

# RISE UP & BUILD

A SERIES ON THE BOOK OF NEHEMIAH

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## DISCUSSION GUIDE WEEK 1

### WELCOME.

### WORSHIP.

**Sing:** HOSANNA (*Hillsong United*)

### WORD.

**Introduction:** Last Sunday, Pastor Jon opened this new series on Nehemiah with a sermon called "BURDENED WITH A GLORIOUS PURPOSE." Nehemiah hears about the condition of the Jewish homeland and is filled with burdened with a "holy discontent" which was God's plan for a glorious purpose. What holy discontent is God laying on your heart? What do you think you should do about it?

#### Scripture: Nehemiah 1

1. Read Nehemiah 1:1–4. The name Nehemiah means "Yahweh has comforted." But it is more than a name. The comfort of God will be a major theme throughout the story of Nehemiah. To begin, notice how Nehemiah responds to the bad news he receives (Nehemiah 1:4).
  - What does indicate about what kind of person Nehemiah might be?
  - Why do you think this was his response? Was this the right response?
2. What we turn to in times of distress often reveals what we put our hope in.
  - If you were completely honest with yourself, where do you go? To whom or to what do you turn and why??
3. When the story of Nehemiah begins, God's people are greatly burdened and deeply discouraged.
  - What about you? Where are you in this season? Are you tired? Energized? Do you feel burdened or discouraged? Helpless? Something more positive?
4. Read Nehemiah 1:4–5. Nehemiah's prayer reveals his view of God.
  - What attributes or characteristics of God are disclosed in this passage? In other words, what is God like? Why is it good news that God is who He is?
5. Read Nehemiah 1:6–11. Nehemiah does not observe the sinful state of God's people from afar. He does not point his finger. He does not distance himself. He owns his people's sin. He confesses it to God. Notice how many times the word "we" is used in this passage.
  - What is the difference between seeing God's people as a "we" rather than "me"? Discuss.
6. Think about the city we live in and the circles you are in.
  - Who are the hardest people to love? Be honest. Who do you feel resistant to pray for? Why?

### WORK.

1. Every genuine follower of Jesus should feel a holy discontent and compassion for anyone who is far from God. This is the essence of our calling to make disciples and the heart of our vision as a church. Read 2 Peter 3:9. Do you feel compassion, concern and holy discontent for others?

2. Take time to pray and commit yourself to start acting on the holy discontent in your heart and have compassion on people who are far from God by praying for them and inviting them into a relationship with Jesus.