

What if the very place we find ourselves today is exactly where God intends us to be? This exploration of Nehemiah 11 challenges us to examine our 'lot in life' and how we respond to it. The text reveals something profound: while one out of every ten Israelites was chosen by lot to live in the devastated city of Jerusalem, some actually volunteered to go. These volunteers were commended because they embraced their calling rather than resisted it. We see a powerful contrast between Abraham, who trusted God with his portion, and Lot, who chose for himself what looked best and ended up losing everything. The message cuts to the heart of our daily struggles: Are we fighting against our circumstances, or are we asking God what He wants us to do right where we are? The detailed listing of names, roles, and responsibilities in this chapter reminds us that God sees and remembers every person who faithfully serves in their assigned place, whether as leaders, gatekeepers, musicians, or those who handle the outside work. Our names matter to God, and the ultimate question becomes: Is our name written in the Lamb's Book of Life? When we stop choosing our own way and instead settle into God's purpose for us, we discover that worship, prayer, and thanksgiving become the weapons that break through every barrier we face.

Title: Accepting Your Lot in Life: Living in God's Calling

Sermon Summary: This sermon from Nehemiah 11 explores the concept of accepting one's "lot in life" - the circumstances, positions, and callings God places us in. The pastor examines how the Israelites cast lots to determine who would live in the devastated city of Jerusalem, with one out of ten chosen to repopulate the holy city. Through this narrative, the sermon emphasizes that God recognizes and remembers those who accept their calling, whether as leaders, volunteers, or faithful servants. The central message encourages believers to stop fighting against their circumstances and instead ask God what He wants them to do in their current situation. Rather than choosing our own path like Lot did (which led to destruction), we should trust God's placement in our lives like Abraham did. The sermon challenges listeners to be people of standing - those who love God, live righteously, and accept their God-given roles whether as fathers, business leaders, church volunteers, or faithful servants in any capacity.

Key Points:

- God ordains our lot in life and remembers those who faithfully serve in their calling
- Choosing our own way (like Lot) leads to destruction; trusting God's placement (like Abraham) leads to blessing
- Leaders, fathers, and people in authority have been called and anointed by God for their positions
- Volunteers are commended by God and essential for His work
- Your name being written in the Lamb's Book of Life is the most important question
- Being a person of standing means loving God and living righteously regardless of worldly pressures
- Every role matters - from chief officers to gatekeepers to those doing outside work
- Worship is essential for spiritual breakthrough and should be practiced daily, not just on Sundays
- Settling into your lot in life rather than fighting it allows God to work through you
- We should be gatekeepers who sound the alarm and stand for righteousness

Stories:

- Personal story of a friend who jumped on his Bible in the gravel to demonstrate standing on God's Word when the pastor's father was terminally ill
- Abraham and Lot's choice of land - Lot chose the beautiful plain for himself and lost everything, while Abraham trusted God and received blessing
- The lineage of Perez, born from the complicated story of Judah and Tamar (Genesis 38), yet used in Jesus' lineage
- Asaph's testimony in Psalm 73 about almost slipping when seeing the wicked prosper, then understanding their end after entering the sanctuary
- Pastor Bill Myers saying his goal was to be the best sheep in the congregation despite having pastored huge churches
- Dean Sherman's story about worship breaking through spiritual resistance - when witnessing failed, they spent a week worshiping God, then revival broke out
- Personal testimony of the pastor's journey from farmer to garage door installer to ministry, learning to accept rather than fight his calling
- David defeating lions and bears while worshiping God as a shepherd
- The worship team at Mount Zion and how Pastor Steve trained multiple worship leaders who now serve in various churches

