

## TAKING IT HOME:

Take some time this week to think about and pray for those who you may have found to be difficult or even who have directly opposed you. Ask the Lord to soften your heart towards them and if applicable, ask that the Lord soften theirs as well.

## MY WEEKLY PRAYER PAGE:

My group's prayer requests:

### LIFE GROUP TIPS ON GROUP PRAYER

Prayer is an important part of being in a Life Group, but it can also be intimidating. We find that group prayer goes better when we don't require everyone to pray and we keep our prayers short and simple.

**Pi<sup>2</sup>**  
PRAY • INVEST • INVITE

**MY Pi<sup>2</sup> LIST**

**P**  
**PRAY**  
PRAY DAILY FOR THOSE ON YOUR Pi<sup>2</sup> LIST, PROVIDENTIAL MOMENTS, AND FOR OPPORTUNITIES, BOLDNESS, AND CLARITY.

**i**  
**INVEST**  
INVEST AND BUILD AUTHENTIC RELATIONSHIPS AND REAL FRIENDSHIPS WITH THOSE ON YOUR LIST.

**i**  
**INVITE**  
INVITE THEM TO THE APPROPRIATE LEVEL OF COMMITMENT (ATTEND CHURCH, LIFE GROUP, GO OUT FOR COFFEE, TRUST IN CHRIST).

FAMILY MEMBER \_\_\_\_\_  
FRIEND \_\_\_\_\_  
CO-WORKER/CLASSMATE \_\_\_\_\_  
NEIGHBOR \_\_\_\_\_



## LIFE GROUP SERMON GUIDE

For the week of February 9, 2020—February 15, 2020

### ANOTHER BRICK IN THE WALL: PART 3—ACCOUNTING FOR CONFLICT

Pastor Lambert Sikkema  
NEHEMIAH 2:19-20

Recall Nehemiah's "ask"

### HOMILETICAL POINT:

Knowing the "nature of the opposition" is essential for the success of any plan. No "heart of darkness" celebrates the arrival of the kingdom's light. Every plan must account for the likely response of the opposition.

### 5 POINTS TO CONSIDER:

#1 The status quo is always working out well for somebody.

#2 Coming to terms with the "heart of darkness"

#3 Nehemiah the realist vv. 19, cf. John 4

#4 Nehemiah the optimist vv. 20

#5 Realistic Optimism...The default setting for all believers regarding our assumptions about advancing God's kingdom.



## Life Group Homework

For the week of February 9, 2020

### QUICK REVIEW:

As you reflect on your Sermon Guide Notes for this week's message, what was one key take-away that you'd like to discuss with your group?

### GOD'S STORY / OUR STORY

Read: Nehemiah 2:19-20

How did Nehemiah respond to the opposition he faced?

How does this challenge or encourage the way you face opposition in your own life? *Would you now reconsider how you handled a situation in the past?*

How does society respond to opposition today? Why? *Complacent? Volatile? Etc.?*

While there are plenty of people you may not connect with or see eye to eye with, there is a vast difference between someone you may consider "difficult" and someone who is opposing God's work in and through your life. Difficult people provide us with an excellent opportunity to grow in love, compassion, patience, and self-control.

Share of a time when you were forced to work alongside a "difficult person". *What about them was "difficult"? Why?*

What was your initial response?

Looking back, do you think that working with this person helped you to grow in the fruits of the Spirit? How?

How do you see this person now? *Do you understand them or do you still find them difficult?*



### DIGGING DEEPER

Read: Ephesians 2:2 and 6:12, 2:1-7 (Cont.)

When you are interacting with someone who is outright ridiculing your efforts to follow God, you may need a deeper view of the Truth to best handle the situation. The Apostle Paul tells us plainly that there are spiritual forces at work around us. Tell of a time when you experienced opposition for doing something God called you to do. What was that like?

How can we pray for those who are antagonistic to God's work? *Why is praying for those who are antagonistic so important?*

How can we be an example to them?

How might you need to distance yourself from an ungodly influence? *What steps might you choose to take before creating this distance?*

Read: Nehemiah 2:20

What is one thing God has called you to that you can rise up and do this week? *Encourage group members to share, but keep in mind that this may be a highly personal question/answer.*

### ADDITIONAL SELF-STUDY (Optional)

Read: Genesis 12:1-7 and Psalm 37

The physical land God promised to Abraham and his descendants was of monumental importance to the Jews. Consider reading and meditating on the verses above (focus on Psalm 37) several times this week. What encouragement do you imagine this psalm would have brought Nehemiah and the others building the wall in the face of opposition?

What encouragement does this psalm bring you in your present circumstances?

How does it challenge you?

What do you think it means as a New Testament believer to have an inheritance in Christ?

