

It's Time to Get Sick and Tired!

Nehemiah 1

Nehemiah. Cupbearer to King Artaxerxes. About 445 b.c.
Esther was Artaxerxes' stepmother. Ezra *wrote* Nehemiah.
Two governorships. 1st 12 chapters = 1 year.

Remember Earl Pitts' rants on the radio? "*You know what makes me sick?*"

A *decent* question: **what is it that makes you sick?**
A *better* question: **what is it that breaks your heart?**

- About your culture... *inequality? injustice? oppression?*
- About your community... *addiction? family issues? lostness?*
- About your life... *mediocrity? status quo?*

We're starting a series today, based on the life of Nehemiah, about what to **do** about the things that make us sick and tired – **How to Have a Breakthrough**

It's a series about **vision**. It's a series about **leadership**.

But more importantly, it's a series about **depending on God** to break some chains and change the situation for us as we rise up to the challenges!

God is looking for some people who will get sick and tired of the brokenness in the world around them, AND, who will DO something.

Nehemiah 1:1-10 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. **2** 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. **3** 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." **4** **When I heard this, I sat down and wept.** In fact, for days I **mourned, fasted,** and **prayed** to the God of heaven. **5** Then I said, **6** "O LORD, God of heaven, the great and awesome God who keeps his covenant of unfailing love with those who love him and obey his commands, listen to my prayer! Look down and see me praying night and day for your people Israel. I **confess** that we have sinned against you. Yes, even my own family and **I have sinned!** **7** We have sinned terribly by not obeying the commands, decrees, and regulations that you gave us through your servant Moses. **8** "Please remember what you told your servant Moses: 'If you are unfaithful to me, I will scatter you among the nations. **9** But if you **return** to me and obey my commands and live by them, then even if you are exiled to the ends of the earth, I will bring you back to the place I have chosen for my name to be honored.' **10** "The people you rescued by your great power and strong hand are your servants. **11** O Lord, please hear my prayer! Listen to the prayers of those of us who delight in honoring you. **Please grant me success today** by making the king favorable to me. Put it into his heart to be kind to me." In those days I was the king's cup-bearer.*

WHAT TO DO WHEN YOU'RE SICK AND TIRED...

1. Spend a moment in mourning.

"When I heard this, I wept... I mourned..."

Get bothered! Get a burden!

Acts 17:16 MSG

*The longer Paul waited in Athens for Silas and Timothy, **the angrier he got**—all those idols! The city was a junkyard of idols.*

Acts 17:16 ESV

*Now while Paul was waiting for them at Athens, **his spirit was provoked** within him as he saw that the city was full of idols.*

2. Spend some days in fasting and prayer.

*"...for days I **mourned**, **fasted**, and **prayed** to the God of heaven."*

Prayer is DOING something.

Fasting is DOING something.

These aren't just religious rituals.

These are the things God calls on us to do in order to call on him!

I'm asking us to spend a concentrated time in fasting and prayer, as a church family, for our people, our community, our nation, our world. **21 days**. We're not going to be picky about *how* you fast.

Fasting demonstrates dependence on God. It shows that we recognize the heaviness of the moment enough to put down our forks and pay attention to God, and what God wants to do.

3. Continually practice repentance.

"I confess that we have sinned against you. Yes, even my own family and I have sinned! We have sinned terribly..."

It's never enough to recognize the brokenness *around* us. That leads to self-righteousness and bitterness. We must look at the brokenness *within* us. We must confess *our part* of the problem.

4. Beg God for a breakthrough!!

"Please grant me success today..."

I want US to be successful.

I want YOU to be successful!

Success, as God defines it, starts with taking up a cross.

What do you need to get sick and tired of today?

What do you need to pray for success in?