

Opening Question

What leadership experience have you enjoyed? Why? Did those you led feel the same way? If you can't think of an enjoyable leadership experience, what does that say about you and leadership?

Time in the Word

Read 1 Timothy 3: 1-13. Note the words used to describe church leaders. Which of these stood out to you? Why? How applicable are these requirements to all followers versus just elders or deacons?

Discussion Questions

What are you passionate about? How does your passion influence those around you? When does influence become leadership? How are passion, influence and leadership connected?

Explain the difference between leading and teaching, coaching or managing.

If you've ever led a group, how did you balance the need to be decisive with your awareness of the needs/desires/concerns of the group?

When decisions are made, what role should a leader play in hearing, considering and protecting the voice of the dissenting or minority voice of a group?

How do you create space in your life? How often? If you don't regularly assess your life to create space, how do you create space for what God may be doing?

Homework

What about your local community, neighborhood or area interests you? How can you turn your interest into participation or leading in whatever way God has equipped you?



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Our Purpose
why we exist

The purpose of the church is to bring glory to God.

Our Mission
what we do

Love God • Love People • Make Disciples

Our Core Values
how we do it

Worship - lifting up the name of the Lord Jesus Christ
Connect - living in community, loving and supporting one another
Grow - equipping believers to live in obedience to God's Word
Serve - helping people discover and use their God-given talents
Reach - transforming lives and communities with the good news of Jesus Christ

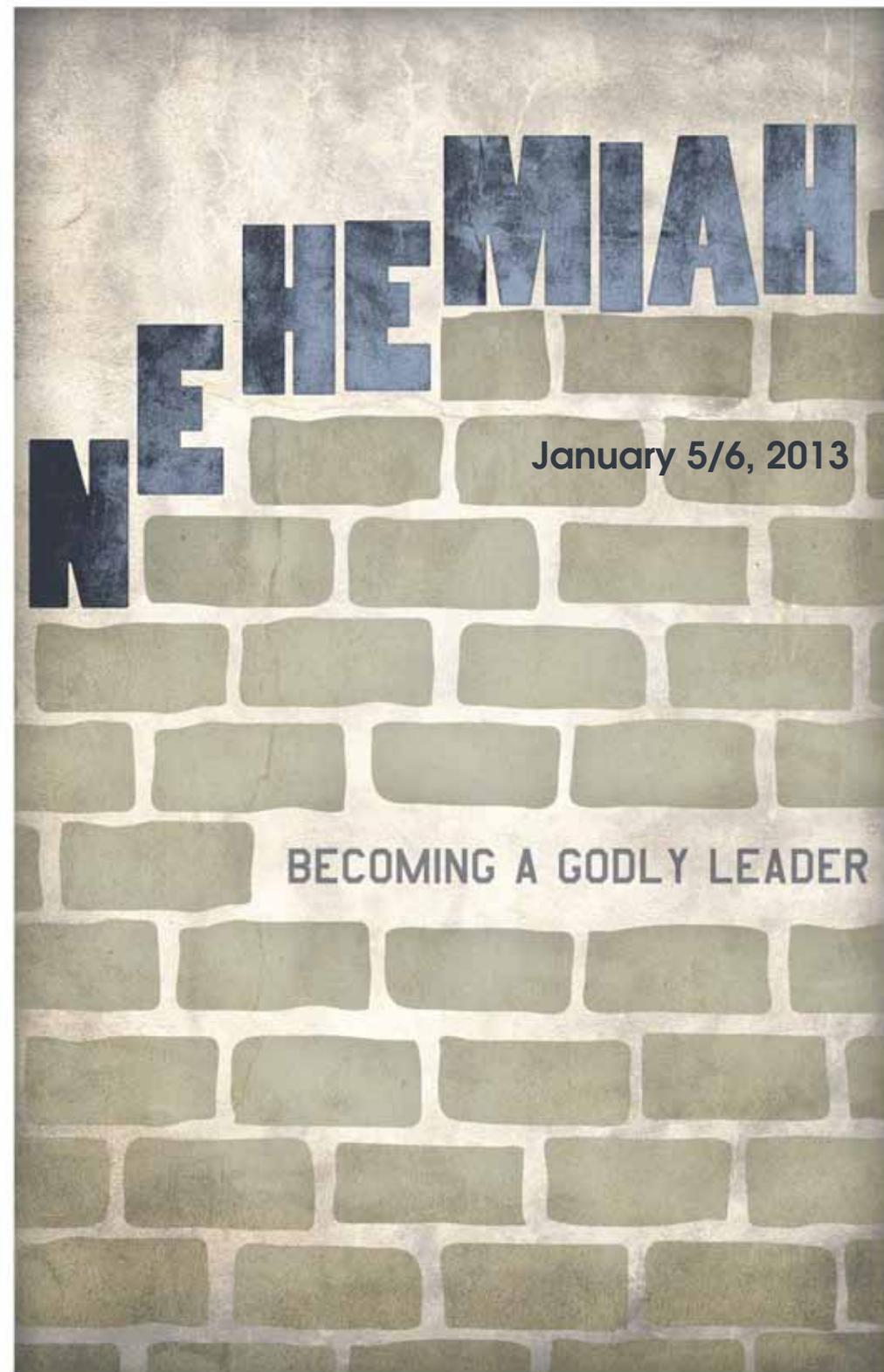
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Sermon Notes

Becoming a Godly Leader

Nehemiah 1:1-4

Pastor Rick Countryman

When there is moral rot within a nation, its government topples easily. But wise and knowledgeable leaders bring stability. Proverbs 28:2 (NLT)

Leadership Principle: Leadership is all about _____.

