

**Icebreaker:**

When have you been faced with a very difficult project or task? What did you do?

**Read Nehemiah 2 and discuss:**

1. In his relating to the king, and in his relating to those in Judah, did Nehemiah relate consistently? Why do you think so?
2. Why do you think Nehemiah didn't tell anyone in Jerusalem his plan right away and why does he inspect the city at night alone (verses 11-16)?
3. Nehemiah says that God has a vision for him for Jerusalem in verse 12 when he says, "what my God had put into my heart to do for Jerusalem." How do you discern if you or someone else has a vision or a word from God?
4. Why did those in Judah seem willing to follow Nehemiah (verse 18)? When you've been a leader, how have you garnered support for your vision or mission?
5. Has there been a promise or vision that God has given you that you've had a hard time believing? Examples might be accepting the promise of God's grace and forgiveness; the vision to reach out to a particular neighbor; or a vision for changing something where you have control.
6. Most leaders are either vision oriented or pragmatic oriented. Nehemiah was both. Do you tend to be more vision oriented or practical oriented? What are the strengths and values of each?
7. When you've met opposition like Nehemiah did (verses 10 and 19), how did you prepare? How did you see God show up?

**Prayer:**

As you pray for one another, please pray for the following needs in our church family:

**prayer requests**

- > Prayers of healing for Ann Baun, John Lindenschmidt, and Jamie Jones.

Nehemiah is truly an example of a God-inspired leader. In chapter 1, he wept, prayed, confessed, fasted then got ready to act. In chapter 2, he acted humbly and carefully with the King, and acted with boldness and planning with the people in Jerusalem. Since God's Word is living and active, may Nehemiah inspire us to live with more humility and boldness in following Jesus in our own lives.

1. No, he interacts differently. With the King, he is careful and humble, yet asks for what he needs. He does so in a respectful way. With the people in Judah, he speaks more like a bold leader with vision. In both cases, he has taken time to pray for God's guidance and help, and been strategic and confident in how he speaks.
2. As a leader, Nehemiah takes time to check information, collect data, see if his thinking is correct, and if his vision is do-able with God's help. He is smart and bold at the same time.
3. Having a "word" or a "vision from God" can be tricky. Did God really say that or is it something else? We can ask: Does the vision/word exalt Jesus? Does it align with scripture? Will other Christians confirm that it is from God? Will God make it happen and will it produce fruit? (adapted from Adventures in Missions missionaries)
4. Some reasons why the people may have been willing to follow Nehemiah: He showed confidence, they were desperate for a leader, he was team-oriented, he had a "we" mentality to accomplish the task. Nehemiah gives them an inspired task, "Come, let us rebuild the walls." Perhaps his confidence comes from God and God's vision. We might use some of Nehemiah's examples of leadership in our own lives.
5. This is more of a personal sharing question. Encourage your group members to share. Be prepared to go first. It can be something as personal as accepting God's promise of grace after you have failed, or something as public as success in a big project.
6. Nehemiah had a vision from God to rebuild Jerusalem, and thus help the people there regain their dignity and purpose. He was also very pragmatic, taking time to plan what he would say to the King and doing "recon" at night on the walls of Jerusalem. Pragmatic leaders help ask, "How can we do this?" Then they make a list to accomplish the task. Other leaders cast a vision or rally the people with creativity and inspiration to go "take the hill."
7. Meeting opposition, especially as direct as Nehemiah did, is tough. The local leaders were displeased and mocked and ridiculed Nehemiah. Many of us would drop our heads and turn around and go home. Using Nehemiah's example, discuss some ways you can prepare to meet opposition and to expect God to act if it is truly God's vision.