

WE CAN DO MORE TOGETHER
Recruitment Sunday, July 29 2018
Nehemiah

As a church, we have embraced a culture of FAMILY MINISTRY in order to impact our world for Christ. This means that we must FOCUS on BEING PRESENT in the lives of babies, children, and students in order to expose them to the Gospel. This year, the ORANGE FAMILY MINISTRY THEME was introduced as **WE CAN DO MORE TOGETHER**. This message and theme was introduced by Reggie Joiner at the Orange Conference. This is a message that will be heard all over the country this year, and it is one that I want to share with you today.

This is a message about the GREAT NEED that we have right here in Desoto County to IMPACT FAMILIES FOR GOD'S GLORY. There are 41 public schools in Desoto County, Mississippi, serving 33,140 students. I am not going to hide the ENORMITY of the NEED and the ENORMITY of the WORKFORCE REQUIRED to meet this need. God has placed us HERE for this very purpose in this very hour. What will YOU do in response to this enormous opportunity?

The BACKDROP for our message today is the BOOK OF NEHEMIAH. He lived in a desperate time but he was willing to see and obey what God led him to do.

Doing God's Work Together Will Change How a Generation Sees God!

*God is still the SAME GOD that he has always been. And he still wants to do mighty things in the lives of us and our children and in our WORLD!

*Sadly, the WORLD seems to be DISMISSING the CHURCH as IRRELEVANT to their lives.

-Think about how OUR OWN KIDS feel about God's power and presence right now!

[If David can kill Goliath; if Moses can see the Red Sea part; why don't we see God's work?]

-Think about how LOST KIDS feel about God right now. Where is God?

WE CANNOT BLAME THIS ON THE WORLD; WE HAVE IGNORED WHAT IS PAINFULLY OBVIOUS!

Name What's Broken. Nehemiah 1:3 NIV

3 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."

Nehemiah's heart was broken over this. He mourned, fasted, and prayed!

***If we cannot NAME the problem, then we cannot FIX the problem!**

-Have you ever been around something bad for so long that you no longer see it?

[Going NOSE BLIND!] [Don't just ACCEPT that this is the way it will ALWAYS be!]

-This is a WAKE-UP CALL about our church and our community and its needs!

PROBLEMS IN DESOTO COUNTY:

Faithlessness, Spiritual Complacency, Depression and Suicide, Broken/Fatherless homes, Gangs, Drug addiction.

-The condition of our county is DIRECTLY RELATED to the condition of OUR FAITH!

***If we IGNORE the problem, then we FORFEIT the right to have a godly INFLUENCE in our COMMUNITY. [Our POSITIVE IMPACT on the Hernando Middle School]**

-SOMEBODY needed to ask the QUESTION: **Why don't we DO SOMETHING?**

Nehemiah was that somebody, and it started a glorious landslide! But it requires the same thing of us that it required of Nehemiah.

Leverage whatever you have. Nehemiah 1:11 NIV

11 Lord, let your ear be attentive to the prayer of this your servant and to the prayer of your servants who delight in revering your name. Give your servant success today by granting him favor in the presence of this man." I was cupbearer to the king.

***Don't be stopped by what you are NOT; use who you ARE!**

- Nehemiah was not afraid to leverage his position for the sake of God's will!
- Nehemiah did not LIMIT his thinking by focusing on what he did not have!

***Leveraging what you have will RISK your POWER, your PRIVILEGES, and your POSITION . . . for God! [ROBERT/KATIE SIMS – JOSEPH'S PRAYER LAST SUNDAY!]**

- The BENEFIT is worth the risk and the COST! [What do you have? Resources/Knowledge]
- *How will it affect our community if WE pay the price to influence kids for Christ?

***Leveraging what you have will REQUIRE YOU to MOVE OUT OF YOUR COMFORT ZONE!**

- It's OK to EXPECT a MIRACLE, but it is NOT OK to simply WAIT FOR ONE! MOVE!

PROXIMITY changes your PERSPECTIVE! Nehemiah 2:4-5 NIV

4 The king said to me, "What is it you want?" Then I prayed to the God of heaven, 5 and I answered the king, "If it pleases the king and if your servant has found favor in his sight, let him send me to the city in Judah where my ancestors are buried so that I can rebuild it."

***Go and SEE the problem for yourself! [Nehemiah had to GO TO JERUSALEM!]**

- The MORE of us that move closer to the brokenness, the more IMPACT we will have.
- Before you whine about what is, and even before you offer a solution: Get closer!
- Nehemiah inspected the walls himself before he told the people his plans! (2:11-16)

There is no substitute in life for a CONSISTENT LEADER! Nehemiah 2:17-18 NIV

17 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." 18 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.

