The Story: Chapter 21

Rebuilding the Walls Pastor Kevin Donoho

September 3, 2023

DURING THE STORY SERIES, REMIX CLASS SESSIONS WILL BE DIVIDED INTO TWO SEGMENTS:

- 1) THE STORY STUDY GUIDE QUESTIONS CHOSEN BY THE LEADER.
- 2) THE FOLLOWING REMIX QUESTIONS:

Opening Discussion

• What thoughts, feelings, or impressions do you have about the sermon this week?

Thought #1: God uses those who connect with others who are in pain!

Read Nehemiah 1:1-4

"The words of Nehemiah son of Hakaliah: In the month of Kislev in the twentieth year, while I was in the citadel of Susa, Hanani, one of my brothers, came from Judah with some other men, and I questioned them about the Jewish remnant that had survived the exile, and also about Jerusalem. They said to me, "Those who survived the exile and are back in the province are in great trouble and disgrace. The wall of Jerusalem is broken down, and its gates have been burned with fire." When I heard these things, I sat down and wept. For some days I mourned and fasted and prayed before the God of heaven."

It is easy to look around, see the hurt and brokenness in the world, and become overwhelmed by it.

Can you recall a time, either past or present, when you experienced this sense of overwhelm? What hurt or brokenness did you see that caused you to feel helpless in that moment?

Now read Nehemiah 1:5-6

"Then I said: Lord, the God of heaven, the great and awesome God, who keeps his covenant of love with those who love him and keep his commandments, let your ear be attentive and your eyes open to hear the prayer your servant is praying before you day and night for your servants, the people of Israel."

Pastor Kevin reminded us of the power of prayer in the moment. It may feel as if there is nothing you can do, but the most important thing you can do is pray! When you see the thing or hear the thing... take it directly to God.

What do you need to carry to God as a group right now? How can you be present for one another in the pain and brokenness? Take this time to pray with and over one another as a group. Through this time of prayer, are there next steps you are sensing or hearing from Him?

Though #2: God needs people who ride into the mess to rebuild!

It is normal to be disturbed by the rubble.

When we see the brokenness, the hurt, the damage, it is normal to be troubled by this. Even Nehemiah was.

Read Nehemiah 2:17-18

"Then I said to them, "You see the trouble we are in: Jerusalem lies in ruins, and its gates have been burned with fire. Come, let us rebuild the wall of Jerusalem, and we will no longer be in disgrace." I also told them about the gracious hand of my God on me and what the king had said to me. They replied, "Let us start rebuilding." So, they began this good work."

But he didn't stop there. He recognized the need and believed in the ability to rebuild. And from there, he encouraged others to join him in the good work.

Have you experienced that moment of noticing the rubble, feeling the hurt and the loss, then getting stuck in that place? Have you experienced others sitting with you in your "rubble"? What was this like for you? How have others helped you rebuild in the wake of brokenness or damage?

Consider who God has led into your life right now that you can bring this kind of hope to. Who is He calling you to bring true healing, help, and hope to? If no one comes to mind, consider praying specifically for God to open your eyes to those around you He is calling you to.

Thought #3: God uses the entire community to advance the work!

In Nehemiah Chapter 3, we see a long list of people who were on the wall, helping to rebuild. There were roles you would anticipate and others you would not. Everyone played a part! This is a beautiful picture of the church today. We need everyone on the wall. Our different skills and experiences make us stronger together and able to build a stronger wall because of it.

How have you been strengthened and fortified through your group or community? How have you seen strength in the people that God has surrounded you with? How important of a role has your community played in broken moments?

Thought #4: God calls us knowing there will be opposition!

Read Nehemiah 4:16-20

"From that day on, half of my men did the work, while the other half were equipped with spears, shields, bows, and armor. The officers posted themselves behind all the people of Judah who were building the wall. Those who carried materials did their work with one hand and held a weapon in the other, and each of the builders wore his sword at his side as he worked. But the man who sounded the trumpet stayed with me. Then I said to the nobles, the officials, and the rest of the people, "The work is extensive and spread out, and we are widely separated from each other along the wall. Wherever you hear the sound of the trumpet, join us there. Our God will fight for us!"

The enemy doesn't stop as we rebuild! As we work to put the rubble back together, we are often met with opposition and trials. Let's face it, this can be discouraging! However, in this passage from Nehemiah, we see how in the face of opposition, they needed each other all the more.

Some were building. Some were protecting. And without BOTH, restoration would not have happened.

Recall times you have been on either side: protecting or rebuilding. How has the presence of opposition during rebuilding impacted you? How have you felt the covering of others as you rebuild? How did God meet you there in either place?

Prayer:

As a member of this group, you have made a significant step in building a community that will sit with each other in the rubble. As you close in prayer, consider how you, as a group, can help others find this same thing.

Pray for an opportunity to notice those in need. Pray over an opportunity to invite those who are searching.

Pray over an opportunity to sit with those who are hurting.

Pray for an opportunity to protect those who are rebuilding.

Questions for Pastor Todd Keller or Julie Burch regarding your REMIX group?

 Email: Todd <u>tkeller@collegechurch.com</u> Julie <u>groups@collegechurch.com</u>

***Remember to record your attendance for the week. Thank you.

How can we pray for each other this week?