

REBUILDING

OUR PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD

SUNDAY 16 AUGUST 2020 | PASTOR RJ

Nehemiah 1:1-11

1 The words of Nehemiah son of Hakaliah:

In the month of Kislev in the twentieth year, while I was in the citadel of Susa, **2** Hanani, one of my brothers, came from Judah with some other men, and I questioned them about the Jewish remnant that had survived the exile, and also about Jerusalem.

3 They said to me, "Those who survived the exile and are back in the province are in great trouble and disgrace. The wall of Jerusalem is broken down, and its gates have been burned with fire."**4** When I heard these things, I sat down and wept. For some days I mourned and fasted and prayed before the God of heaven. **5** Then I said:

"Lord, the God of heaven, the great and awesome God, who keeps his covenant of love with those who love him and keep his commandments, **6** let your ear be attentive and your eyes open to hear the prayer your servant is praying before you day and night for your servants, the people of Israel. I confess the sins we Israelites, including myself and my father's family, have committed against you. **7** We have acted very wickedly toward you. We have not obeyed the commands, decrees and laws you gave your servant Moses.

8 "Remember the instruction you gave your servant Moses, saying, 'If you are unfaithful, I will scatter you among the nations, **9** but if you return to me and obey my commands, then even if your exiled people are at the farthest horizon, I will gather them from there and bring them to the place I have chosen as a dwelling for my Name.'

10 "They are your servants and your people, whom you redeemed by your great strength and your mighty hand. **11** Lord, let your ear be attentive to the prayer of this your servant and to the prayer of your servants who delight in revering your name. Give your servant success today by granting him favour in the presence of this man."

I was cupbearer to the king.

SERMON NOTES

SERMON BY PASTOR RJ

Introduction: "easy wrong over hard right"

1. Distraction

2. Deviation

3. Disappointment

4. Devotion

Conclusion: What can I do now?

APPLICATION AND DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

SERMON BY PASTOR RJ

Q1. What would you say is the biggest distraction for you that prevents you from prioritising God in your life?

Q2. What can you do to minimise these distractions and how can you keep yourself accountable?

REBUILDING

OUR PRIORITIES TO MATCH CONVICTIONS

SUNDAY 23 AUGUST 2020 | MARCUS WONG

Nehemiah 2:1-10

1 In the month of Nisan in the twentieth year of King Artaxerxes, when wine was brought for him, I took the wine and gave it to the king. I had not been sad in his presence before, **2** so the king asked me, “Why does your face look so sad when you are not ill? This can be nothing but sadness of heart.”

I was very much afraid, **3** but I said to the king, “May the king live forever! Why should my face not look sad when the city where my ancestors are buried lies in ruins, and its gates have been destroyed by fire?”

4 The king said to me, “What is it you want?”

Then I prayed to the God of heaven, **5** and I answered the king, “If it pleases the king and if your servant has found favour in his sight, let him send me to the city in Judah where my ancestors are buried so that I can rebuild it.”

6 Then the king, with the queen sitting beside him, asked me, “How long will your journey take, and when will you get back?” It pleased the king to send me; so I set a time.

7 I also said to him, “If it pleases the king, may I have letters to the governors of Trans-Euphrates, so that they will provide me safe-conduct until I arrive in Judah? **8** And may I have a letter to Asaph, keeper of the royal park, so he will give me timber to make beams for the gates of the citadel by the temple and for the city wall and for the residence I will occupy?” And because the gracious hand of my God was on me, the king granted my requests. **9** So I went to the governors of Trans-Euphrates and gave them the king’s letters. The king had also sent army officers and cavalry with me.

10 When Sanballat the Horonite and Tobiah the Ammonite official heard about this, they were very much disturbed that someone had come to promote the welfare of the Israelites.

SERMON NOTES

SERMON BY MARCUS WONG

Big idea

Priorities complement convictions

Working definitions

Priorities: “a thing that is regarded as more important than others”

Convictions: “a firmly held belief or opinion”

Our text for today

Nehemiah 2:1-10

- Nehemiah had a conviction about the plight of Jerusalem (2:3,4)
- Nehemiah’s internal convictions had external expression (2:1-3:12)
- Nehemiah’s convictions were a result of processing and prayer with God (2:4)

Application

- Priorities are arranged by you, but convictions are changed by God.
- Philippians 2:12-13 - working out our salvation, but changed by God.

2 Questions:

1. Who do you want me to be?
2. What do you want me to do?

APPLICATION AND DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

SERMON BY MARCUS WONG

Q1. Based on your actions, what would you say (honestly) are your priorities?

