

NEHEMIAH

when love dares
you to move

Sermon Discussion Curriculum – Week 1 Nehemiah 1:1-11 – Sept. 5, 2021

Helpful Resources

Check out one or more of these helpful overview videos of Nehemiah:

1) <https://bit.ly/1Nehemiah>; 2) <https://bit.ly/2Nehemiah>; 3) <https://bit.ly/3Nehemiah3>.

Be Determined by Warren Wiersbe - <https://bit.ly/DeterminedBe>

Nehemiah: LifeGuide Bible Studies by Don Fields - <https://bit.ly/DonFields>

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KNOW:

- Has anyone in the group ever been to Israel and seen the wall of Jerusalem? What impression did it make on you? If no one has, what thoughts and/or emotions do you have when you see very old architecture in person?
- What, if anything, makes you cry? When was the last time you cried? What is the purpose of crying? What is the emotion that prompts crying?
- What do you think are some of the biggest challenges the church is facing today?
- What do you know about the book of Nehemiah? How much have you interacted with this story?
- When you receive news that disappoints you, how do you normally react? Do all people respond the same way in their disappointment? Why or why not?
- Share about an experience or news that you received where your first reaction was to go to God in prayer. What was the situation? What did you pray? How did God answer that prayer?
- Have you practiced fasting in your life? What was the motivation? Describe that experience.



GROW:

- Read Nehemiah 1:1-11. We're jumping into the story long after Israel had sinned, and God handed them over into exile with Babylon. The tension in the prayer is between God's faithfulness and Israel's unfaithfulness. Why do you think Nehemiah starts with repentance, instead of pleading for God to change circumstances?
- As you read the first three verses of Nehemiah, describe the situation. What information do you see about Nehemiah? What information do you see about the Jews living in Jerusalem?
- Read Nehemiah's prayer in verses 4-11. What do you learn about God in this prayer? What does Nehemiah acknowledge about himself and his people in the prayer?
- Describe the heart-posture Nehemiah takes as he prays to God.
- We learn of God's great love for us on all pages of scripture – Old and New Testaments. Because of our sin, it is true that God would have every right to be disappointed with us. Instead, how does God respond to our sin? Does his heart break or is he a tyrant?
- The purpose of Nehemiah's prayer does not appear to be, "Oh God please fix this." Why would it be that Nehemiah would begin with confession rather than request? What is Nehemiah asking the Lord to do in his prayer?



SHOW:

- This chapter begins the story of God stirring Nehemiah's heart to lead people to faithfulness. What are some ways that you can share what God has done in your life with someone else?
- Nehemiah's heart was broken by the news he learned. But rather than be inwardly focused, he immediately turned to God in prayer. Can you share current disappointments or sinful situations you know of which need to be prayed for? This may be a good time to come beside each other in specific prayer.
- Spend some time in prayer as a group. Pray for our city and our church. Pray for God to move and build His kingdom. Ask Him to lead your heart to live in a way that gives Him glory by leading others to Him.
- Pray for the church and believers around the world. Specifically, pray for those in Afghanistan and Haiti. What other areas of the world do you know where Christians are struggling?
- Even as Christians, it is tempting to turn our "prayers" for others' sin into gossip and judgmental attitudes. Describe the language and attitudes of a humble Christian who is truly heartbroken for sin.
- Do you find it easy/natural to take your disappointments to God – or do you more often blame God when you are disappointed? How should we respond as Christ-followers to disappointments, hurts, and setbacks in our lives?

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Sermon Discussion Curriculum – Week 2 Nehemiah 2 – Sept. 12, 2021

Helpful Resources

Check out one or more of these helpful overview videos of Nehemiah:

1) <https://bit.ly/1Nehemiah>; 2) <https://bit.ly/2Nehemiah>; 3) <https://bit.ly/3Nehemiah3>.

