

SESSION 3 – Courage

I. INTRODUCTION

1. Create and Cultivate: Using our God-given time, talents, and resources to bring things into existence and develop, order, and manage them for the benefit of others and for the glory of God.

II. NEHEMIAH'S STORY – HOWTO CREATE AND CULTIVATE

1. Persia had _____ Israel and many Israelites lived as exiles there. Nehemiah, like many other Israelites, longed to return home to Israel one day to help restore and rebuild their nation.

- o Nehemiah held a _____ position on the King's staff.
- o Nehemiah had a personal dream to use his talents to rebuild Israel.

"I took up the wine and gave it to the king. Now I had not been sad in his presence. And the king said to me, 'Why is your face sad, seeing you are not sick? This is nothing but sadness of the heart.' Then I was very much afraid. I said to the king... 'Why should my face not be sad, when the city, the place of my fathers' graves, lies in ruins, and its gates have been destroyed by fire?' Then the king said to me, 'What are you requesting?' So I prayed to the God of heaven. And I said to the king, 'If it pleases the king, and if your servant has found favor in your sight,... send me to Judah, to the city of my fathers' graves, that I may rebuild it.'" Nehemiah 2:1-5 (ESV)

2. Nehemiah was a _____.

"Nehemiah hoped to use his management skills to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem and reinstate stability so that economic and civic life could begin to flourish again in Israel." – Tim Keller

- o First, notice that Nehemiah had a work- _____ that blessed others.
- o Does your work-vision bring _____ to you, your family, your community and the world?
- o Nehemiah courageously pursued his idea despite being afraid.
- o Nehemiah turned to God in _____. In the middle of his pitch to the king, he turned to God for help.

- Nehemiah also had a well-thought out work strategy.

“And the king said to me... ‘How long will you be gone, and when will you return?’ So it pleased the king to send me when I had given him a time. And I said to the king, ‘If it pleases the king, let letters be given me to the governors of the province Beyond the River, that they may let me pass through until I come to Judah, and a letter to Asaph, the keeper of the king’s forest, that he may give me timber to make beams for the gates of the fortress of the temple, and for the wall of the city, and for the house that I shall occupy.’ And the king granted me what I asked.” Nehemiah 2:6-8 (ESV)

- Begin with the _____ in mind.
- Four takeaways from Nehemiah “Creating”:
 1. A work-vision that blesses others
 2. Courageous in the face of fear
 3. Depended on God in prayer
 4. A well-thought out strategy

3. Nehemiah was a _____ in his work.

“So we labored at the work, and half [of the men] held spears from the break of dawn until the stars came out. I also said to the people at the time, ‘Let every man and his servant pass the night within Jerusalem, that they may be a guard for us by night and may labor by day.’ So neither I nor my brothers nor my servant nor the men of the guard who followed me, none of us took off our [work] clothes; [and] each kept his weapon at his right hand.” Nehemiah 4:21-23 (ESV)

- All of us need to expect _____ to come and be ready to make strategic adjustments.
- The importance of being willing to work hard.
- He took time to _____ and celebrate his accomplishments.

“And at the dedication of the wall of Jerusalem they sought the [priests] in all their places, to bring them to Jerusalem to celebrate the dedication with gladness, with thanksgivings and with singing... Then I brought the leaders of Judah up onto the wall and... [they] gave thanks... And they offered great sacrifices that day and rejoiced, for God had made them rejoice with great joy.” Nehemiah 12:27-43 (ESV)

- Three Takeaways from Nehemiah “Cultivating”:

1. Fought to overcome resistance
2. Willing to work hard
3. Took time to rest and celebrate

III. PAUL'S TEACHING – HOW TO BE A LIFE-GIVING PRESENCE

1. Once Paul started following Jesus, he was all about modeling Jesus' _____ spirit in his work
 - Paul did a lot of blue-collar work.
 - In Acts 18:3, we learn that Paul was a tentmaker – a man who worked with his hands.
 - “Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ.” 1 Corinthians 11:1 (ESV)
2. Three ways to be a life-giving presence in our work:
 1. Provide for _____
 - “If anyone is not willing to work, let him not eat. For we hear that some among you walk in idleness, not busy at work, but busybodies. Now such persons we command and encourage in the Lord Jesus Christ to do their work quietly and to earn their own living.” 2 Thessalonians 3:10-12 (ESV)
 2. Provide for our family.
 - “If anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for members of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.” 1 Timothy 5:8 (ESV)
 3. Give to those who are in _____.
 - “Let the thief no longer steal, but rather let him labor doing honest work with his own hands, so that he may have something to share with anyone in need.” Ephesians 4:28 (ESV)
 - Authentic Men are _____ men.

DISCUSSION / REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. How do the stories and lessons of Nehemiah and Paul give you courage to live out our Biblical Blueprint for work?
2. In this session, we learned that Nehemiah was courageous in the face of fear. What fears are you currently experiencing in your work life? Nehemiah also pressed through resistance. Are you facing any resistance in your work?
3. Nehemiah BOTH prayed and planned when contemplating a big career move. Are you more inclined to pray or plan when it comes to challenges in your work life? Why?
4. Nehemiah allowed himself to dream big and trust God fully with his work-life. Do you give yourself permission to do that with yours? Why or why not?

