

This exploration of Nehemiah chapter 3 reveals a profound truth about how we approach our daily work and service to God. At first glance, this chapter appears to be simply a list of names and construction projects, but beneath the surface lies a powerful message about dedication and worship. The Jewish people didn't just rebuild walls—they consecrated their work to the Lord, starting with the Sheep Gate, the very entrance through which sacrificial lambs entered Jerusalem. This symbolism points directly to Jesus, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. What transforms this ancient building project into a timeless spiritual lesson is the recognition that every stone placed, every gate rebuilt, was an act of worship. This challenges us to reconsider our own daily activities. When we punch in at work, attend school, or engage in routine tasks, are we consecrating these moments to God? The message calls us to understand that worship isn't confined to Sunday mornings—it extends to every breath we take and every action we perform. As 1 Corinthians 10:31 reminds us, everything we do should bring God glory. The rebuilding of Jerusalem's walls becomes a mirror reflecting how we can rebuild broken areas in our own lives, turning ordinary work into extraordinary worship.

Title: Making Yourself Available: Rebuilding What's Broken for God's Glory

Sermon Summary: This sermon from Nehemiah chapter 3 emphasizes that God's work requires willing and available servants, not necessarily the most qualified. Just as the Jews rebuilt Jerusalem's walls as an act of worship, dedicating each section to the Lord, believers today are called to consecrate all their work—whether at home, workplace, or church—as worship to God. The rebuilding effort involved diverse people (priests, rulers, goldsmiths, perfumers, even daughters) working together in community, often near their own homes, addressing brokenness closest to them first. The message challenges Christians to interrupt their routines, surrender their plans, and take hold of the purpose for which Christ took hold of them, avoiding the mistake of those nobles from Tekoa who refused to participate in God's work.

Key Points:

The Jews dedicated their work as an act of worship to God, beginning with the sheep gate which symbolized sacrifice and pointed to Jesus as the Lamb of God

Everything we do—work, school, daily activities—should be consecrated to the Lord and bring Him glory

God doesn't call the equipped; He equips those He calls, looking for availability rather than ability

Nehemiah's plan involved people rebuilding broken walls near their homes, teaching us to address brokenness closest to us first—in our own lives, families, and neighborhoods

Doing God's work may require getting out of our comfortable routines and being willing to be interrupted by divine appointments

The work of rebuilding was done in community, not isolation—we need ministry teams and partners to accomplish God's purposes

Some nobles from Tekoa refused to participate, warning against becoming consumers in the church rather than active participants in God's work

We must avoid burying our God-given talents and instead use our time, treasure, and abilities for kingdom purposes

#### Stories:

The significance of the sheep gate as the entrance for sacrificial lambs, connecting to Jesus riding into Jerusalem on a donkey while thousands of sheep were being brought through this same gate for Passover sacrifice

Moses being chosen despite his speech impediment, showing God doesn't call the equipped but equips the called

Gideon threshing wheat in a winepress out of fear, yet being called a "mighty warrior" by God

A personal testimony about meeting an elderly couple at Culver's after church who had been hurt by the church and given up on attending, demonstrating how being willing to interrupt routines creates divine appointments

A workplace testimony of a church member who does tech work in schools and started a Bible study with Christian coworkers, creating gospel opportunities

The parable of the talents, illustrating that everyone has been given something to use for God's kingdom

#### Directly Referenced or Read:

Nehemiah 3:1-32 - The entire chapter was read, detailing the rebuilding of Jerusalem's walls

1 Corinthians 10:31 - "Everything you do, should be to bring God glory"

Ephesians 2:10 - "We are created new in Christ Jesus to do good works, which he has prepared in advance that we might walk in them"

John 12:26 - "Whoever serves me must follow me. And where I am, my servant also will be. My Father will honor the one who serves me"

Hebrews 10:23-25 - Encouragement to meet together and spur one another on

Nehemiah 3:5 - Specifically mentioned regarding the nobles of Tekoa who refused to work

Philippians 3:12-14 - Paul's statement about pressing on toward the goal

Isaiah 6:8 - "Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying whom shall I send and who will go for us... Here I am send me"

#### Alluded to or Referenced:

John 1:29 - Jesus as "the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world"

Exodus 3-4 - Moses being called by God despite his inadequacies

Judges 6 - Gideon being called a "mighty warrior" while threshing wheat in a winepress

Matthew 25:14-30 - The Parable of the Talents

1 Timothy 3:1-7 - Qualifications for elders, including managing their household well

#### Relevant Verses Aligned with Main Themes:

Colossians 3:23-24 - Working as unto the Lord (theme of work as worship)

Romans 12:4-8 - Different gifts working together in the body (theme of community)

Ecclesiastes 4:9-12 - Two are better than one (theme of working together)

Matthew 28:19-20 - The Great Commission (theme of being sent)

How does viewing your daily work as an act of worship to God change the way you approach your job, school, or responsibilities?