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KNOW:

- As a group, try to define the word "courage". What is a situation in your life that has required courage?
- Figure out who in your D-Group has jumped out of a perfectly good airplane, bungee jumped, or done anything else where they decided that having nothing under their feet was a good idea. Where was it? Why did they do it? What was scarier, the anticipation or the event itself?
- Think of a time you felt desperate. What words or images would you use to describe the situation you faced? What did you do?
- Share about a time where you had to choose to do the right thing even though it would cost you greatly. What, in this situation, propelled you? Did you feel any fear or anxiety in the situation?
- Have you ever felt, without a doubt, that the Holy Spirit was prompting you to act? Did you listen or ignore the prompting? Share the experience with the group.
- What is something in your house right now that needs to be fixed but you've been putting it off? Why are you putting it off?



GROW:

- Read Nehemiah 2:1-20 out loud as a D-Group. Are there any verses or phrases that surprise you? What stands out to you? What do you want to underline or highlight?
- In chapter two, Nehemiah approaches King Artaxerxes with the circumstances of the broken Jerusalem wall that we learned about in chapter one. Revisit the prayer of Nehemiah and how it impacts the events of chapter two. What do you learn about the faith of Nehemiah? Why is time alone with the Lord in preparation for the work He calls you to so vitally important?
- Why was Nehemiah afraid after the king saw him sad? Why would it be dangerous to show emotion (especially negative emotion) around the King? What can we learn about Nehemiah's job in this passage?
- Nehemiah's request to the king is specific and thoughtful. How did asking King Artaxerxes for permission to rebuild the wall help Nehemiah carry out his calling? What can we learn from Nehemiah from his request of the King? What does this tell us about Nehemiah's character?
- According to verses 9-16, Nehemiah travels to Jerusalem to assess the situation of the wall. What did he find once he arrived?
- In verses 17-20, Nehemiah reveals his plan and is met with opposition. What do you learn about the faith of Nehemiah from this passage?
- Compare this passage with Hebrews 4:14-16. What do you learn about bringing your prayers to the Lord? How is bringing requests to the Lord the same as Nehemiah going before King Artaxerxes? How is it different?



SHOW:

- When you become disturbed about something, how do you know if this is something that God has given you a burden for or if it is simply a personal preference? How do you know when it is time to act?
- Is there anything in your life right now that you would say that you need to practically take a step of faith from the place of hearing a call from the Lord, and heeding that call? Share this with the group.
- Can you think of something in our world, a wrong that needs to be righted, and yet we seem to have accepted it as normal? Is there a situation that you need to take time to "go and assess"?
- Are there any ways in which the Lord has given you a vision to build his Kingdom right now? Maybe it is an effort of physical work or an effort of one-on-one discipleship. In what way do you need to act right now? What fears are making you hesitate in what you need to do?
- Have you ever done any "work for the Lord" and it did not go well? How can we guard ourselves from disappointment and cynicism when things do not go well in our service for God?
- Our mission as a church is to make disciples who live by God's grace and for His glory. What specific actions do you sense God desires for you to take to make this mission part of your everyday life?

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Sermon Discussion Curriculum – Week 3 Nehemiah 3 – Sept. 19, 2021

Helpful Resources

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KNOW:

- Think of a time someone served you at great cost to themselves, and how that made you feel. Share with the group.
- Describe something you have recently built or put together. What was challenging about it? What was fun about it?
- What do you think is the greatest team of all time? Which sport was it? What made them such a great team?
- Describe a time whenever you succeeded at a big home repair project. Describe a time when you completely failed a home repair project.
- What are the difficulties of working on a project alone, compared to the benefits of working on a project with a team?
- What is the largest gathering of people you have been a part of (football game, Promise Keepers, etc.)? What was the purpose?



GROW:

- Take a few minutes to read chapter 3 together as a group. Yes, it is a list of all the work that took place. Keep an eye out for anything that sticks out to you. Anything that impacts you. God's word is powerful.
- Read Chapter 3:1. What role did the priests play in rebuilding the wall? Talk about the importance of setting a good example with your work. Contrast the priests' actions with those of the men of Tekoa discussed in Chapter 3:5. How were they different than the priests in verse 1?
- Nehemiah 3:5 describes some who were not willing to serve by rebuilding the wall and gates. Why do you think this verse was included in the text? What significance does it have?
- Arthur Ashe Jr, a famous American tennis player, said "Start where you are. Use what you have. Do what you can." What similarity do you see between his quote and verse 10, 28, and 30? What was significant about this approach to rebuilding the wall?
- Take a few minutes to read and reflect on Psalm 62. How does this psalm expand on the picture of God's faithfulness in the rebuilding of the wall around Jerusalem?
- It's reasonable to imagine some jobs in the rebuilding process were more desirable or admirable than others. In what ways do the scriptures address the variety of body parts in the church and the value of each member?
- How does the rebuilding of the wall in Jerusalem portray the redemption of Jesus on the cross?