Q2. Why do you think we need God to address our convictions instead?

Q3. What might God be saying to you in response to those 2 application questions?

REBUILDING

PAUSE: HOW TO READ THE BIBLE

SUNDAY 4 OCTOBER 2020 | PASTOR CLEM FUNG

No matter whether you're a beginner or a teacher, it always comes down to

- Read -- Interpret -- Apply
- Depending on the Holy Spirit
- Learning in community

How to get started

- 5-10 minutes a day
- A paragraph a day
- Lightbulb -- Question Mark -- Arrow
- A reading partner

How to get established

- 20-30 minutes a day
- A chapter a day
- 5 Discovery Questions
- Huddle or Grow Group

REBUILDING

PAUSE: HOW TO READ THE BIBLE

SUNDAY 4 OCTOBER 2020 | PASTOR CLEM FUNG

How to grow

- 40-45 minutes a day
- At least a chapter a day
- COMA: Context, Original Meaning, Application
- 'The Interpretive Journey'
- Disciple Red Book study

Recommended resources:

- YouVersion Bible app
- Our Daily Bread, odb.org
- NIV (New International Version)
- NLT (New Living Translation)
- CSB (Christian Standard Bible)
- Olive Tree Bible app, NIV Reference Bible
- New Bible Dictionary
- Commentaries:
 - The Bible Speaks Today series (easy)
 - New Bible Commentary, Expositor's Bible Commentary (intermediate)
 - New International Commentary (NICNT/OT), Baker Exegetical, Cornerstone, Pillar (NT) ... (in depth)
- Dictionary of series:
 - Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels
 - Dictionary of New Testament Background
 - Dictionary of Paul and His Letters
 - Dictionary of Later New Testament and Its Developments
 - Dictionary of the Old Testament Historical Books
 - Dictionary of the Old Testament: Pentateuch
 - Dictionary of the Old Testament: Prophets
 - Dictionary of the Old Testament: Wisdom, Poetry & Writings
- 'The Interpretive Journey' seminars, offered at Grace Church
- Disciple Red Book study, offered at Grace Church

APPLICATION AND DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

PAUSE: HOW TO READ THE BIBLE

SERMON BY PASTOR CLEM FUNG | 4 OCTOBER 2020

Q1. Where are you at with reading the Bible for impact -- needing to get started, needing to get established, needing to grow?

Q2. What practical next steps should you take to keep moving forward?

Q3. Try this in your Grow Group:

- Pray, then read Psalm 34 (the whole chapter)
- Take 10-15 minutes to individually reflect on the 5 Discovery Questions:
 - God / Jesus?
 - Human beings?
 - Me?
 - Obey / do?
 - Share with who, how, when?
- Write it down in your journal
- Take 10-15 minutes to share with each other, and pray

BIBLE READING PLAN

PAUSE: HOW TO READ THE BIBLE

SERMON BY PASTOR CLEM FUNG | 4 OCTOBER 2020

CRAWL

Beginning
(if currently less than
twice a week)

WALK

Establishing
(after a daily habit
of 2-3 months)

RUN

Growing
(after daily habit of
6-12 months)

WHAT YOU NEED

Bible
Journal
5-10 minutes a day

Bible
Journal
20-30 minutes a day
A reading plan
A reference Bible

Bible
Journal
40+ minutes a day
A systematic reading plan for the whole Bible (OT and NT)
Bible dictionaries
Commentaries:

PRAY

READ

A paragraph a day e.g.
YouVersion 'verse of the
day' + paragraph or
odb.org 'daily devotional'

A chapter a day - if your
reading plan suggests less,
still read the whole chapter

At least a chapter a day, preferably
something from
both OT and NT

INTERPRET

Lightbulb
Question Mark
Arrow

... before devotional

5 Discovery Questions:
1. God/Jesus
2. Human beings
3. Me
4. Obey/Do
5. Share

... before other resources

COMA:
Context
Original Meaning
Application

... personal reflection, before other
resources

APPLY

Record in your journal
What is your 'Arrow' for
the day?

Record in your journal
What is your 'Arrow' for the day?
What is your 'Obey/Do' for the
day?
Who are you going to 'Share'
with, how and when?

Record in your journal
What is your 'Arrow' for the day?
What is your 'Obey/Do' for the day?
Who are you going to 'Share' with, how
and when?
Universal / Contextual
How does it point us to Christ?

