

MESSAGE

REBUILDING OUR NEIGHBORHOOD & CITY

JUNE 14/15, 2014 | PASTOR J.C. HEIDEN | NEHEMIAH 1-2

"Then I said to them, "You see the trouble we are in: Jerusalem lies in ruins, and its gates have been burned with fire. Come, let us rebuild the wall of Jerusalem, and we will no longer be in disgrace." (Nehemiah 2:17)

Loving our neighborhood & city starts with turning to the Lord (1:1-11)

The Report: It's not supposed to be like this! (Nehemiah 1:1-4)

- The State of Jerusalem
- The State of Milwaukee

Nehemiah's Response: Heartbroken, but hopeful because of our great God! (Nehemiah 1:4-11)

- The wrong response: Someone else's problem.
- The right response: Nehemiah turns to the Lord with a whole heart.

Loving our neighborhood & city moves us to take "calculated action" (2:1-20)

Approaching the king (Nehemiah 2:1-5)

Preparing for "calculated action" (Nehemiah 2:6-16)

Building a coalition and trusting the Lord (Nehemiah 2:17-20)

What's your role to play in our neighborhood & city?

STUDY GUIDE

1. Think about the city of Milwaukee. What are some of the great things about our city? What are some of the things about the city that need to change? What are some of the things that you think might break God's heart about the city of Milwaukee?
2. This week we continue our series, "Love Your Neighborhood," by looking at the story of Nehemiah and his quest to rebuild the walls around the city of Jerusalem. We will consider how this story of what God did through His people can guide us as we engage in our neighborhood and city. Whether you are alone or with a small group, begin by asking God to speak to you and then read Nehemiah 1-2.
3. Notice that Nehemiah turns to the Lord with all of his heart and seeks the Lord's direction before he takes any action (Nehemiah 1:4-11). In what specific ways did Nehemiah respond to the troubling report about the city of Jerusalem? How is Nehemiah's response instructive for us today as we think about our own city?
4. In Jeremiah 29:4-7, God gives further instructions to His people about living abundantly in the city that they find themselves in. Read this passage out loud. What do these verses tell us about God's great care and concern for cities and His great love for the people who live in them? What does God want our city to be like?
5. In chapter 2 Nehemiah starts to plan for the rebuilding process. What are some of the "calculated actions" that Nehemiah takes to ensure for a successful project? Why is such detailed planning and preparation necessary for effective ministry?
6. Jesus teaches His disciples how to pray in Matthew 6:9-13. Read this passage out loud. Jesus taught us to pray that God's kingdom would come and that His will would be done on earth just like His will is done in heaven. What would it look like if God's kingdom would come and if God's will would be done in the city of Milwaukee?
 - a) What would stay the same?
 - b) What would be different?
7. How can you play your part in making God's kingdom more of a daily reality in our neighborhood and city?
Is the Lord leading you to pray more intentionally for our neighborhood and city?
Is the Lord leading you to join with a local outreach ministry here at Eastbrook?
Is the Lord leading you to reach out into your own neighborhood?

[Next week we continue in our message series, "Love Your Neighborhood."]