

Icebreaker:

What was a significant document or agreement where you signed your name? Buying a home, signing a marriage license, affiliating with a business or professional association, other?

Review Nehemiah 10 and discuss:

1. Last Sunday, Jerry asked us to take 5 minutes each day to remember God's faithfulness. Many of you received a daily text from us as a reminder. Were you able to take 5 minutes to write down, reflect, or tell someone about how God has been faithful to you? If so, share with your group what that was like. If not, why not?
2. In this chapter, the people agree to sign a binding agreement to obey God's commands. For the Christian today, are there similar covenants that reflect the same values of this chapter?
3. Is giving to church or to other ministries a reliable measure of commitment to God and his work? Why or why not?
4. Verse 31 reminds God's people of the importance of the practice of sabbath. Eugene Peterson says that sabbath is a defense against hurry that desecrates time. What do you think Peterson means by this? Have you experienced how a hurried life can desecrate time and, if so, what has that looked like in your life?
5. One aspect of sabbath is that it is a time to do what it is that delights you. Peter Scazzero encourages us to set aside time to reflect on the places, activities, and people that energize you. What are those things that bring you delight?
6. The last verse says, "We will not neglect the house of our God." What could this mean for us at ZPC?
7. As you reflect on the first 10 chapters of Nehemiah, what is one thing that stands out to you?

Prayer:

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

prayer requests

- > Prayers of healing for Randy Laffoon, Bob Tibbetts, Phil Isenbarger, and Tracy Conner.
- > Prayers of comfort for Sue Hudson and family in the death of her husband Pete.

This week concludes our 10 week fall semester. Thank you for leading your group this fall!

The wall of Jerusalem was completed. Families were listed and rebuilding homes. Now the agreement that God made with his people through Moses was restored. The people have now agreed again to carefully obey all the commands of God (see Neh. 10:28-29). Today, we can covenant with God to honor God in our relationships, our time, our things, and our giving. We know that sometimes we will fail or wander off, but we always have our relationship and covenant with God where we can return.

1. In Nehemiah chapter 9 the people consistently remember God's goodness, and that they are a people who have "stiff necks" and often turn away from God. Being reminded to remember who God is can help us to persevere in faith and walk with God.
2. The people agree to sign a binding agreement committing themselves to obey God (Neh. 9:38 and 10:28). Some of the same values the church shares today are giving back to God, committing time and talent, remembering festivals (Easter and Christmas and others), and to give God the "firstfruits" of our lives.
3. The first question we should answer is: Is Jesus Christ my Savior and Lord (leader of my life)? If the answer is yes, then giving of our resources including our finances, our time, and our relationships can be reliable measurements for commitment to God.
4. Keeping Sabbath is one of God's Ten Commandments. It is important to God and was modeled in the creation story by God in Genesis. When we are not resting on Sabbath, we are often in a hurry, pushed to hurry by expectations of our smart phones, computers, our work and our family obligations. Hurry does not allow us time to reflect on what's important but pushes us to the next item on our agenda. Sabbath and rest can help us fight against hurry that can distract us from what's important.
5. We can be energized by doing healthy things that delight us. Think creatively what delights you and God. Here are some suggestions: Being quiet in prayer and reflection, talking to a close friend or loved one, being in nature, exercise, reading, watching a movie, favorite show or sport, eating favorite foods or going to your family's favorite restaurant.
6. The people of Israel used their bread for the grain offerings, brought wood to burn on the altar, and brought crops to the storeroom for tithes and offerings. Today, we might find ways to maintain, improve, and creatively give to use our land and buildings at ZPC, including the Sanctuary.
7. We have covered many topics in Nehemiah including confession, prayer, planning, inspecting the wall, building the wall, fighting opposition, facing fear and obstacles, helping the poor and oppressed families, listing the names of the important and ordinary people, worship and hearing the Word, and remembering God's goodness and our own sins. What is something that impacted you and your group?