***God will go before us to provide if we will make the necessary move toward the need!**

***Give every kid an adult that will show him who Jesus is.**

REGGIE JOINER: "Churches should NEVER measure their success by how many people show up to sit in a room on Sunday. They should measure their success by how many are willing to show up IN THE LIVES OF PEOPLE!" [People of other colors/Different views/Financial status]

- What about those children who DO NOT HAVE Christian parents? How will they know?
- *Our county is full of kids who see only BROKEN LIVES/FAMILIES around them, so we

are their BEST CHANCE to experience GOD'S LOVE in their lives.

-I know: YOU DON'T FEEL QUALIFIED to get in the life of a TEENAGER or a CHILD. Well . . .

Do something you DON'T know how to do!

***These wall builders were not professionally trained.** They just DID what needed to be done!

-WHY? Because people were in danger! Children were at RISK! God's reputation was being trashed because of God's people's rebellion and COMPLACENCY!

***Everybody that Nehemiah needed to rebuild the town was ALREADY IN the town!**

Nehemiah positioned PARENTS to become CHAMPIONS for their children's faith!

Nehemiah 4:13-14 NIV

13 Therefore I stationed some of the people behind the lowest points of the wall at the exposed places, posting them by families, with their swords, spears and bows. 14 After I looked things over, I stood up and said to the nobles, the officials and the rest of the people, "Don't be afraid of them. Remember the Lord, who is great and awesome, and fight for your families, your sons and your daughters, your wives and your homes."

***These parents became the FULFILLMENT of Isaiah's prophecy: Isaiah 61:4 NIV**

4 They will rebuild the ancient ruins and restore the places long devastated; they will renew the ruined cities that have been devastated for generations.

***Parents need to feel the SUPPORT of the CHURCH!**

-How well are we AFFIRMING and HELPING parents outside of the church in their task?

*Those parents that FEEL this support will often GET INVOLVED in the church!

*This SUPPORT will give us the opportunity to LEAD *WHOLE FAMILIES TO JESUS!*

BUT WHAT ABOUT THOSE PARENTS THAT ARE *ALREADY HERE?* **Nehemiah 3:23**

[Benjamin and Hashtub - Repaired the wall NEXT TO their OWN HOUSE!]

***I want to challenge EVERY CHC PARENT to get involved in the Family Ministry at CHC!**

-COME ONE, SERVE ONE . . . EVERY WEEK!!

***I want to challenge us to MULTI-GENERATIONAL MINISTRY! [Older teaching the younger]**

-We need servants of ALL AGES to step in and serve! [High school, Young Adult, Sr. Adult!]

Keep working together NO MATTER WHAT!

***You WILL FACE OBSTACLES:**

-Enemies

-Physical Weariness

-Discouragement from people WITHIN the church! [NOBLES OF TEKOA – **Nehemiah 3:5**]

DON'T LET THE LAZY PEOPLE DISCOURAGE YOU FROM DOING THE WORK!

Nothing helps you keep going like 1) A LEADER that STAYS CONSISTENT and keeps on encouraging you to KEEP ON WORKING, and 2) Seeing PROGRESS on the project!

*If you STOP WORKING and walk away you will lose both!

***EXPECT TO SEE GOD, BUT NOT NECESSARILY THE GOD THAT YOU EXPECT!**

-God often works in ways that we do not anticipate.

*There was a MIRACLE in this story, but it is NOT what you would have thought:

-The GREATEST work of God in this story is how he changed PEOPLE.

3 THINGS HAPPENED WHEN THE WALLS WERE REBUILT:

Those OUTSIDE the walls changed what they BELIEVED about God. Nehemiah 6:16 NIV

16 When all our enemies heard about this, all the surrounding nations were afraid and lost their self-confidence, because they realized that this work had been done with the help of our God.

Those INSIDE the walls changed how they LISTENED to God. Nehemiah 8:3 NIV

3 He [EZRA] read it [the Law] aloud from daybreak till noon as he faced the square before the Water Gate in the presence of the men, women and others who could understand. **And all the people listened attentively to the Book of the Law.**

A GENERATION changed how they WORSHIPPED God! Nehemiah 8:17 NIV

17 The whole company that had returned from exile built temporary shelters and lived in them. From the days of Joshua son of Nun until that day, the Israelites had not celebrated it [Feast of Tabernacles] like this. And their joy was very great.

Some of the GREATEST CHAMPIONS of the faith that I know are people who have no kids of their own, but they relentlessly and joyfully INVEST in the lives of other people's kids week after week for years on end. They are HEROES OF THE FAITH. I also know PARENTS who have done this in the lives of their own AND other kids. That is a picture of biblical faith where God shows himself STRONG and PRESENT!

Are you willing to step up to the challenge so that a NEW GENERATION can learn to TRUST IN GOD and gain a new perspective on the POWER OF GOD? You and I can change an entire generation's VIEW of God, but only as we do it TOGETHER!

I CHALLENGE YOU TO COMMIT TO THIS OPPORTUNITY TODAY.

LET'S PRAY.