In what ways do we sometimes disqualify ourselves from God's work, and how does the example of perfumers and goldsmiths building walls challenge that mindset?  
What does it mean to consecrate or dedicate something to the Lord, and how can we apply this practice to areas of our lives beyond Sunday worship?  
Why do you think Nehemiah had people rebuild the walls closest to their own homes, and what broken relationships or situations close to you might God be calling you to address first?  
How do our comfortable routines sometimes prevent us from being available for what God wants us to do, and what might it look like to surrender those routines?  
What is the difference between being a consumer in the church versus being an active participant in God's work, and which category do you find yourself in?  
The nobles of Tekoa refused to bend their necks to the work. What are some modern ways Christians might resist doing the work God has called them to while still appearing engaged?  
How does doing ministry or serving God in community rather than isolation strengthen our ability to persevere through difficult or overwhelming circumstances?  
Paul spoke of taking hold of that for which Christ took hold of us. What specific purpose or calling do you believe Jesus has taken hold of your life for?  
When Isaiah said 'Here I am, send me,' he was responding to God's question about who would go. What would it practically look like for you to pray this prayer in your current season of life?

Work as Worship - The Jews dedicated their work as an act of worship to God  
Availability Over Ability - God uses willing people, not just qualified people  
Start Close to Home - Nehemiah's plan involved people rebuilding walls near their homes  
Interrupted Routines - Doing God's work may require getting out of our routines  
Community Over Isolation - The rebuilding was done together, not alone  
The Choice to Participate - Some refused to take part in the work

Discussion Questions

Section 1: Work as Worship (Nehemiah 3:1)

The people dedicated the Sheep Gate first and consecrated their work to the Lord. What does it mean to "consecrate" or "set apart" our daily work to God?

Read 1 Corinthians 10:31. What are some practical ways you can make your work—whether at a job, school, or home—an act of worship to God this week?

How does viewing our work as worship change our attitude toward tasks we find mundane or difficult?

Section 2: Availability Over Ability (Nehemiah 3:8, 32)

The sermon mentioned perfumers, goldsmiths, and daughters all participating in wall-building. Why do you think God often chooses "unqualified" people for His work?

Read Ephesians 2:10. What does it mean that God has "prepared in advance" good works for us to do? How does this encourage you when you feel inadequate?

Share an area where you've felt God calling you but you've disqualified yourself. What would it look like to make yourself available instead?

### Section 3: Start Close to Home (Nehemiah 3:10, 23, 28-29)

Many people rebuilt the walls "next to their own houses." Why is it sometimes harder to address brokenness closest to us rather than reaching out to strangers?

What "brokenness close to home" might God be calling you to address—whether in your family, neighborhood, or close relationships?

The pastor mentioned that prayer "tills the soil for seeds to be planted." How can your group commit to praying for the broken relationships or situations closest to each of you?

### Section 4: Interrupted Routines (John 12:26)

The rebuilding took 52 days and required people to leave their routines. What "holy routines" do you have that are good, but might sometimes keep you from being available to God's interruptions?

Share about the Culver's story from the sermon. When was a time God interrupted your plans for a divine appointment? What happened?

What's one area where you sense God asking you to be more flexible or available, even if it disrupts your schedule?

### Section 5: Community Over Isolation

The text repeatedly says people worked "next to" each other. Why is doing ministry in teams or communities so important? What are the dangers of trying to serve God in isolation?

Read Hebrews 10:24-25. How does your group currently "spur one another on toward love and good deeds"? How could you improve in this area?

Is there a ministry or mission God has put on your heart where you need to find a team or partner? How can this group help?

### Section 6: The Choice to Participate (Nehemiah 3:5)

The nobles of Tekoa "would not put their shoulders to the work." What are some reasons people in the church today become "consumers" rather than contributors?

Read the Parable of the Talents (Matthew 25:14-30). What "talents" (time, resources, abilities, passions) has God given you that you might be "burying in the ground"?

The sermon asked: "Have you made yourself willing and available to do whatever God asks?" How would you honestly answer that question today?

## Personal Reflection Questions

What specific work is God calling me to right now?

Am I willing to let God interrupt my routines?

Where is the brokenness closest to me that I need to address?

Am I serving in the community or trying to do everything alone?

What's one step of obedience I need to take this week?

Practical Application

This Week's Challenge:

Choose ONE of the following action steps:

**Consecrate Your Work:** Each day this week, before starting work/school, pray a simple prayer: "Lord, I dedicate this day's work to You as an act of worship."

**Address Brokenness Close to Home:** Identify one broken relationship near you (family, neighbor, coworker) and commit to praying for them daily. Then take one practical step toward restoration.

**Make Yourself Available:** Block out 2-3 hours this week with no agenda except to be available for whatever God might ask you to do. Be open to divine interruptions.

**Find Your Team:** If God has put something on your heart, reach out to at least one person this week to share it and ask them to pray with you or partner with you.

**Serve Together:** Sign up for a ministry opportunity at church or organize a service project with your small group.

## Prayer Time

Pray for each person to hear clearly what work God is calling them to

Pray for willingness to address brokenness close to home

Pray for flexibility to let God interrupt our routines

Pray for those who don't yet know Jesus, especially those close to us

Pray for unity and partnership in doing God's work together

Closing Prayer: "Lord, we echo Isaiah's words: 'Here I am, send me.' Make us willing and available to do whatever You ask. Help us not to bury our talents but to use them for Your glory. Show us the work You've prepared for us, starting with the brokenness closest to us. Give us courage to step out of our routines and into Your purposes. We surrender our lives to You. In Jesus' name, Amen."

## Before Next Week

Share with the group how your action step went

Be prepared to discuss any "divine interruptions" you experienced

Continue praying for each other's specific areas of obedience

Consider reading the entire book of Nehemiah this week to see the complete story of restoration