



Nehemiah 3 - Rebuilding Jerusalem

Do you agree that we should see parallels between Nehemiah's work on the wall and our work today in building the church? Are there any limits or cautions we need to consider when we do this?

Take a look at 1 Corinthians 3:10 for the use of building as a metaphor in the New Testament. Cautions might include some of the very obvious differences between a wall (made of stones) and the church (made of people!), which means we can't push the parallels too far...

Why do you think this list of names is here? Why not just summarise?

What different sorts of people can you see at work? What does the variety tell us? (Also, who doesn't work? How might that be revealing?)

How do you react to the idea of 'working' in the church? Does it excite you, or fill you with dread, or something else..?

What difference might it make to remember that serving in the church is a participation in the work of the Lord Jesus?

Jesus builds the church - Matthew 16:18. Bear in mind, though, that we are not Jesus, and we grow weary even when we are serving well. If people in the group find the idea of working in the church just exhausting, perhaps you need to turn to another passage to observe that because the

work belongs primarily to Christ, we can trust him with it and take rest where needed. Psalm 127 might help.

We see the end result of Jesus building the church in Revelation 21. Read verses 10-14. Does the vision of the end encourage you in your work in the church here and now?

You might want to recap the summary Andrew gave of the historical context of the book of Nehemiah briefly as you begin

1) A burden for the church (v1-4)

- What news does Nehemiah receive in v3? How does he react to it and why do you think he reacts so strongly?
- How does Nehemiah's burden for the people of God then challenge us in our burden for the church today?

2) Humble prayer for the church (v5-8)

- Nehemiah turns to prayer. How does he approach God in prayer here?
- Why do you think Nehemiah confesses their (and his) sin here and what lessons do we learn from it?

3) Hope-filled prayer for the church (v8-11)

- Why do you think Nehemiah recalls God's promises in v8-9 as he prays and what we can learn from that in our prayers?
- Where do you see hope in Nehemiah's prayer in these verses? How do they point us towards the hope we have in Jesus?
- What strikes you most about Nehemiah's prayer and how does it challenge or encourage you in your own prayers?