This is a trustworthy saying: "If someone aspires to be an elder, he desires an honorable position." So an elder must be a man whose life is above reproach. He must be faithful to his wife. He must exercise self-control, live wisely, and have a good reputation. He must enjoy having guests in his home, and he must be able to teach. He must not be a heavy drinker or be violent. He must be gentle, not quarrelsome, and not love money. He must manage his own family well, having children who respect and obey him. For if a man cannot manage his own household, how can he take care of God's church?

An elder must not be a new believer, because he might become proud, and the devil would cause him to fall. Also, people outside the church must speak well of him so that he will not be disgraced and fall into the devil's trap.

In the same way, deacons must be well respected and have integrity. They must not be heavy drinkers or dishonest with money. They must be committed to the mystery of the faith now revealed and must live with a clear conscience. Before they are appointed as deacons, let them be closely examined. If they pass the test, then let them serve as deacons.

In the same way, their wives must be respected and must not slander others. They must exercise self-control and be faithful in everything they do.

A deacon must be faithful to his wife, and he must manage his children and household well. Those who do well as deacons will be rewarded with respect from others and will have increased confidence in their faith in Christ Jesus. 1 Timothy 3:1-13 (NLT)

These are the memoirs of Nehemiah son of Hacaliah. In late autumn, in the month of Kislev, in the twentieth year of King Artaxerxes' reign, I was at the fortress of Susa. Hanani, one of my brothers, came to visit me with some other men who had just arrived from Judah. I asked them about the Jews who had returned there from captivity and about how things were going in Jerusalem.

They said to me, "Things are not going well for those who returned to the province of Judah. They are in great trouble and disgrace. The wall of Jerusalem has been torn down, and the gates have been destroyed by fire."

When I heard this, I sat down and wept. In fact, for days I mourned, fasted, and prayed to the God of heaven. Nehemiah 1:1-4 (NLT)

Why did God choose Nehemiah?

1. Nehemiah was _____ to the needs around him.

When I heard this, I sat down and wept. In fact, for days I mourned, fasted, and prayed to the God of heaven. Verse 4

An expert in religious law, tried to trap him with this question: "Teacher, which is the most important commandment in the law of Moses?"

Jesus replied, "'You must love the LORD your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. A second is equally important: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' The entire law and all the demands of the prophets are based on these two commandments." Matthew 22:35-40 (NLT)

When he [Jesus] saw the crowds, he had compassion on them because they were confused and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Matthew 9:36 (NLT)

Sensitivity Scale

How sensitive are you to the needs around you?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

2. Nehemiah was _____.

In those days I was the king's cup-bearer. Verse 11

If you are faithful in little things, you will be faithful in large ones. But if you are dishonest in little things, you won't be honest with greater responsibilities. And if you are untrustworthy about worldly wealth, who will trust you with the true riches of heaven? And if you are not faithful with other people's things, why should you be trusted with things of your own?

Luke 16:10-12 (NLT)

Trustworthy Scale

How trustworthy are you with what God has given you?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

3. Nehemiah was _____.

Then I heard the Lord asking, "Whom should I send as a messenger to this people? Who will go for us?" I said, "Here I am. Send me." Isaiah 6:8 (NLT)

Availability Scale

How available are you for God's purposes?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10



Journaling

Writing out the Nehemiah verses each day will give you opportunity to look more closely into God's Word. You may want to use a journal or make a file on your computer. By the end of this series, you will have copied the entire book of Nehemiah.

Before beginning this new study, read the entire book of Nehemiah in one sitting. It should take you approximately 45 minutes. (Skim through the lists of names.)

Monday – Begin the day in prayer. Write or type Nehemiah 1:1-4.

What did Nehemiah ask his brother? What does this question reveal about Nehemiah's character?

What did Hanani report about the condition of the remnant of Jews and the city of Jerusalem?

List Nehemiah's four responses to this news.

What do you learn about Nehemiah's character and values by his response?

How anxious are you to hear about people in your town who are living in poverty?

Tuesday – Begin the day in prayer. Write or type Nehemiah 1:5-6.

How does Nehemiah address God in verse 5?

Why do you think Nehemiah reminds God of His covenant of unfailing love? (If time allows, look up the word *covenant*.) With whom did God make this covenant?

What does Nehemiah ask God to do? For whom?

What does Nehemiah confess?

Have you ever made a covenant with God? How have you experienced His unfailing love?

Wednesday – Begin the day in prayer. Write or type Nehemiah 1:7.

Why do you think Nehemiah includes himself in this confession?

Why is confession an important aspect of prayer? See also 1 John 1:9.

What does Nehemiah's confession reveal about his character?

Ask God to bring to your mind anything you need to confess to Him.

Thursday – Begin the day in prayer. Write or type Nehemiah 1:8-9.

Read Deuteronomy 30:1-4. What are the two conditions of the promise?

Why do you think Nehemiah is asking God to remember His promises?

Read Psalm 106:23. How was Nehemiah like Moses?

How was Nehemiah leading the people to follow 2 Chronicles 7:14?

How are you serving with the gifts God has given you?

Friday – Begin the day in prayer. Write or type Nehemiah 1:10-11.

What had God already done for His people?

What petition does Nehemiah make?

Based on this prayer, what kind of relationship would you say Nehemiah had with God? Describe his faith.

What character traits do you think motivated Nehemiah to pray as he did about such an overwhelming task?

Personal Reflection & Application

What insights or principles of leadership have you learned from Nehemiah?

How can you be more sensitive to the needs of others?

What have you learned about God's character?

Reaching Out

Ask God to reveal an area in which He might use you to accomplish His will. How can you be more available to be used by God?