PRAY TOGETHER

COMMUNITY

Reading partner
(someone spiritually
more mature)

Reading partner / huddle /
GG (helpful if there's
someone more mature,
but peers are good)

Reading partner / huddle / GG
(helpful if there's someone more
mature, but peers are good)
Help someone spiritually less mature

REBUILDING

OUR COMMUNITY AND CARE

SUNDAY 20 SEPTEMBER 2020 | SOO CHUAH

Nehemiah 5:1-19

1 Now the men and their wives raised a great outcry against their fellow Jews. **2** Some were saying, "We and our sons and daughters are numerous; in order for us to eat and stay alive, we must get grain."

3 Others were saying, "We are mortgaging our fields, our vineyards and our homes to get grain during the famine."

4 Still others were saying, "We have had to borrow money to pay the king's tax on our fields and vineyards. **5** Although we are of the same flesh and blood as our fellow Jews and though our children are as good as theirs, yet we have to subject our sons and daughters to slavery. Some of our daughters have already been enslaved, but we are powerless, because our fields and our vineyards belong to others."

6 When I heard their outcry and these charges, I was very angry. **7** I pondered them in my mind and then accused the nobles and officials. I told them, "You are charging your own people interest!" So I called together a large meeting to deal with them **8** and said: "As far as possible, we have bought back our fellow Jews who were sold to the Gentiles. Now you are selling your own people, only for them to be sold back to us!" They kept quiet, because they could find nothing to say.

9 So I continued, "What you are doing is not right. Shouldn't you walk in the fear of our God to avoid the reproach of our Gentile enemies? **10** I and my brothers and my men are also lending the people money and grain. But let us stop charging interest! **11** Give back to them immediately their fields, vineyards, olive groves and houses, and also the interest you are charging them—one percent of the money, grain, new wine and olive oil."

12 "We will give it back," they said. "And we will not demand anything more from them. We will do as you say."

Then I summoned the priests and made the nobles and officials take an oath to do what they had promised. **13** I also shook out the folds of my robe and said, "In this way may God shake out of their house and possessions anyone who does not keep this promise. So may such a person be shaken out and emptied!"

At this the whole assembly said, "Amen," and praised the Lord. And the people did as they had promised.

14 Moreover, from the twentieth year of King Artaxerxes, when I was appointed to be their governor in the land of Judah, until his thirty-second year—twelve years—neither I nor my brothers ate the food allotted to the governor. **15** But the earlier governors—those preceding me—placed a heavy burden on the people and took forty shekels of silver from them in addition to food and wine. Their assistants also lorded it over the people. But out of reverence for God I did not act like that. **16** Instead, I devoted myself to the work on this wall. All my men were assembled there for the work; we did not acquire any land.

17 Furthermore, a hundred and fifty Jews and officials ate at my table, as well as those who came to us from the surrounding nations. **18** Each day one ox, six choice sheep and some poultry were prepared for me, and every ten days an abundant supply of wine of all kinds. In spite of all this, I never demanded the food allotted to the governor, because the demands were heavy on these people.

19 Remember me with favor, my God, for all I have done for these people.

SERMON NOTES

REBUILDING OUR COMMUNITY AND CARE

SERMON BY SOO CHUAH | 20 SEPTEMBER 2020

The event

- The complaint: Nehemiah 5:1-5
- Nehemiah's response: Nehemiah 5:6-7
- The redress: Nehemiah 5:7-13

The significance

- The wall and the people
 - Protecting the glorious name of God
 - Protecting from external enemies
 - Protecting distinctiveness of God's people
- The wall and the poor

Nehemiah's character

Nehemiah 5:14-19

APPLICATION AND DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

REBUILDING OUR COMMUNITY AND CARE

SERMON BY SOO CHUAH | 20 SEPTEMBER 2020

Q1. Internal dissention can wreck the whole of God's community. What are some of the things that can cause dissention in your grow group or your church community? How might you prevent or handle these issues?

Q2. Over 100 times we are instructed in the Bible to "fear not". What does it mean for you to "fear the Lord"?

Q3. From the account in Nehemiah 5, what do you notice about the way Nehemiah handles conflict?

REBUILDING

OUR HUNGER FOR GOD'S WORD

SUNDAY 27 SEPTEMBER 2020 | PASTOR CLEM FUNG

Nehemiah 8

1 All the people came together as one in the square before the Water Gate. They told Ezra the teacher of the Law to bring out the Book of the Law of Moses, which the Lord had commanded for Israel.