SHOW:

- What kind of builder are you? Do you build your life to make a name for yourself or to glorify the name of God? How should the way believers handle money, relationships and time reflect their desire to build God's kingdom rather than their own?
- Verse 12 shows that families of all kinds were involved in this rebuilding process. Take advantage of this discipleship process by including your kids in D-Group service projects rather than using them as an out. What can your D-Group do to serve as families?
- The life of a believer is a life marked by service. In Matthew 20:28, Jesus clearly states that he did not come to be served, but to serve. Think about Jesus' words, then examine your own personal life and the life of your group. Do they reflect the teaching and the heart of Jesus, or is there a need for course correction?
- God has a long, rich history of restoring what is broken. What might God's act of restoration in your own life – along with the model of Nehemiah rebuilding the wall – lead you to do to participate in the restoration of someone else?
- Pray together as a group using these prompts as a guide. Be intentional in your prayer.
 - *Thank the Father that He knows you by name. Thank Him for uniquely gifting you and placing you to build at your appointed spot.*
 - *Ask the Lord to give you the patience, compassion, and humility to work well with your fellow builders of God's kingdom. Ask Him to help you love them as you love yourself.*
 - *Confess to the Lord where you have attempted to build a name for yourself. Ask Him to make His name the motivation and object of all your efforts.*

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Sermon Discussion Curriculum – Week 4 Nehemiah 4 – Sept. 26, 2021

Helpful Resources

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1) <https://bit.ly/1Nehemiah>; 2) <https://bit.ly/2Nehemiah>; 3) <https://bit.ly/3Nehemiah3>.

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KNOW:

- Did you or anyone in your D-Group get to participate in any of the Local Missions Week activities? If so, tell us about your experience serving with one of our local mission partners.
- How do you handle criticism? Think of a time when someone criticized you for doing good. How did you respond?
- What is the scariest thing that has happened to you? What is often your first response to fear? How do you handle loss of control?
- Have you ever had someone who opposed you or something you were doing personally? What was that situation/experience like? How did you feel? What did you do? Was there anyone helpful to you in that situation?
- Describe a time you were attacked or felt threatened by someone or circumstances in your life. What was your response to the situation? How did the situation resolve itself?



GROW:

- Read Nehemiah 4. Describe what is happening as the Jews continued to build the wall. Feel free to look at your Study Bible notes if you need help piecing the story together.
- G.K. Chesterton said, "The Bible tells us to love our neighbors, and also to love our enemies; probably because they are generally the same people." The enemy doesn't want to see the work of the Lord progress, so it's often when God is working, opposition will come. How does Nehemiah handle the opposition from Sanballat and Tobiah? How do his actions show his faith in God?
- Discuss the ways Nehemiah and the people responded to the threats that came against their work. How do these responses demonstrate their commitment to the rebuilding?
- What feelings does the opposition cause in the people of Judah (v. 10)? How does Nehemiah inspire them? What steps do they take to overcome these feelings?
- What was the significance of Nehemiah shifting the attention from the enemy, and onto a great and awesome Lord?
- Read Romans 8:14-17. What comparisons do you see with what Paul wrote and how the people in Nehemiah behaved? How does our adoption as sons and daughters of God change both our doubts about His attitude toward us and our ability to face opposition?
- The title for this sermon series is, "When Love Dares You to Move." Where do you see love for God, love for each other, and love for our enemies showing up in this chapter?



