

Rebuild Don't Relax, Part 6

Jimmy Harris February 26, 2017

Today

continuing our study in Ezra/Nehemiah

Today we are going to be learning from Nehemiah three things we need to do to rebuild our lives

Continuing our story of Rebuild Don't Relax

- King Cyrus had given the Israelites in exile permission to return and rebuild, along with the financing to repair the temple
- 50,000 went, 100,000 stayed behind
- they built the foundation of the temple
- time has gone by, there have been delays, for three generations, and the project isn't finished... the walls are still down

What are you being called to rebuild?

- **Nehemiah 1:5-11**

And I said: "I pray, Lord God of heaven, O great and awesome God, You who keep Your covenant and mercy with those who love You and observe Your commandments, please let Your ear be attentive and Your eyes open, that You may hear the prayer of Your servant which I pray before You now, day and night, for the children of Israel Your servants, and confess the sins of the children of Israel which we have sinned against You. Both my father's house and I have sinned. We have acted very corruptly against You, and have not kept the commandments, the statutes, nor the ordinances which You commanded Your servant Moses. Remember, I pray, the word that You commanded Your servant Moses, saying, 'If you are unfaithful, I will scatter you among the nations; ⁹ but if you return to Me, and keep My commandments and do them, though some of you were cast out to the farthest part of the heavens, **yet I will gather them from there, and bring them to the place which I have chosen as a dwelling for My name.**' Now these are Your servants and Your people, whom You have redeemed by Your great power, and by Your strong hand. O Lord, I pray, please let Your ear be attentive to the prayer of Your servant, and to the prayer of Your servants who desire to fear Your name; and let Your servant prosper this day, I pray, and grant him mercy in the sight of this man." For I was the king's cupbearer.

What is going on here?

- Nehemiah finds out, his heart is broken
- He identifies with the sin of his people, takes ownership and prays night and day
- Reflects back on the promises to Moses — for a remnant
- Asks for mercy as he goes to look for an opportunity to request help from the King

What is a cupbearer to the King?

- Important trusted role in the King's court
- Dangerous job, where if you broke the King's trust = death
- It was illegal to be sad in the presence of the king

- **Nehemiah 2:1-4**

And it came to pass in the month of Nisan, in the twentieth year of King Artaxerxes, when wine was before him, that I took the wine and gave it to the king. Now I had never been sad in his presence before. Therefore the king said to me, "Why is your face sad, since you are not sick? This is nothing but sorrow of heart. **"So I became dreadfully afraid**, and said to the king, "May the king live forever! Why should my face not be sad, when the city, the place of my fathers' tombs, lies waste, and its gates are burned with fire?" Then the king said to me, **"What do you request?"**

Stop pretending

Notice: "He was dreadfully afraid"

Courage is being afraid and doing the right thing anyway.

If you are going to REBUILD your life you will have to....

- **Stop Pretending** — no matter what the cost will be. Look honestly at the obvious big impossible problem in front of your face, and stop pretending it is not there.
 - Risked DEATH
 - Why don't people finish rebuilding their lives? **They won't stop pretending.** The problems in our lives persist because we just keep smiling in the presence of the KING forever.

What does pretending look like?

- When we pretend — we put things off. We rationalize.
- Go to small group and pretend everything is fine — marriage falling apart.
- Come to church — act like everything's fine — and it isn't.

If you lose everything, you won't lose anything

- **Hebrews 4:14-16**

Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

- **Notice: The throne of Grace**
 - Not the throne of Judgment
 - Not the throne of fear
 - Not the throne of control
 - Not the throne of religion
 - Not the throne of *just try harder*
- **It was illegal to be sad in the presence of Nehemiah's earthly king**

- We live like our God is just like this King. We think we have to pretend like everything is fine
- It is not illegal to come to the throne room of God with confidence.
- There is no pretending in the presence of our KING

What is it like in the throne room of the KING of KINGS?

- **Romans 8:1-4**

There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God did by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin: He condemned sin in the flesh, that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.

- Jesus has given us the **POWER** to overcome **ANYTHING** that is condemning us
- Be sad, be broken hearted over sin, but then Come **BOLDY** to the throne of Grace
- Move forward with confidence and **POWER**
- There is **NO** condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus
- Take some risks! We have a good King!

If you are going to **REBUILD** your life you will have to....

GO BIG!!! — or go home!!!