2 So on the first day of the seventh month Ezra the priest brought the Law before the assembly, which was made up of men and women and all who were able to understand. 3 He read it aloud from daybreak till noon as he faced the square before the Water Gate in the presence of the men, women and others who could understand. And all the people listened attentively to the Book of the Law.

4 Ezra the teacher of the Law stood on a high wooden platform built for the occasion. Beside him on his right stood Mattithiah, Shema, Anaiah, Uriah, Hilkiah and Maaseiah; and on his left were Pedaiah, Mishael, Malkijah, Hashum, Hashbaddanah, Zechariah and Meshullam.

5 Ezra opened the book. All the people could see him because he was standing above them; and as he opened it, the people all stood up. 6 Ezra praised the Lord, the great God; and all the people lifted their hands and responded, "Amen! Amen!" Then they bowed down and worshiped the Lord with their faces to the ground.

7 The Levites—Jeshua, Bani, Sherebiah, Jamin, Akkub, Shabbethai, Hodiah, Maaseiah, Kelita, Azariah, Jozabad, Hanan and Pelaiah—instructed the people in the Law while the people were standing there. 8 They read from the Book of the Law of God, making it clear and giving the meaning so that the people understood what was being read.

9 Then Nehemiah the governor, Ezra the priest and teacher of the Law, and the Levites who were instructing the people said to them all, "This day is holy to the Lord your God. Do not mourn or weep." For all the people had been weeping as they listened to the words of the Law.

10 Nehemiah said, "Go and enjoy choice food and sweet drinks, and send some to those who have nothing prepared. This day is holy to our Lord. Do not grieve, for the joy of the Lord is your strength."

11 The Levites calmed all the people, saying, "Be still, for this is a holy day. Do not grieve."¹² Then all the people went away to eat and drink, to send portions of food and to celebrate with great joy, because they now understood the words that had been made known to them.

13 On the second day of the month, the heads of all the families, along with the priests and the Levites, gathered around Ezra the teacher to give attention to the words of the Law. 14 They found written in the Law, which the Lord had commanded through Moses, that the Israelites were to live in temporary shelters during the festival of the seventh month 15 and that they should proclaim this word and spread it throughout their towns and in Jerusalem: "Go out into the hill country and bring back branches from olive and wild olive trees, and from myrtles, palms and shade trees, to make temporary shelters"—as it is written.

16 So the people went out and brought back branches and built themselves temporary shelters on their own roofs, in their courtyards, in the courts of the house of God and in the square by the Water Gate and the one by the Gate of Ephraim. 17 The whole company that had returned from exile built temporary shelters and lived in them. From the days of Joshua son of Nun until that day, the Israelites had not celebrated it like this. And their joy was very great.

18 Day after day, from the first day to the last, Ezra read from the Book of the Law of God. They celebrated the festival for seven days, and on the eighth day, in accordance with the regulation, there was an assembly.

SERMON NOTES

REBUILDING OUR HUNGER FOR GOD'S WORD

SERMON BY PASTOR CLEM FUNG | 27 SEPTEMBER 2020

Recap 'Rebuilding' so far:

1. Personal relationship with God
2. Priorities to match convictions
3. Pause: Sharing your story
4. Collaboration toward something bigger
5. Resilience
6. Community and care

Nehemiah 8

1. Reading (vv.1-6)

- The right attitude: eagerness, expectancy, hunger, humility
- But we still have to read!
- "Nothing beats the power and impact of God's Word speaking for itself" e.g. Ex 20

2. Interpreting (vv.7-12)

- The aim is understanding (both the meaning and the significance)
- Which leads to conviction

3. Applying (vv.13-18)

- Application is not 'slavish'
- Obedience is practical, relevant, adapted

'Bonus' for NT believers: something God's people of Ezra/Nehemiah's time didn't have access to

- Our hunger for God's Word, should ultimately be a hunger for _____.

APPLICATION AND DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

REBUILDING OUR HUNGER FOR GOD'S WORD

SERMON BY PASTOR CLEM FUNG | 27 SEPTEMBER 2020

Q1. Do you think we today will be held more accountable than those of yesteryear, if we fail to read - interpret - apply God's word?

Q2. What keeps you from hungering for God's word? What things do you 'fill up' on instead?

Q3. What do you think is the goal of reading and studying the Bible?