SHOW:

- How might you act as a type of Nehemiah to your church and your family, leading them away from the fear of opposition and into reliance on God?
- What are some of the daily battles you fight and how might you need the Lord's help in them? How could your D-Group help?
- In Nehemiah, we see this great balance of faith and action. How should that balance show up in your life? What does it look like to trust God, but to act in faith in the tough situations of your life? Re-read verse 9 for a great picture of this.
- What does dealing with opposition wisely and winsomely do to demonstrate our love for others? What does this look like in our own lives as we love our family, neighbors, and enemies as Christ would have us do?
- What are some of the ways we can deal with opposition and criticism when it comes our way? What role does abiding in Christ play in dealing with difficult people and opposition?

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Sermon Discussion Curriculum – Week 5 Nehemiah 5 – Oct. 3, 2021

Helpful Resources

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KNOW:

- Share something when you were a kid you thought was unfair growing up in your family? (Worst seat in the car, early curfew, smallest bedroom, etc.)
- Have you ever restored an old piece of furniture? Or maybe an old house? What was the most challenging part of the project? What did you enjoy the most?
- Share about a time you were in need, and someone went out of their way to care for you. How was this meaningful to you? How has this experience informed the way you care for others in need?
- Books and movies are filled with stories of the weak being exploited by the rich and powerful. Do you have a favorite story? Why does it resonate so much with you?
- Share about a time you've acted on behalf of someone who was being taken advantage of or hurt by someone else. What did you do?



GROW:

- In Nehemiah 5, Nehemiah takes action to protect those who are being oppressed. What were some of the specific actions that Nehemiah took?
- Read Nehemiah 5:6. How do we discern if our anger is righteous like Nehemiah's? Read Psalm 7:11, Exodus 22:25, Leviticus 25:35-36, and 39-40 for help.
- Read 1 John 3:11-18. How does Jesus's sacrifice for us inform the way we treat others?
- How does Nehemiah 5 compare with the passage of Philippians 2:1-11? In what ways does Nehemiah call out and challenge the leaders?
- In what ways do you see God's concern for hurting people revealed in this passage?
- Read through some passages in the New Testament that show what the church should do when members sin against each other (Gal. 6:1, Matt. 18:15-20, etc.). How does this compare with how Nehemiah handled his situation?



SHOW:

- How has God spoken to you through this passage?
- As we have been going through this study, have you been prompted by the Holy Spirit to take action? Maybe your thoughts or ideas are just starting to take shape. Share them with the group even if they aren't fully fleshed out yet.
- What "personal rights" do you need to lay aside in order to serve/love God and others better?
- If you haven't already, spend some time talking about where your group can serve together in our community. Visit www.fellowshipar.com/servelocal and click on Project \$100K for more info about how your group can partner with Fellowship to serve our local partners this Fall.
- During this series, we've been encouraged to pray intentionally for our city. Commit to pray for our city every day at 5:01. Pray together as a group using these prompts as a guide.
 - *Pray for the needs of our city and for our eyes to be open to those needs and respond in ways that show the love of Jesus to those around us.*
 - *Ask God to give you compassion, wisdom, and humility for dealing with the injustice in our city*
 - *Thank the Lord that He knows you by name and has gifted with you with everything you need to fulfill His calling on your life*
 - *Ask Him to give you a heart for the city.*

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Sermon Discussion Curriculum – Week 6 Nehemiah 6-7 – Oct. 10, 2021

Helpful Resources

Check out one or more of these helpful overview videos of Nehemiah:

1) <https://bit.ly/1Nehemiah>; 2) <https://bit.ly/2Nehemiah>; 3) <https://bit.ly/3Nehemiah3>.

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KNOW:

- Do you think of yourself as a focused person or a distractible person? Why? If you don't know, who might be able to tell you?
- When you are concentrating or trying to relax, what is something you find annoying, distracting, or irritating?
- Distractions can come from internal and/or external sources. What "good things" might be distracting you in your own life?
- What things, thoughts or people consume most of your attention throughout your day? How do you react to the distraction of 'good things'?
- Have you ever had a situation where you knew that God being at work in and through you was the only explanation for how that situation turned out? Share your experience with your group.
- What is something that you have accomplished that took many months to finish? Did you ever want to quit? What caused you to keep going?