Scripture References from the Sermon

1. **Nehemiah 11:1-2** - Leaders settling in Jerusalem; casting lots
2. **Nehemiah 11:3-36** - Complete listing of those who settled in Jerusalem
3. **Genesis 13** - Abraham and Lot parting ways
4. **Genesis 13:8-11** - Lot choosing for himself
5. **Deuteronomy 29:24-25** - Why the Lord brought destruction on the land
6. **Genesis 38** - Story of Tamar, Judah, and Perez (referenced but not read)
7. **Matthew 1** - Genealogy of Jesus including Perez (alluded to as "the begots")
8. **Psalm 73** - Asaph's psalm about the wicked prospering
9. **Revelation 20:12, 15; 21:27** - The Lamb's Book of Life
10. **Matthew 24:35** - "Heaven and earth will pass away, but my word will remain"
11. **Ezekiel 33:6** - Watchman's responsibility to sound the alarm
12. **Psalm 84:10** - "I'd rather be a gatekeeper in the house of the Lord"
13. **2 Chronicles 20:21-22** - Sending worship leaders into battle
14. **2 Chronicles 20:12** - "We do not know what to do, but our eyes are on you"
15. **1 Samuel 17** - David defeating lions and bears (alluded to)
16. **1 Samuel 27:6** - David being given Ziklag
17. **Proverbs 13:15** - "The way of the transgressor is hard" (quoted in the sermon)
18. **Romans 8:28** - God working all things for good (theme of accepting your lot)
19. **Jeremiah 29:11** - God's plans and purposes (theme throughout)
20. **1 Corinthians 12:4-7** - Different gifts and callings (leadership theme)
21. **Ephesians 2:10** - Created for good works (theme of divine calling)

How does the story of Lot choosing for himself versus Abraham trusting God's provision challenge your approach to making major life decisions?

In what ways might you be fighting against your current lot in life rather than asking God what He wants you to do with it?

The sermon mentions that Jerusalem was decimated because the people abandoned their covenant with God. What parallels do you see in our culture today when we walk away from God's ways?

Why do you think God chose to include Perez in the lineage of Jesus despite his controversial origins, and what does this reveal about God's redemptive purposes?

The text describes people who volunteered to live in Jerusalem when others had to be chosen by lot. What areas of service in God's kingdom are you being called to volunteer for rather than waiting to be asked?

How does the concept of being a gatekeeper who sounds the alarm when trouble comes apply to your role as a Christian in your workplace, family, or community?

The sermon emphasizes that worship was so important it was regulated by the king's orders and happened daily. How might daily worship transform the spiritual battles you face?

What does it mean to be a person of standing in today's world, and how can fathers and leaders rise up to take their stand on God's Word regardless of cultural pressure?

The passage shows God remembering and recording names for eternity. How does knowing your name can be written in the Lamb's Book of Life impact how you live today?

Instead of complaining about your circumstances like the sermon describes, what would it look like to settle into your lot in life and ask God what He wants you to do now?

Small Group Guide: "What Is Your Lot in Life?"

Based on Nehemiah 11 | Pastor Dave

Opening Prayer & Icebreaker

Prayer Focus: Ask God to help each person honestly evaluate their current "lot in life" and be open to His direction.

Icebreaker Question: Share one milestone moment in your life where God clearly showed you His direction or taught you an important lesson.

Key Scripture References

Primary Text: Nehemiah 11:1-2

Supporting Passages: Genesis 13:8-13, Deuteronomy 29:24-25, Psalm 73

Summary of Main Points

God assigns and recognizes our "lot in life" - our current situation, role, and calling

Choosing our own way versus accepting God's placement - the contrast between Lot and Abraham

God remembers and records names - the importance of having your name in the Lamb's Book of Life

Various roles are needed in God's kingdom - leaders, gatekeepers, musicians, workers, volunteers

Being settled versus fighting against your lot - finding peace and purpose where God has placed you

Discussion Questions

Understanding Your Lot in Life

What does "your lot in life" mean to you personally? How would you describe your current lot in life - your circumstances, roles, and responsibilities?

Abraham vs. Lot: Read Genesis 13:8-13. How do you see yourself in this story? Are you more like Abraham (trusting God with the outcome) or Lot (choosing what looks best to you)? Share examples.