- **Nehemiah 2:4-10**

“So I prayed to the God of heaven. And I said to the king, “If it pleases the king, and if your servant has found favor in your sight, I ask that you send me to Judah, to the city of my fathers’ tombs, that I may rebuild it.” Then the king said to me (the queen also sitting beside him), “How long will your journey be? And when will you return?” So it pleased the king to send me; and I set him a time. Furthermore I said to the king, “If it pleases the king, let letters be given to me for the governors of the region beyond the River, that they must permit me to pass through till I come to Judah, and a letter to Asaph the keeper of the king’s forest, that he must give me timber to make beams for the gates of the citadel which pertains to the temple, for the city wall, and for the house that I will occupy.” And the king granted them to me according to the good hand of my God upon me. Then I went to the governors in the region beyond the River, and gave them the king’s letters. Now the king had sent captains of the army and horsemen with me. When Sanballat the Horonite and Tobiah the Ammonite official heard of it they were deeply disturbed that a man had come to seek the well-being of the children of Israel.

- **DON’T SETTLE for small incremental gains.** What are you and God doing together?
 - **GO BIG** — Look at how HUGE a request this is!!! Imagine if he had asked for just one part of this!
 - Don’t be the friend who said....”I just want to be able to breath.”
 - Don’t be the man who said....”I just want to not hate my wife.”
- **The reason why we don’t we rebuild our lives?**
 - **We aim too low.** The problem isn’t failure, it's small successes, good intentions, and compromise.

- Why are you afraid to go big?
 - Feels impossible?
 - To good to be true?
 - I don't really believe I can change
 - I don't want to fail again.
 - Maybe I am just sad about it. Being sad about sin is not always true repentance. "Godly sorrow brings repentance."
- You can't GO BIG until you FIX your AIMS much higher than you can do alone.
- You won't GO BIG until your willing to ask for EVERYTHING you need.
- You won't GO BIG because you won't ask for help.
- There is dangerous, accepted self-sufficiency in the Church (in me) that is called TRY HARDER. As if, by effort, without the intervention of God, without supernatural provision you can "just do it."
 - That's called living by the flesh.
- Unless you GO REALLY BIG you won't NEED God to show up.

Circle the Problem

So, once Nehemiah had everything he needed he went to Jerusalem...

- **Nehemiah 2:11-18**

So I came to Jerusalem and was there three days. Then I arose in the night, I and a few men with me; I told no one what my God had put in my heart to do at Jerusalem; nor was there any animal with me, except the one on which I rode. And I went out by night through the Valley Gate to the Serpent Well and the Refuse Gate, and viewed the walls of Jerusalem which were broken down and its gates which were burned with fire. Then I went on to the Fountain Gate and to the King's Pool, but there was no room for the animal under me to pass. So I went up in the night by the valley, and viewed the wall; then I turned back and entered by the Valley Gate, and so returned. And the officials did not know where I had gone or what I had done; I had not yet told the Jews, the priests, the nobles, the officials, or the others who did the work. Then I said to them, "You see the distress that we are in, how Jerusalem lies waste, and its gates are burned with fire. Come and let us build the wall of Jerusalem, that we may no longer be a reproach." And I told them of the hand of my God which had been good upon me, and also of the king's words that he had spoken to me. So they said, "Let us rise up and build." Then they set their hands to this good work.

Why does he go into all this detail?

CIRCLE THE PROBLEM – Look at the worst parts of your problem up close and personal. Spend some time with it. Look at every single broken door.

- **Don't jump to a quick solution that is short-sighted** because you are impatient to get the ball rolling.
 - That is a guaranteed way to fail an important goal.
 - Don't make a quick sacrifice, and avoid really deeply looking into the problem.
 - Don't grit your teeth and run at it
- **Don't be too quick to move to action.**
 - Sometimes the reason we don't finish what we start is because we solve the wrong problem.

- Or our vision needs to be larger.
- **Look at the broken down walls.**
 - Maybe we have walls that are down.
 - Israel had tried to rebuild without walls.
- **Ask God to search you out.**
 - Ask God to show you the right place to begin to rebuild.

So what? What's next?

What is God calling you to rebuild? Write it down.

If it's nothing — you're pretending! Write it down.
Are you still not sure? Ask your spouse!

Stop pretending in the presence of the King.

We don't have to pretend in the presence of our King.

GO BIG!!! – Ask God for EVERYTHING you need.

Raise the bar up high! We have a good King!!!

Circle the problem.

Don't rush into your solution before you understand the problem.

The King is good, He has all the resources we need.

He can do immeasurably more than we can comprehend! He will do it!

Discussion Questions

1. Do you know an example of “courage is being afraid and doing the right thing anyway?”
2. Can you identify anything in your life that you are *pretending* about?
3. What are some steps you can take to stop pretending, to begin to rebuild your life?
4. In Nehemiah 2:4-5, how did Nehemiah's spiritual life flow right into his physical life?
5. Respond to, “The problem isn't failure, it's small successes, good intentions, and compromise.”
6. Why is it hard to ask God for everything we need?
7. What is God calling you to rebuild? Write it down.

Before the Throne: Worship Night

Tuesday, February 28th

6:30 pm

Sanctuary