REBUILDING

OUR COLLABORATION TOWARDS SOMETHING BIGGER

SUNDAY 6 SEPTEMBER 2020 | FRANCIS KHOO

Nehemiah 2:16-3:5

Chapter 2

16 The officials did not know where I had gone or what I was doing, because as yet I had said nothing to the Jews or the priests or nobles or officials or any others who would be doing the work.

17 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." **18** I also told them about the gracious hand of my God on me and what the king had said to me.

They replied, "Let us start rebuilding." So they began this good work.

19 But when Sanballat the Horonite, Tobiah the Ammonite official and Geshem the Arab heard about it, they mocked and ridiculed us. "What is this you are doing?" they asked. "Are you rebelling against the king?"

20 I answered them by saying, "The God of heaven will give us success. We his servants will start rebuilding, but as for you, you have no share in Jerusalem or any claim or historic right to it."

Chapter 3

Builders of the Wall

1 Eliashib the high priest and his fellow priests went to work and rebuilt the Sheep Gate. They dedicated it and set its doors in place, building as far as the Tower of the Hundred, which they dedicated, and as far as the Tower of Hananel. **2** The men of Jericho built the adjoining section, and Zakkur son of Imri built next to them.

3 The Fish Gate was rebuilt by the sons of Hassenaah. They laid its beams and put its doors and bolts and bars in place. **4** Meremoth son of Uriah, the son of Hakkoz, repaired the next section. Next to him Meshullam son of Berekiah, the son of Meshezabel, made repairs, and next to him Zadok son of Baana also made repairs. **5** The next section was repaired by the men of Tekoa, but their nobles would not put their shoulders to the work under their supervisors.

SERMON NOTES

OUR COLLABORATION TOWARDS SOMETHING BIGGER

SERMON BY FRANCIS KHOO | 6 SEPTEMBER 2020

God brought the Jews back from Babylonian captivity to re-establish His covenant with them. Nehemiah was sent to mobilise the Jews to re-build the walls and create a strong Jerusalem that would bring glory to God.

What is the Something Bigger that God has set for us to do?

- To build God's spiritual house, the Church (1 Pet 2:4-6)
- Through making disciples (Matt 28:19)

Collaboration

People coming together to achieve a shared objective.

Why Collaborate?

- Each part needs to do its work (Ephesians 4:16)
- To each believer, the Holy Spirit gives spiritual gifts needed for our role in the Body
- Develops strong sense of ownership in the community

Application:

What is your role in the church that will contribute towards making disciples?
Pray, seek guidance, take action.

Get connected in a Grow Group.
Can you invite a friend to join?

How are you contributing to your Grow Group?

APPLICATION AND DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

OUR COLLABORATION TOWARDS SOMETHING BIGGER

SERMON BY FRANCIS KHOO | 9 SETMEBER 2020

Q1. a) Difficulties and friction inevitably arise when people work together (collaborate) in a group or on a project? Discuss what these may be.

b) For each of those difficulties, discuss how the Jesus' teachings can empower Christians to overcome them.

Q2. If you are in a Grow Group, please discuss specific ways in which your Grow Group can work together (in smaller sub-groups or as a whole group) to make disciples. OR If you are not in a Grow Group, please consider what obstacles need to be overcome so that you will join one.

REBUILDING

OUR RESILIENCE

SUNDAY 13 SEPTEMBER 2020 | PASTOR RJ

Nehemiah 4:1-14

1 When Sanballat heard that we were rebuilding the wall, he became angry and was greatly incensed. He ridiculed the Jews, **2** and in the presence of his associates and the army of Samaria, he said, “What are those feeble Jews doing? Will they restore their wall? Will they offer sacrifices? Will they finish in a day? Can they bring the stones back to life from those heaps of rubble—burned as they are?”

3 Tobiah the Ammonite, who was at his side, said, “What they are building—even a fox climbing up on it would break down their wall of stones!”

4 Hear us, our God, for we are despised. Turn their insults back on their own heads. Give them over as plunder in a land of captivity. **5** Do not cover up their guilt or blot out their sins from your sight, for they have thrown insults in the face of the builders.

6 So we rebuilt the wall till all of it reached half its height, for the people worked with all their heart.

7 But when Sanballat, Tobiah, the Arabs, the Ammonites and the people of Ashdod heard that the repairs to Jerusalem’s walls had gone ahead and that the gaps were being closed, they were very angry. **8** They all plotted together to come and fight against Jerusalem and stir up trouble against it. **9** But we prayed to our God and posted a guard day and night to meet this threat.

10 Meanwhile, the people in Judah said, “The strength of the labourers is giving out, and there is so much rubble that we cannot rebuild the wall.”

