

Encounter Church
Sunday October 19, 2025

Together We Build
Turning Problems Into Possibilities (Part 2)

INTRODUCTION: Last week we talked about “Turning our Problems into Possibilities.” First, we need to *Recognize*, hey that’s a problem. Then we take one more step and we *Agonize* over the problem.

Nehemiah *recognized* that the people of Jerusalem being in great distress and reproach with broken down walls was a problem. He not only *recognized* the problem, but he also *agonized* over the problem.

He prayed a prayer of *contrition*. A prayer of *confession*. A prayer of *confidence*. And a prayer of *commitment*.

As we continue with this series from the Book of Nehemiah I want us to notice again the verse that I believe sets the tone for the Book of Nehemiah. I love this verse and believe that it’s applicable for today.

Nehemiah 2:20 (NKJV)- “So I answered them, and said to them, “The God of heaven Himself will prosper us; therefore, we His servants will arise and build,…”

BUT **WHY** DID THEY ARISE AND BUILD? Can I give you a New Testament answer?

Matthew 5:13-16 (MSG)- “Let me tell you why you are here. You’re here to be salt-seasoning that brings out the God-flavors of this earth. If you lose your saltiness, how will people taste godliness? You’ve lost your usefulness and will end up in the garbage. “Here’s another way to put it: You’re here to be light, bringing out the God-colors in the world. God is not a secret to be kept. We’re going public with this, as public as a city on a hill. If I make you light-bearers, you don’t think I’m going to hide you under a bucket, do you? I’m putting you on a light stand. Now that I’ve put you there on a hilltop, on a light stand—shine! Keep open house; be generous with your lives. By opening up to others, you’ll prompt people to open up with God, this generous Father in heaven.”

“I want to make a difference with people who want to make a difference, doing something that makes a difference.” John Maxwell

To do this we have to *recognize there’s a problem* and then *agonize* over the problem.

BUT THIS THIRD STEP IS ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY BUT MANY TIMES NOT APPLIED BECAUSE IT DOESN’T SEEM SPIRITUAL.

3. Organize

That's what Nehemiah did! He organized!

Did you know people sometimes get so spiritual that they fail to do anything practical!

And the thing I love about Nehemiah is that he was deeply spiritual and intensely practical!

So when God began to move in his heart, and he saw that the walls were in disarray, and he saw that there was a need, his mind began to work and he started to plan!

You know we as a church have made plans. And these plans have been soaked and saturated in prayer.

And we believe that our plans are God's plans, for we have the mind of Christ!

There are some people who don't want to plan! There are some people who think that if you organize, you're unspiritual.

It's unspiritual, if you don't organize! It's unspiritual if you don't plan!

GOD IS A PLANNER!

Jeremiah 29:11 (MSG)- "I know what I'm doing. I have it all planned out—plans to take care of you, not abandon you, plans to give you the future you hope for."

Ephesians 2:10 (NLT)- "For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago."

Psalms 138:8-(NLT) "The Lord will work out his plans for my life— for your faithful love, O Lord, endures forever. Don't abandon me, for you made me."

2 Timothy 1:9 (NLT)- "For God saved us and called us to live a holy life. He did this, not because we deserved it, but because that was his plan from before the beginning of time—to show us his grace through Christ Jesus."

NEHEMIAH WAS A PLANNER BECAUSE GOD IS A PLANNER

For four months Nehemiah **prayed** and **planned** before he appeared before the King.

Nehemiah 2:2-6 (NLT)- "So the king asked me, "Why are you looking so sad? You don't look sick to me. You must be deeply troubled." Then I was terrified, but I replied, "Long

live the king! How can I not be sad? For the city where my ancestors are buried is in ruins, and the gates have been destroyed by fire.” The king asked, “Well, how can I help you?” With a prayer to the God of heaven, I replied, “If it please the king, and if you are pleased with me, your servant, send me to Judah to rebuild the city where my ancestors are buried.” The king, with the queen sitting beside him, asked, “How long will you be gone? When will you return?” After I told him how long I would be gone, the king agreed to my request.

IN ORGANIZING AROUND GOD’S PLAN TO TURN PROBLEMS INTO
POSSIBILITIES I NEED TO ASK GOD FOR TWO THINGS:

a. Ask for His Protection

Nehemiah 2:7 (NLT)- “I also said to the king, “If it please the king, let me have letters addressed to the governors of the province west of the Euphrates River, instructing them to let me travel safely through their territories on my way to Judah.”

Nehemiah was saying that as I go people are going to want to know who I am, what authority do you have, and what right do you have to travel here. I need something to pull out, a letter from the King giving me protection.

***Friends, aren’t you thankful, that as Children of God, we have that protection?
Aren’t you thankful that God has given us a letter to pull out. His Holy Word, the Bible.***

Aren’t you thankful He’s given us His authority.

Luke 10:19 (NLT)- “Look, I have given you authority over all the power of the enemy,…”

Isaiah 41:10 (NLT)- “Don’t be afraid, for I am with you. Don’t be discouraged, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you. I will hold you up with my victorious right hand.”

NOT ONLY ASK FOR PROTECTION BUT...

b. Ask for His Provision

Nehemiah 2:8- “And please give me a letter addressed to Asaph, the manager of the king’s forest, instructing him to give me timber. I will need it to make beams for the gates of the Temple fortress, for the city walls, and for a house for myself.” And the king granted these requests, because the gracious hand of God was on me.

ASK FOR PROVISION.....AND BE SPECIFIC!

Matthew 7:7-11 (NLT)- “Keep on asking, and you will receive what you ask for. Keep on seeking, and you will find. Keep on knocking, and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks, receives. Everyone who seeks, finds. And to everyone who knocks, the door will be opened. “You parents—if your children ask for a loaf of bread, do you give them a stone instead? Or if they ask for a fish, do you give them a snake? Of course not! So if you sinful people know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give good gifts to those who ask him.”

CONCLUSION: Friends, if you will **recognize** the problem and then begin to **agonize** over that problem to the point that you confess and commit, then you have every right to **organize** around God’s plan and ask for His **protection** and **provision**.

Now I’m just not talking about building a building. I’m talking about **building a life!**

I’m talking about **building a family!** I’m talking about **building healthy relationships!**

It’s time God’s children start being like God’s children!

LET’S PRAY: **Father in Heaven, we just pray that You will lay upon our hearts a burden. O God, that we’ll not be content to be in our warm nest of security, but Lord, that we might do something to help heal humanity’s hurt. Oh Lord, that we might find our place along the wall—that we might say, “The hand of our God is upon us...Therefore, we, His servants, will arise, and build.” And Lord, help us to see that problems are also opportunities. And help us to see, Lord, that our problem is a possibility if we’ll only see it that way. In the name of Jesus, amen!**