

Keepers of the Gospel
Reflections on Nehemiah
Nehemiah 6.1-15

It may be a good time for your Life Group to have a party, because according to Nehemiah 6, the wall project has come to its conclusion, all within 52 days! Nevertheless, the enemies of this project simply refuse to let up; to the very end, they try to thwart it. This week, it's quite clear what tactic they use, which is an ancient one that is absolutely deadly to our project too. Begin by reading Nehemiah 6.1-15, then answer as many of these questions that you have time for.

Pastor Eric

Understanding the Passage

In Nehemiah 6, the enemies of Jerusalem used intimidation, rumors, and manipulation to stop the work. Which of those tactics seems most effective in today's culture? Which kinds have the greatest potency to cause ruin in the church?

Why was the accusation that Nehemiah wanted to become king such a dangerous lie? Shemaiah sounded spiritual and convincing, yet Nehemiah recognized his message as false. What helped Nehemiah discern the truth?

The Nature of Lying

Lying is "truth-twisting." Why are half-truths or exaggerations often harder to recognize than "baldfaced lies?" Why do people tend to justify "small" or "white" lies? Are these dangerous too?

"When we fudge truth, we fudge trust." Why is trust so foundational for relationships and community?

Community and Church

Read Ephesians 4:25. Why does Paul connect speaking truthfully with being "members of one body"? How can gossip, suspicion, exaggeration, or careless speech weaken a church community? In what ways can this destroy the church's gospel-centered project?

Where have you seen honesty *strengthen* relationships or communities?

Heart Issues and Spiritual Growth

Jesus says that what comes out of our mouths comes from the heart (Matthew 15:18). What heart issues most often lead people toward dishonesty?

How does focusing on Christ help shape us into more truthful people? What is one area where God may be calling you to greater honesty or integrity?

Practical Application

"If you are not part of the problem or part of the solution, stay out of it." How could applying that principle change conversations in your life?

Read Ephesians 4:29. What does it practically look like to speak "only what is helpful for building others up"? What is one practical habit that could help you grow in truthful, grace-filled speech this week?