

The 17th Sunday after Pentecost ~ Sunday, September 20, 2015

A Time to Build: Lessons From the Book of Nehemiah

The Right Tools For the Job

Nehemiah 2:1-10

“According to the grace of God given to me, like a skilled master builder I laid a foundation, and someone else is building on it. Each builder must choose with care how to build on it. For no one can lay any foundation other than the one that has been laid; that foundation is Jesus Christ.”

(1 Corinthians 3:10)

“Anyone who builds on that foundation may use a variety of materials—gold, silver, jewels, wood, hay, or straw. But on the judgment day, fire will reveal what kind of work each builder has done. The fire will show if a person’s work has any value.” (1 Corinthians 3:12)

2 DIFFERENT KINDS OF MATERIALS

Commonalities between the gold, silver, and precious stones:

Commonalities between the wood, hay, and straw:

The gold, silver, precious stones are symbolic of:

The wood, hay, and straw are symbolic of:

“Unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labour in vain.” (Psalm 127:1)

“My grace is all you need. My power works best in your weakness.’ So now I am glad to boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ can work through me. That’s why I take pleasure in my weaknesses, and in the insults, hardships, persecutions, and troubles that I suffer for Christ. For when I am weak, then I am strong.” (2 Corinthians 12:9-10)

🕒 Building Block #1:

🕒 Building Block #2:

Nehemiah’s story shows us that if we want to be successful, everything we do needs to start and end, and be covered with _____.

4 TOOLS IN NEHEMIAH’S S TOOLS BOX

Tool #1: _____.

“Early the following spring, in the month of Nisan, during the twentieth year of King Artaxerxes’ reign, I was serving the king his wine. I had never before appeared sad in his presence. So the king asked me, ‘Why are you looking so sad? You don’t look sick to me. You must be deeply troubled.’” (Nehemiah 2:1-2)

How are you at waiting?

How the culture views waiting =

“Integrity and honesty will protect me because I wait for you.” (Psalm 25:21)

“Wait with hope for the Lord. Be strong, and let your heart be courageous. Yes, wait with hope for the Lord.” (Psalm 27:14)

“The Lord’s eyes are on those who fear him, on those who wait with hope for his mercy.” (Psalm 33:18)

“We wait for the Lord. He is our help and our shield.” (Psalm 33:20)

Waiting = ‘qa-wa,’ =

Nehemiah reminds us:

“Even youths will faint and be weary, and the young will fall exhausted; but those who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint.” (Isaiah 40:30)

Tool #2: _____.

“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.” (Nehemiah 2:2-3)

2 REASONS NEHEMIAH MIGHT HAVE BEEN AFRAID

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“Therefore issue an order that these people be made to cease, and that this city not be rebuilt, until I make a decree.” (Ezra 4:21)

What fears are circling around in your head this morning?

Nehemiah shows us that the antidote to fear is _____–trusting in God and in His promises.

“And those who know your name put their trust in you, for you, O Lord, have not forsaken those who seek you.” (Psalm 9:10)

“O my God, in you I trust; do not let me be put to shame; do not let my enemies exult over me.” (Psalm 25:2)

“But I trust in you, O Lord; I say, ‘You are my God.’” (Psalm 31:14)

“Commit your way to the Lord; trust in him, and he will act.” (Psalm 37:5)

“When I am afraid, I put my trust in you.” (Psalm 56:3)

Nehemiah reminds us:

Tool #3: _____.

“The king asked, ‘Well, how can I help you.’ With a prayer to the God of heaven, I replied...” (Nehemiah 2:4)

Listen to my cry for help, my King and my God, for I pray to no one but you.” (Psalm 5:2)

“Hear me as I pray, O Lord. Be merciful and answer me! (Psalm 27:7)

“As soon as I pray, you answer me; you encourage me by giving me strength. (Psalm 138:3)

“Then I called on the name of the Lord: ‘O Lord, I pray, save my life!’” (Psalm 116:4)

Do ‘arrow’ prayers play a role in your daily walk with God?

Nehemiah reminds us:

“Rejoice in our confident hope. Be patient in trouble, and keep on praying.” (Romans 12:12)

Tool #4: _____.

“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. 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. 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.” (Nehemiah 2:5-8)

3 BENEFITS OF NEHEMIAH’S PLANNING

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Are you someone who plans ahead?

Nehemiah reminds us:

“Strategic planning is the key to warfare; to win, you need a lot of good counsel.” (Proverbs 24:6 msg)

“Careful planning puts you ahead in the long run; hurry and scurry puts you further behind.” (Proverbs 21:5 msg)

“We can make our plans, but the Lord determines our steps.” (Proverbs 16:9)

“Commit your actions to the Lord, and your plans will succeed.” (Prov 16:3)

Additional Notes: