



## To Be or Not to Be - Week 5 Be Engaged, Not Withdrawn - Discussion & Reflection Guide

### Questions and Prompts:

- **Who is one of the most generous, giving people you know?** How do they model giving without keeping score or expectation of being repaid?
- **What stood out to you from Sunday's service?** How did you sense God at work in you through the songs and the message? (The message's main points and scripture are listed below if it helps you think back.)
- Eddie shared, "God wants every person to make an extraordinary contribution of some kind." **Do you have any ways that you feel called by God to give back?**
- Remind yourself and your group of some of the key points of Nehemiah's story (he was a Jewish man in exile in Persia, he had a high-influence role in the foreign court). Then, **read Nehemiah 1:1-4 and 6:1-9.** Have someone read the passages out loud if you're in a group.
  - What do you notice about Nehemiah and his calling to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem?
  - Is there a word or phrase that stands out from this passage?
- Prayer played a significant role in Nehemiah's calling. **Are there things that are close to your heart that you need to pray about while you consider your response?**
- Read Jesus' words in John 15:18-20 as he reminds his followers to expect opposition. **How do Jesus' words comfort you? How do they challenge you?**
- **Take a moment to reflect on the words Eddie invited us to repeat:**
  - I must give up my own way.
  - I must take up my cross.
  - If I try to hang on to the life I want... I will lose it.
  - If I surrender my life for him... I will truly live.

**What does this mean for you practically today?** Write out some examples.

- **Is there anything else from the message you want to explore more deeply this week?**

We hope you'll use this guide to take the teaching from Sunday's service and reflect on it with a few friends or with a group. If you have questions or want to talk more about how to take your next spiritual step, contact us at [info@wschurch.org](mailto:info@wschurch.org).

## Message Main Points & Scripture

- **There are givers, takers and matchers.**
- **God wants every person to make an extraordinary contribution of some kind.**
- Nehemiah 1:1-2 – “In late autumn, in the month of Kislev, in the twentieth year of King Artaxerxes’ reign, I was at the fortress of Susa. Hanani, one of my brothers, came to visit me with some other men who had just arrived from Judah. I asked them about the Jews who had returned there from captivity and about how things were going in Jerusalem.”
- **My calling will disrupt my comfort.**
- Nehemiah 1:3-4 – “They said to me, ‘Things are not going well for those who returned to the province of Judah. They are in great trouble and disgrace. The wall of Jerusalem has been torn down, and the gates have been destroyed by fire.’ When I heard this, I sat down and wept. In fact, for days I mourned, fasted, and prayed to the God of heaven.”
- **Great lives are always accompanied by great burdens.**
- **Even if it's not my problem, God may want it to be my responsibility.**
- Galatians 6:2-3 – “Share each other’s burdens, and in this way obey the law of Christ. If you think you are too important to help someone, you are only fooling yourself. You are not that important.”
- Nehemiah 1:5 – “Then I said, ‘O LORD, God of heaven, the great and awesome God who keeps his covenant of unfailing love with those who love him and obey his commands, listen to my prayer! Look down and see me praying night and day for your people Israel. I confess that we have sinned against you. Yes, even my own family and I have sinned! We have sinned terribly by not obeying the commands, decrees, and regulations that you gave us through your servant Moses.’”
- **Prayer and strategy are not mutually exclusive.**
- Nehemiah 4:1-3 – “Sanballat was very angry when he learned that we were rebuilding the wall. He flew into a rage and mocked the Jews, saying in front of his friends and the Samaritan army officers, ‘What does this bunch of poor, feeble Jews think they’re doing? Do they think they can build the wall in a single day by just offering a few sacrifices? Do they actually think they can make something of stones from a rubbish heap—and charred ones at that?’  
Tobiah the Ammonite, who was standing beside him, remarked, ‘That stone wall would collapse if even a fox walked along the top of it!’”
- **Nothing worthwhile happens without opposition.**
- John 15:20 - “Do you remember what I told you? A slave is not greater than the master. Since they persecuted me, naturally they will persecute you.”
- Nehemiah 6:8 - “There is no truth in any part of your story. You are making up the whole thing.”
- Nehemiah 6:15 – “So on October 2 the wall was finished—just fifty-two days after we had begun. When our enemies and the surrounding nations heard about it, they were frightened and humiliated. They realized this work had been done with the help of our God.”
- **God will never stop calling us to engage, both in the world and in the church.**

- Matthew 9:38 - “The harvest is great, but the workers are few. So pray to the Lord who is in charge of the harvest – ask him to send more workers into his fields.”
- **Your best life is in the center of God’s will for you, no matter how much adjustment it requires.**
- Matthew 16:24-25 – “Then Jesus said to his disciples, ‘If any of you wants to be my follower, you must give up your own way, take up your cross, and follow me. If you try to hang on to your life, you will lose it. But if you give up your life for my sake, you will save it.’”