

Group/Individual Study

Series: Nehemiah: Rebuild, Restore, Renew

Passages: Nehemiah 1:3-11

REFLECT on the message heard Sunday, 1/14

1. Read Nehemiah 1:3-11. At the time these verses were written, what was the status of people's lives back in Jerusalem? What was the status of Nehemiah's life in the palace? What do you think made Nehemiah care about suffering in Jerusalem when he, himself, had a cushy job in the king's palace?
2. The message Sunday described a "dislocated heart" as one that cares about hurt, pain, and injustice for others -- when we aren't experiencing these things ourselves. Though the term "dislocated heart" might be new to us, the type of care for the suffering of others that it describes is shot through the pages of Scripture. Name as many examples as you can of Bible characters who demonstrated this kind of heart.
3. Have you ever experienced God giving you a "dislocated heart" that was hurting over the suffering of others in the world? What actions did it lead you to take? What role did prayer play? Which elements of Nehemiah's process (compassion, prayer, humility, action) were part of your process? Which weren't?
4. When Nehemiah's heart cared deeply for the suffering of those in Jerusalem, he began with prayer and seeking God. Why might this have been a good first step rather than charging into action right away? How do you think Nehemiah's impulse to help might have "matured" and developed by the time he approached the king after four months of prayer and holding this need up before God?
5. Read verses 1:7-1:9. How do you see humility in how Nehemiah responded? When God touches our hearts to restore things with those who suffer, what role does a humble heart on our part play? How does it bless those we help? Have you ever seen this done well? Have you ever seen it done poorly?
6. Are there points of need around you for which you feel a dislocated heart? How can you pray and hold that need up to God as Nehemiah did? How can you address that situation from a humble and servant-hearted posture?