah's careful examination of the wall and immediate connection with the people secured his trusted leadership. For us to answer the question, "what will it take to live out God's mission?" we can follow Nehemiah's example of first being able to describe the society around us. ***How would you describe society today overall? How would you describe society in each the different areas of your life?***

The majority of Americans say that society today is best described as divided. This makes the words of verse eight seem even further away: "*So they committed themselves to the common good.*" We have always been a divided society, but the difference today is the anger, fear, and dehumanization of each other's position. ***How has this division most affected you? How have factors like technology and social media impacted your own experiences?***

[David Brooks points to the erosion of social trust](#) as the contributing factor to our division. Brooks says that social trust can be re-built, however, "within the nitty-gritty work of organizational life: going to meetings, driving people places, planning events, sitting with the ailing, rejoicing with the joyous, showing up for the unfortunate." The good news for Christian communities is that if we are healthy in the ways we operate, we should be leading the effort of rebuilding social trust. ***In what ways can you detect social trust being re-built in the small pockets of community within your life? How are you encouraged to participate in re-building within these specific areas?***

As Christians, our common identity is not based on what we do, but what God has done. The Apostle Paul describes us all as "seeing in a mirror dimly." When we can stand passionately for what we believe *while* holding onto humility, we are uniquely positioned to lead in exactly the ways our world and nation need right now. Despite our differences, kingdom work is already taking place through Covenant. ***Where do you think you are being called to learn in the midst of diversity? Where are you being called to model caring about others for more than what they do or how they think?***

*Heavenly Father, thank you for reminding us that you call us each to work for the common good in the small, local areas of our lives. Help us to model loving others for who they are in you, not for what they do or say. May we be encouraged and not overwhelmed by the unique opportunities we have to help re-build social trust. Amen.*