GROW:

- Read Quote: “Sometimes ‘good things’ can be one of Satan’s greatest tools to distract us from the work God has for us”. What do you think this statement means?
- Think about some of the challenges you are currently facing. How do these scriptures encourage you? *Galatians 6:9; Isaiah 41:10 ; Matthew 6:31–34; Psalm 94:18–19*
- How did Nehemiah’s enemies attempt to distract him from the work? What does the persistence of his enemies teach us about our enemy? Read Nehemiah 6:9. What was Nehemiah’s response to his enemies?
- Fear can be a very powerful tool of the enemy. How does the enemy try and use fear to distract Nehemiah? How does fear often work hand-in-hand with the lies of the enemy?
- What do we learn from Nehemiah in this chapter about overcoming opposition and distraction?
- What does this passage teach us about God’s heart?



SHOW:

- Is there a mission or task God has you on right now that you feel like you don’t have the ability or energy to complete? Share that with your group and pray Nehemiah 6:9 over each other – that God would “strengthen your hands for the work”.
- Think about the attributes and character of God – if it helps, google “attributes of God” to find a list. As you think or read over these characteristics, pick out two or three that you need to be most evidenced in your life right now. Pray and ask God to show himself in your life specifically in these ways.
- How have you seen the enemy use distractions as a way of hindering the work God has called us to?
- What distractions does the enemy use to pull your focus away from what God is calling you to?
- How can you be an encouragement to others who are doing God’s work and facing opposition?

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Sermon Discussion Curriculum – Week 7 Nehemiah 8-10:27 – Oct. 17, 2021

Helpful Resources

Check out one or more of these helpful overview videos of Nehemiah:

1) <https://bit.ly/1Nehemiah>; 2) <https://bit.ly/2Nehemiah>; 3) <https://bit.ly/3Nehemiah3>.

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KNOW:

- Share about a meeting where it was hard to pay attention or stay awake. Why was it difficult?
- When you think about reading Scripture, what image or memory comes to mind?
- A.W. Tozer said, "Truth is a glorious but hard mistress. She never consults, bargains, or compromises". Would you agree in society today that we have lost the concept of "absolute truth"? How would you define truth?
- Talk about a time a verse or passage of Scripture from the Bible changed you or brought comfort to you. What were the circumstances at the time? How did God's word comfort you or convict you at that time in your life?
- The chapters from Nehemiah today talked a lot about rejoicing. When you hear that word 'rejoice,' what do you think of? What's something that you've rejoiced over in your life?
- Have you ever had an emotional reaction to something you read? What was it? Why did it effect and resonate with you?



GROW:

- Read Nehemiah 8:1-8. What is the significance of reading the Book of the Law? How do the people react to the reading of God's word?
- How do Nehemiah, Ezra, and the Levites encourage the people of Israel to react to the reading of the Law (See 8:10)? How should we respond to the reading and teaching of God's Word?
- Read Chapter 9. What do the people of Israel remember about God during the reading of the Law? What is their response to Him? How does this remembering lead the people of Israel to repentance?
- We see in Nehemiah 8:9 that the people's initial reaction to hearing the Law was mourning. We see here what Paul describes in Romans 3:20 when he says, "through the law comes knowledge of sin." Why is that?
- Read Nehemiah 8:9-12. Think about what the people have gone through building the wall in the face of opposition. Now, they hear the Law read and taught, which revealed all the ways they had fallen short and sinned. V.10 says, "the joy of the Lord is your strength". Ezra and the Levites tell the people to go party. How can that be the response in the midst of such conviction? How can we have joy during sorrowful times?
- Nehemiah 9 is one long prayer. Read 9:33. Why is it important that the Levites leading the prayer say "we" instead of "they"? Is it easier for us to acknowledge our own sin or the sin of others? Why?