ANSWERS

SESSION 3 – Courage

I. INTRODUCTION

1. Create and Cultivate: Using our God-given time, talents, and resources to bring things into existence and develop, order, and manage them for the benefit of others and for the glory of God.

II. NEHEMIAH'S STORY – HOWTO CRETE AND CULTIVATE

1. Persia had **conquered** Israel and many Israelites lived as exiles there. Nehemiah, like many other Israelites, longed to return home to Israel one day to help restore and rebuild their nation.
 - o Nehemiah held a **distinguished** position on the King's staff.
 - o Nehemiah had a personal dream to use his talents to rebuild Israel.

"I took up the wine and gave it to the king. Now I had not been sad in his presence. And the king said to me, 'Why is your face sad, seeing you are not sick? This is nothing but sadness of the heart.' Then I was very much afraid. I said to the king... 'Why should my face not be sad, when the city, the place of my fathers' graves, lies in ruins, and its gates have been destroyed by fire?' Then the king said to me, 'What are you requesting?' So I prayed to the God of heaven. And I said to the king, 'If it pleases the king, and if your servant has found favor in your sight,... send me to Judah, to the city of my fathers' graves, that I may rebuild it.'" Nehemiah 2:1-5 (ESV)

2. Nehemiah was a **creator**

"Nehemiah hoped to use his management skills to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem and reinstate stability so that economic and civic life could begin to flourish again in Israel." – Tim Keller

- o First, notice that Nehemiah had a work- **vision** that blessed others.
- o Does your work-vision bring **life** to you, your family, your community and the world?
- o Nehemiah courageously pursued his idea despite being afraid.
- o Nehemiah turned to God in **prayer** In the middle of his pitch to the king, he

turned to God for help.

- Nehemiah also had a well-thought out work strategy.

“And the king said to me... ‘How long will you be gone, and when will you return?’ So it pleased the king to send me when I had given him a time. And I said to the king, ‘If it pleases the king, let letters be given me to the governors of the province Beyond the River, that they may let me pass through until I come to Judah, and a letter to Asaph, the keeper of the king’s forest, that he may give me timber to make beams for the gates of the fortress of the temple, and for the wall of the city, and for the house that I shall occupy.’ And the king granted me what I asked.” Nehemiah 2:6-8 (ESV)

- Begin with the **end** in mind.
- Four takeaways from Nehemiah “Creating”:
 1. A work-vision that blesses others
 2. Courageous in the face of fear
 3. Depended on God in prayer
 4. A well-thought out strategy

3. Nehemiah was a **cultivator** in his work.

“So we labored at the work, and half [of the men] held spears from the break of dawn until the stars came out. I also said to the people at the time, ‘Let every man and his servant pass the night within Jerusalem, that they may be a guard for us by night and may labor by day.’ So neither I nor my brothers nor my servant nor the men of the guard who followed me, none of us took off our [work] clothes; [and] each kept his weapon at his right hand.” Nehemiah 4:21-23 (ESV)

- All of us need to expect **resistance** to come and be ready to make strategic adjustments.
- The importance of being willing to work hard.
- He took time to **rest** and celebrate his accomplishments.

“And at the dedication of the wall of Jerusalem they sought the [priests] in all their places, to bring them to Jerusalem to celebrate the dedication with gladness, with thanksgivings and with singing... Then I brought the leaders of Judah up onto the wall and... [they] gave thanks... And they offered great sacrifices that day and rejoiced, for God had made them rejoice with great joy.” Nehemiah 12:27-43 (ESV)

- Three Takeaways from Nehemiah “Cultivating”:
 1. Fought to overcome resistance
 2. Willing to work hard
 3. Took time to rest and celebrate

III. PAUL’S TEACHING – HOW TO BE A LIFE-GIVING PRESENCE

1. Once Paul started following Jesus, he was all about modeling Jesus’ **life-giving** spirit in his work
 - Paul did a lot of blue-collar work.
 - In Acts 18:3, we learn that Paul was a tentmaker – a man who worked with his hands.
 - “Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ.” 1 Corinthians 11:1 (ESV)
2. Three ways to be a life-giving presence in our work:
 1. Provide for **ourselves**

“If anyone is not willing to work, let him not eat. For we hear that some among you walk in idleness, not busy at work, but busybodies. Now such persons we command and encourage in the Lord Jesus Christ to do their work quietly and to earn their own living.” 2 Thessalonians 3:10-12 (ESV)
 2. Provide for our family.

“If anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for members of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.” 1 Timothy 5:8 (ESV)
 3. Give to those who are in **need**

“Let the thief no longer steal, but rather let him labor doing honest work with his own hands, so that he may have something to share with anyone in need.” Ephesians 4:28 (ESV)

 - Authentic Men are **giving** men.