11 Also our enemies said, “Before they know it or see us, we will be right there among them and will kill them and put an end to the work.”

12 Then the Jews who lived near them came and told us ten times over, “Wherever you turn, they will attack us.”

13 Therefore I stationed some of the people behind the lowest points of the wall at the exposed places, posting them by families, with their swords, spears and bows. **14** After I looked things over, I stood up and said to the nobles, the officials and the rest of the people, “Don’t be afraid of them. Remember the Lord, who is great and awesome, and fight for your families, your sons and your daughters, your wives and your homes.”

SERMON NOTES

REBUILDING OUR RESILIENCE

SERMON BY PASTOR RJ | 13 SEPTEMBER 2020

Intro: The Bible is not Ted Talk

1. The Cause of Discouragement - why do we get discouraged?

- i. Humiliation
- ii. Persecution

2. The Consequences of Discouragement - what does it do to us and our ministry?

3. The Cure for Discouragement - how do we overcome discouragement?

- i. Prayerful Dependence
- ii. Passionate Reminder
- iii. Persevering Work

Conclusion: A greater Nehemiah

APPLICATION AND DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

REBUILDING OUR RESILIENCE

SERMON BY PASTOR RJ | 13 SEPTEMBER 2020

Q1. What are some forms of discouragements Christians often face in ministry?

Q2. Have you had experience with ministry burnt out? How did you deal with it?

Q3. Prevention is always better than cure - how can we prevent burnt out in ministry, both individually and as a team?

REBUILDING

PAUSE TO SHARE YOUR STORY

SUNDAY 30 AUGUST 2020 | PASTOR CLEM FUNG

John 9:1-41

Jesus Heals a Man Born Blind

1 As he went along, he saw a man blind from birth. 2 His disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?"

3 "Neither this man nor his parents sinned," said Jesus, "but this happened so that the works of God might be displayed in him. 4 As long as it is day, we must do the works of him who sent me. Night is coming, when no one can work. 5 While I am in the world, I am the light of the world."

6 After saying this, he spit on the ground, made some mud with the saliva, and put it on the man's eyes. 7 "Go," he told him, "wash in the Pool of Siloam" (this word means "Sent"). So the man went and washed, and came home seeing.

8 His neighbours and those who had formerly seen him begging asked, "Isn't this the same man who used to sit and beg?" 9 Some claimed that he was.

Others said, "No, he only looks like him."

But he himself insisted, "I am the man."

10 "How then were your eyes opened?" they asked.

11 He replied, "The man they call Jesus made some mud and put it on my eyes. He told me to go to Siloam and wash. So I went and washed, and then I could see."

12 "Where is this man?" they asked him.

"I don't know," he said.

The Pharisees Investigate the Healing

13 They brought to the Pharisees the man who had been blind. 14 Now the day on which Jesus had made the mud and opened the man's eyes was a Sabbath. 15 Therefore the Pharisees also asked him how he had received his sight. "He put mud on my eyes," the man replied, "and I washed, and now I see."

16 Some of the Pharisees said, "This man is not from God, for he does not keep the Sabbath."

But others asked, "How can a sinner perform such signs?" So they were divided.

17 Then they turned again to the blind man, "What have you to say about him? It was your eyes he opened."

The man replied, "He is a prophet."

8 They still did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight until they sent for the man's parents.

REBUILDING

PAUSE TO SHARE YOUR STORY

SUNDAY 30 AUGUST 2020 | PASTOR CLEM FUNG

John 9:1-41 cont.

119 "Is this your son?" they asked. "Is this the one you say was born blind? How is it that now he can see?"

20 "We know he is our son," the parents answered, "and we know he was born blind. 21 But how he can see now, or who opened his eyes, we don't know. Ask him. He is of age; he will speak for himself." 22 His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jewish leaders, who already had decided that anyone who acknowledged that Jesus was the Messiah would be put out of the synagogue. 23 That was why his parents said, "He is of age; ask him."

24 A second time they summoned the man who had been blind. "Give glory to God by telling the truth," they said. "We know this man is a sinner."

25 He replied, "Whether he is a sinner or not, I don't know. One thing I do know. I was blind but now I see!"

26 Then they asked him, "What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?"

27 He answered, "I have told you already and you did not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you want to become his disciples too?"

28 Then they hurled insults at him and said, "You are this fellow's disciple! We are disciples of Moses! 29 We know that God spoke to Moses, but as for this fellow, we don't even know where he comes from."