SHOW:

- Often we find ourselves centering our joy around good health, finances, material possessions, accomplishments, or otherworldly things. How can these things lead to disappointment and sorrow?
- Nehemiah reminded the people of Israel when they were sorrowful that the joy of the Lord was their strength. Why is it so hard for us as people today to find our ultimate joy in Lord alone?
- Warren Wiersbe said, *"The joy that comes from the Lord is real and lasting and enriches our lives. God doesn't give us joy instead of sorrow, or joy in spite of sorrow, but joy in the midst of sorrow. It is not substitution but transformation"*. How can the joy of the Lord transform the sorrows and difficulties you face?
- In Ch. 10, the people commit to remembering who God is and what He has done. How can you live in a way that consistently remembers God's faithfulness? How can you immerse yourself in Scripture during this upcoming week?
- Fellowship Bible Church was able to give \$25,000 to Seed Company to help translate the Gospel of Luke for 3 remote, unreached people groups in South Asia who have no Scripture in their heart language. Did you know that there are still 171 million people without a single verse of Scripture in their heart language? Do you want to help get Scripture to unreached people groups? Visit seedcompany.com, or email missions@fellowshipar.com to find out how you can help.

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Sermon Discussion Curriculum – Week 8 Nehemiah 10:28-13:31 – Oct. 24, 2021

Helpful Resources

Check out one or more of these helpful overview videos of Nehemiah:

1) <https://bit.ly/1Nehemiah>; 2) <https://bit.ly/2Nehemiah>; 3) <https://bit.ly/3Nehemiah3>.

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KNOW:

- Do you have a favorite city? Why is it your favorite?
- Describe the difference of emotions you may feel between a city you only visit and the feelings you have about the city in which you live. Why are these emotions different?
- Have you ever lived in a city that has a nickname? What was that city's nickname, and do you know the story behind the name?
- Have you ever witnessed or been a part of a flash mob that gathered to sing? Share about that experience.
- What is your favorite hymn? Why does that song speak to you so much? Do you have any other worship songs that you use to center your heart on Jesus?
- Share about a time that you were able to be a part of a dedication ceremony. What was the purpose? Who or what was being honored? Was there anything that happened at the ceremony that was unique?



GROW:

- “The abundant life in Christ is not defined by what God has given you but what he has done for you.” This phrase was used in the sermon from last week. How should our perspective of praise change in light of this biblical truth?
- Read Nehemiah 10:28-39. What is the significance of the Israelites separating themselves from the land around them? In what other ways did they visibly choose to worship God? Is there anything in this passage that stands out to you?
- It has been said that obedience without worship is legalism. Describe the hearts of those in giving in Nehemiah 12 and discuss that description in comparison with 2 Corinthians 9:7.
- Describe any similarities or themes found in Nehemiah 11 and 12 with that of Romans 12:1.
- In Nehemiah 12, the Israelites gave the Lord the first of everything that they had. Why do you think that it was important for them to give to the Lord right off the top? How did giving to the Lord impact their relationship with Him?
- After some time away from Israel, Nehemiah returns (chapter 13) to find that many of Israel’s promises made in their covenant in chapter 10 were being violated. What were some of the violations that Nehemiah found upon his return to Jerusalem? What significance do you think these violations played in their relationship with God?



SHOW:

- Pastor and theologian Warren Wiersbe writes, “Never underestimate the importance of simply being physically present in the place where God wants you.” In what ways can you express “the ministry of presence” in the lives of others this week? How will your presence bring the hope of Jesus into their lives?
- There are many similarities among religions and non-profits on their response to suffering. However, how a person behaves in response to success is a significant indication of who or what they worship. Elaborate on what we have learned from Nehemiah on how to show a watching world we believe God deserves all glory and honor.
- What does it look like for you to take inventory (similar to what the Israelites did) and dedicate yourself and all that you have to the Lord? Think about your own household. Maybe it is you, or your spouse, or children. Is there a special “ceremony” that you can do to mark this dedication?
- Look at the Hymns album from Fellowship Music. Pick one of the songs to play and sing together as a D-Group. Focus on your worship and encourage the group to focus on the Lord in this moment.
- In what ways have you compromised your walk with the Lord? Is there anything that you have “let slide” similar to the Israelites in Nehemiah 13? Share this with your D-Group and pray together that your heart will realign with Jesus.