

Becoming Light Bearers

Nehemiah 2:10-20

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Open It¹

1. Talk about those who especially influenced you? A teacher? A parent? A coach? How so?
2. How do you typically respond to someone with a critical spirit?
3. What are “dark” areas in your life into which you’re sensing the Lord desiring to shine light? What might be some ways that the Lord might do that through you?

Explore It

1. What did Nehemiah do when he first arrived in Jerusalem? (2:11-12)
2. What strategy did Nehemiah use in surveying the state of the city? (2:11-16)
3. Why do you think Nehemiah surveyed the city himself before he approached others with his plan?
4. How did Nehemiah prepare himself to present his plan to the Jews? (2:11-16)
5. From where did Nehemiah receive his motivation to rebuild Jerusalem? (2:12)
6. What attitude did Nehemiah have about himself and about God? (2:12, 18, 20)
7. What did Nehemiah find in his inspection of the city? (2:13)
8. Why were the officials unaware of Nehemiah’s plan? (2:16)
9. Why did Nehemiah say that the Israelites were in disgrace? (2:17)
10. How did Nehemiah motivate the Israelites to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem? (2:17-18)
11. How did the Jews respond to Nehemiah? (2:18)
12. What encouragement did Nehemiah offer those people who may have initially doubted his plan? (2:18)
13. Why did Nehemiah experience opposition to the work of rebuilding Jerusalem? (2:19)
14. How did Nehemiah respond to his critics? (2:20)
15. Whom did Nehemiah credit for the Israelites’ expected success? (2:20)

Get It

1. How was Nehemiah able to shine light into such a dark place? What qualities do you observe within him?
2. In what specific ways could you emulate Nehemiah to shine light in your family, on the job, or in some other setting?
3. What might Nehemiah teach you about responding to criticism?
4. How can Christians protect themselves from developing a critical attitude?
5. Why do you think Nehemiah was so confident that the Lord would grant him success?

Apply It

1. What action can you take this week to shine light at your job or in your home?
2. What specific steps could you take in the next few days to anticipate criticism and handle it in a way that gives glory to the Lord?
3. How might you demonstrate your dependence on the Lord for success?
4. How can Nehemiah's example of praying, planning and boldness help you to take risks and action?

¹ I’m indebted to Adult Questions for LESSONMaker and LifeGuide Bible Studies - LifeGuide Bible Studies – Nehemiah: The Courage to Face Opposition as the basis for many of these thought questions.