Why did so few people want to live in Jerusalem? (It had been destroyed because of disobedience - Deuteronomy 29:24-25). What "difficult assignments" in your life might actually be opportunities for rebuilding and restoration?

Recognizing God's Call

The sermon mentioned many different roles: leaders, chief officers, heads of families, men of standing, gatekeepers, musicians, those in charge of outside work, those who led thanksgiving and prayer, and volunteers. Which role resonates most with your current season of life?

The people "commended all who volunteered" (Nehemiah 11:2). What does it mean to volunteer in God's kingdom versus being forced into service? How does attitude affect our effectiveness?

Is your name written in the Lamb's Book of Life? If someone in your group is unsure, take time to discuss what it means to have assurance of salvation through Jesus Christ.

Application & Reflection

Pastor Dave asked: "Are you settled with your lot in life, or are you kicking against the goads?" Be honest - are you fighting against where God has placed you, or have you found peace in it? What's the difference?

Gatekeepers were called to "sound the alarm" when they saw trouble coming. In what areas of life are you called to be a gatekeeper (family, workplace, community)? Are you sounding the alarm when needed?

The musicians were "under the king's orders" for daily worship (Nehemiah 11:22-23). How can daily worship change your perspective on difficult circumstances? Share a time when worship broke through in your life.

"Lord, I need you" and "I don't know what to do, but my eyes are on you." When was the last time you prayed these prayers? What was the result?

Key Takeaways

Your lot in life is not random - God has placed you where you are for a purpose

Choosing your own way often leads to trouble - surrendering to God's plan brings blessing (Abraham vs. Lot)

Every role matters in God's kingdom - from leaders to volunteers, gatekeepers to musicians

Being "settled" doesn't mean being passive - it means accepting your assignment and asking God what to do next

Worship is warfare - daily praise breaks through spiritual opposition

God remembers and records faithful servants - your name matters to Him

Practical Applications

This Week's Challenge: Choose ONE

For Those Struggling with Their Lot:

Each morning this week, pray: "Lord, this is my lot in life. What do You want me to do today?" Journal what happens.

For Those Called to Lead:

Identify one area where you've been avoiding leadership responsibility. Take one concrete step this week to lead in a godly manner.

For Potential Volunteers:

Contact the church office or a ministry leader and ask, "Where do you need help?" Then volunteer for one specific role.

For Everyone:

Start each day with thanksgiving. Before your feet hit the floor, say "Thank You, Lord" and name three specific blessings.

Incorporate daily worship into your routine - in the car, at home, wherever you are.

Reflection Exercise

Personal Inventory:

Take 5-10 minutes of quiet time. Have each person complete these sentences:

My current lot in life includes these roles: _____

The role I'm most grateful for is: _____

The role I struggle with most is: _____

One way I can be a "person of standing" this week: _____

If I'm honest, I need to stop fighting against: _____

One specific way I can worship God daily: _____

Share (if comfortable) one insight from your reflection with the group.

Closing Prayer Points

Pray for those who are uncertain about their salvation - that they would have their names written in the Lamb's Book of Life

Pray for fathers and heads of families (especially relevant for Father's Day message)

Pray for those struggling to accept their current lot in life - for peace and direction

Pray for the church to raise up more volunteers and servants

Pray for daily worship to become a reality in each person's life

Pray for wisdom to be gatekeepers who sound the alarm when needed

For Next Week

Scripture Reading: Continue in Nehemiah 12 (or the next sermon passage)

Memory Verse: "I would rather be a gatekeeper in the house of the Lord than dwell in the tents of the wicked." (Psalm 84:10)

Follow-up: Be prepared to share how God spoke to you about your "lot in life" this week.

Leader Notes

Be sensitive to those who may be in very difficult circumstances - job loss, family crisis, health issues. Emphasize that accepting our lot doesn't mean we don't seek change, but that we trust God in the process.

Have resources available for those who want to discuss salvation assurance.

Consider having testimonies from volunteers in your church about how serving has blessed them.

The sermon emphasized men of standing for Father's Day, but apply leadership principles to all believers.