

*Doing Your Homework*

*Rebuild*

Nehemiah 2:11-16

**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**

*So I came to Jerusalem and was there for three days. Then I got up during the night, I and a few men with me; I told no one what my God had put into my heart to do for Jerusalem. The only animal I took was the animal I rode. I went out by night by the Valley Gate past the Dragon's Spring and to the Dung Gate, and I inspected the walls of Jerusalem that had been broken down and its gates that had been destroyed by fire. Then I went on to the Fountain Gate and to the King's Pool; but there was no place for the animal I was riding to continue. So I went up by way of the valley by night and inspected the wall. Then I turned back and entered by the Valley Gate, and so returned. The officials did not know where I had gone or what I was doing; I had not yet told the Jews, the priests, the nobles, the officials, and the rest that were to do the work.*

**REFLECTION**

We continue to hold the opportunity before us to rebuild something in a way that is healthier and better than before. At this point in our disorientation, we either choose to rebuild now or keep things the way they are. **Think about your own experience so far, using the following points to keep perspective:**

- 1) **Our burden should spark joy, not add extra weight to our lives. Pay attention to those sparks of energy.**
- 2) **Don't judge your burden in comparison to others. Be honest about what God is laying on your heart.**

The poet David White writes, "the anecdote for exhaustion is not rest, but whole-heartedness. Rest alone is not enough." **How have you been able to find rest to help you come out of this disorientation? What activities, thoughts, or projects in particular have given you energy? How might you connect that energy to a burden?**

Read the passage and consider the way Nehemiah and his team approach Jerusalem. It would seem Nehemiah had every right to hastily announce he was there on behalf of the king and his vision from God. **Why is it significant that Nehemiah first takes his time to carefully examine the walls? Why is it important for us to not only recognize our burden, but to do our homework so we can answer our "why"?**

We are programmed to resist change. If we cannot explain the "why" of our burden, the resistance is going to win. **This week, how will you continue to invest in the process of naming disappointment and sharing it with others?**

*Heavenly Father, lead us, guide us, speak to us, and help us do the work we need to do that you've placed before us. Thank You for the ways You keep speaking to us. We present ourselves to You and our community. Amen.*