30 The man answered, "Now that is remarkable! You don't know where he comes from, yet he opened my eyes. 31 We know that God does not listen to sinners. He listens to the godly person who does his will. 32 Nobody has ever heard of opening the eyes of a man born blind. 33 If this man were not from God, he could do nothing."

34 To this they replied, "You were steeped in sin at birth; how dare you lecture us!" And they threw him out.

Spiritual Blindness

35 Jesus heard that they had thrown him out, and when he found him, he said, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?"

36 "Who is he, sir?" the man asked. "Tell me so that I may believe in him."

37 Jesus said, "You have now seen him; in fact, he is the one speaking with you."

38 Then the man said, "Lord, I believe," and he worshiped him.

39 Jesus said,[a] "For judgment I have come into this world, so that the blind will see and those who see will become blind."

40 Some Pharisees who were with him heard him say this and asked, "What? Are we blind too?"

41 Jesus said, "If you were blind, you would not be guilty of sin; but now that you claim you can see, your guilt remains."

SERMON NOTES

SERMON BY PASTOR CLEM FUNG

Introduction

Every person who had life-changing encounter with Jesus, couldn't help but tell

Passage today

John chapter 9, the man born blind

- BEFORE, vv.8-9
- JESUS, vv.10-11
- NOW, v.11b

Shorter version in v.15

Even shorter version in v.25

Application:

- Make it short
- Make it personal (share your experience not theory or theology)
- Keep Christ central (Jesus is the hero)
- Before -- Jesus -- Now (the three essential elements)
- Write it out, and practice

5-minute testimony (500-600 words)

Objective: Let Jesus shine!

So in your prep, start with JESUS

20-second teasers (50-60 words)

Objective: Establish rapport/commonality

So in your prep, start with BEFORE

Recommended resources on YouTube (4 minutes each)

- Search: "15-second testimony (411, pt 1)"
- Search: "3 circles (411, pt 2)"

APPLICATION AND DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

SERMON BY PASTOR CLEM FUNG

Q1. How did you come to total surrender to Jesus? What was your tipping point?

Q2. How has Jesus changed your life? (Each point could become a 20-second teaser and a 5-minute testimony.)

Q3. What are some common objections/needs you have experienced? How did Jesus meet you there?

REBUILDING

OUR CONFESSION AND COMMITMENT

SUNDAY 11 OCTOBER 2020 | MARK LO

NEHEMIAH 9:1-5

1 On the twenty-fourth day of the same month, the Israelites gathered together, fasting and wearing sackcloth and putting dust on their heads. **2** Those of Israelite descent had separated themselves from all foreigners. They stood in their places and confessed their sins and the sins of their ancestors. **3** They stood where they were and read from the Book of the Law of the Lord their God for a quarter of the day, and spent another quarter in confession and in worshipping the Lord their God.

4 Standing on the stairs of the Levites were Jeshua, Bani, Kadmiel, Shebaniah, Bunni, Sherebiah, Bani and Kenani. They cried out with loud voices to the Lord their God.

5 And the Levites—Jeshua, Kadmiel, Bani, Hashabneiah, Sherebiah, Hodiah, Shebaniah and Pethahiah—said: “Stand up and praise the Lord your God, who is from everlasting to everlasting.” “Blessed be your glorious name, and may it be exalted above all blessing and praise.”

NEHEMIAH 9:36-38

36 “But see, we are slaves today, slaves in the land you gave our ancestors so they could eat its fruit and the other good things it produces. **37** Because of our sins, its abundant harvest goes to the kings you have placed over us. They rule over our bodies and our cattle as they please. We are in great distress.

38 “In view of all this, we are making a binding agreement, putting it in writing, and our leaders, our Levites and our priests are affixing their seals to it.”

NEHEMIAH 10:28-29

28 “The rest of the people—priests, Levites, gatekeepers, musicians, temple servants and all who separated themselves from the neighbouring peoples for the sake of the Law of God, together with their wives and all their sons and daughters who are able to understand— **29** all these now join their fellow Israelites the nobles, and bind themselves with a curse and an oath to follow the Law of God given through Moses the servant of God and to obey carefully all the commands, regulations and decrees of the Lord our Lord.

SERMON NOTES

REBUILDING OUR CONFESSION AND COMMITMENT

SUNDAY 11 OCTOBER 2020 | MARK LO

RESTORATION/REVIVAL - A RESULT OF CONFESSION AND COMMITMENT

Background

Leading up to the Assembly in Chapter 9

Humility before God: Confession of Personal sin and sinful heritage 9:1-4

- Prayer of Adoration & Praise of His Greatness 9:5,6
- Prayer of Thanks Giving & Recounting of His Mercy 9:7-31
- Prayer Requests Appealing for God's mercy 9:32-37
- Prayer of Commitment to the New Covenant 9:38

Commitment to the New Covenant 10:1-10:39

Hallmarks of Restoration & Revival

- My people
- Humble
- Pray and seek
- Turn from their wicked ways

Applications

- Personal
- Church Community

APPLICATION AND DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

REBUILDING OUR CONFESSION AND COMMITMENT

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- Q1. In seeking personal spiritual restoration/revival, we identified humility, pray & seek God, and turning from our wicked ways (repentance & commitment) as key elements, which one(s) of these do you find personally most challenging? Why?**
- Q2. Is it important to recount our past experience with God, remembering all the failures and successes as we give thanks and recount His mercy? Share your personal experience with the group focussing on the overall approach not the details.**
- Q3. Restoration/revival of a Christian community appears to take a long time to take place, if at all. Do you agree with the statement? Please provide reason(s) in support of your answer.**

2 Chronicles 7:14

"If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land."

REBUILDING

OUR JOY AND CELEBRATION

SUNDAY 18 OCTOBER 2020 | DANIEL WONG

NEHEMIAH 12:43-47

43 And on that day they offered great sacrifices, rejoicing because God had given them great joy. The women and children also rejoiced. The sound of rejoicing in Jerusalem could be heard far away.

44 At that time men were appointed to be in charge of the storerooms for the contributions, firstfruits and tithes. From the fields around the towns they were to bring into the storerooms the portions required by the Law for the priests and the Levites, for Judah was pleased with the ministering priests and Levites.

45 They performed the service of their God and the service of purification, as did also the musicians and gatekeepers, according to the commands of David and his son Solomon.

46 For long ago, in the days of David and Asaph, there had been directors for the musicians and for the songs of praise and thanksgiving to God.

47 So in the days of Zerubbabel and of Nehemiah, all Israel contributed the daily portions for the musicians and the gatekeepers. They also set aside the portion for the other Levites, and the Levites set aside the portion for the descendants of Aaron.

SERMON NOTES

REBUILDING OUR JOY AND CELEBRATION

SUNDAY 18 OCTOBER 2020 | DANIEL WONG

“REBUILDING – JOY AND CELEBRATIONS”

*“And on that day they offered great sacrifices, rejoicing because God had given them great joy. The women and children also rejoiced. The sound of rejoicing could be heard far away”
Nehemiah 12:43*

Celebrations of the Israelites (verses 27-42)

Purification (verse 30)

Focus on the Word (verse 36)

Joy of the Israelites (verse 43)

Nehemiah 8:1 “all the people assembled as one man in the square before the Water Gate. They told Ezra to bring out the Law of Moses, which the Lord has commanded for Israel”

Law of Moses

Pentateuch: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy

Significance – Creation, history of the nation, God’s deliverance and protection, God’s character, God’s covenant, blessings of multitudes and land, blessing to other nations!

Jesus in the Pentateuch

Triune God (Genesis 1: 26), Passover lamb, manna and water from the rock (Exodus), sacrifices and purifications (Leviticus, Numbers & Deuteronomy)

Joy of salvation in Christ!

Joy of salvation in the Risen Christ!

“I have told you this so that my joy be in you and that your joy may be complete. My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends.” John 15:11-13

Expressions of Joy (verses 43-47)

Proclamation (verse 43)

Support ministries of the church:

Through Offerings and Gifts (verse 44)

ALL to support the church (verse 47)

Serving (verse 45)

Praise and Thanksgiving (verse 46)

APPLICATION AND DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

REBUILDING OUR JOY AND CELEBRATION

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Q1. As Christians, one of the key elements in coming together to 'celebrate' is the focus and proclamation of the Word of God. Do you think that the pastors, elders and 'older' Christians have the sole responsibility of reading, teaching and sharing the Word? How are you personally involved in proclaiming the Word?

Q2. The Israelites rejoiced "because God had given them great joy" (Nehemiah 12 : 43). Wherein is the Christians' joy? (refer John 15 : 9 - 13)

Q3. Expressing joy is the spiritual outcome of knowing Jesus as Saviour. We manifest the joy in many ways. Do you struggle with any aspects of expressions of joy? (Nehemiah 12 : 43 - 47)