

NEHEMIAH

STUDY GUIDE

1

PRAYER

Each session will begin with an opportunity to help you connect with and get to know one another. Since this may be your first time together (or since you may have new members), take a few minutes to make sure everyone knows each other.

If you could suddenly know everything there is to know about one specific subject, what subject would you choose? What would you do with your newfound knowledge?

Play the “Session One: Prayer” video lesson.

What stood out to you from the video?

“COME TO GOD IN PRAYER. SIMPLY—BELIEVING HE IS YOUR FATHER WHO LOVES YOU DEEPLY. COME TO HIM. AS YOU ARE!”

— DUSTY FRIZZELL

In the following section, you will explore Bible passages and take part in discussion to apply insights from this session. If time is a concern, please choose just a few questions to discuss in your group.

Read Nehemiah 1:1-11

1. Who is the main person in your life to whom you go for advice or wisdom when you're not sure what to do? How has that person's advice steered you in the right direction? Where do you think their wisdom comes from?

2. When Nehemiah learns the wall of Jerusalem is in ruins, his first instinct is to seek God in prayer. Why do you think he prayed? Why should we pray when we receive news that troubles or upsets us? Why should we pray when we don't know what to do?

3. Even though Nehemiah lived far from his homeland, he maintained a connection to God through prayer. Why do we need to stay connected to God when we are disconnected from our loved ones and our church family? How can prayer help us get through seasons of loneliness?

Read Matthew 6:5-13 & Matthew 7:7-12

4. In these verses, Jesus teaches the disciples a very simple prayer. Why should we aim for simplicity in our prayers to God? What happens when we try to become too eloquent or impressive? What do you think God desires most from us when we pray to Him?

5. Why does God ask us to view Him like a heavenly parent? How does our relationship with God resemble the relationship of a parent and a child? How has your practice of prayer changed your relationship with God over time? How has the nature of your prayer life transformed over time?

6. What is something you're currently asking for in prayer? What subject has kept coming up in your conversations with God recently? How has God answered you?

DEEPER STUDY QUESTIONS

Read Luke 18:1-8

7. Through this parable, Jesus teaches that our prayers should be consistent and constant. Why is consistency and constancy in prayer such an essential piece of the Christian life? How does it serve as a display of our faith? How does consistent prayer form our character and fortitude?

8. What happens to us when we continually pray, yet it seems like nothing happens as a result? How would that make you feel? How might you lose faith over time? Why should we continually pray even when we don't immediately receive the thing for which we are asking?

PRAYER AND PRAISE

This is a place where you can write each other's prayer requests and make notes when God answers prayer. Pray for each other's requests out loud together as a group. If you're new to group prayer, you may pray silently.

Prayer Requests

Praise Reports

2

CHARACTER

Each session will begin with an opportunity to help you connect with and get to know one another.

What has been your favorite job over the course of your life? What makes that job stand out from the rest?

Play the "Session Two: Character" video lesson.

What stood out to you from the video?

"CHARACTER IS EVERYTHING. WHO YOU ARE IS INFINITELY MORE IMPORTANT THAN WHAT YOU SAY. POST OR LEAD."

— DUSTY FRIZZELL

In the following section, you will explore Bible passages and take part in discussion to apply insights from this session. If time is a concern, please choose just a few questions to discuss in your group.

Read Nehemiah 2:1-10

1. What is the biggest favor you've ever asked for? Did you receive it or were you turned down? Whenever someone asks you for a favor, what factors do you consider before saying yes or no?

2. Even though it was against his best interest, the king granted Nehemiah's request. Why did the king do this? Why do you think the king trusted Nehemiah and believed he would keep his word? How do you build trust with others?

3. Even though Nehemiah didn't typically show his emotions before the king, he did on this occasion. Why do you think Nehemiah's feelings came out? Why should we show others our emotions and our passion? How might this change the way others see us?

Read 1 Peter 2:11-12 & 1 Peter 3:8-17

4. Why did Peter ask the Christians to maintain good character among their unbelieving neighbors? Why is good character crucial for us as we share Christ with others? How do you feel when you hear the gospel shared by someone with questionable character?

5. The Christians to whom Peter writes couldn't control whether or not someone might accuse them of wrongdoing. But they could control their character. Why should we focus on what we can control rather than worrying about what we cannot? Why do we tend to worry about what we cannot control?

6. Share about how your character and reputation have served you during your life. How have you personally watched God work through your integrity? Who is someone in your life who trusts you and would listen to you if you shared the gospel with them? How will you take one step this week to make that a reality?

DEEPER STUDY QUESTIONS

Read Philippians 1:12-30

7. As Christians, we might tend to think those with selfish motives should not preach the gospel. But according to these verses, Paul rejoiced when that happened. Why? How do these verses reveal what Paul values most and what Christians should value most as well?

8. In Philippians 1:27, Paul writes that good Christian character leads to unity and solidarity in the church. Why does he assume this? How does seeking to live like Christ bring us together rather than separate us?

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3 CHANGE

Each session will begin with an opportunity to help you connect with and get to know one another.

What is one important skill you believe every person should have? If every person on earth had to take one class to learn a simple skill, what skill should that class teach?

Play the “Session Three: Change” video lesson.

What stood out to you from the video?

“HERE’S THE PRINCIPLE: CHARACTER LEAKS. THE WORK IS LEARNING TO PAY ATTENTION AND MOVE TOWARDS HONEST SELF-AWARENESS.”

— DUSTY FRIZZELL

In the following section, you will explore Bible passages and take part in discussion to apply insights from this session. If time is a concern, please choose just a few questions to discuss in your group.

Read Nehemiah 2:11-20

1. Share an example of something you discovered about your personality that you didn't know until later in life. How did you feel when you realized something about yourself that many of your friends and family already knew?

2. In order to understand the work ahead of him, Nehemiah went and examined the ruins of the wall himself. Why do we need to learn as much as we can about problems before attempting to solve them? How can we unintentionally make problems worse by jumping in too early to fix them? What are some examples of this?

3. How do you personally seek to become self-aware? What tools or practices have you found useful? How has self-awareness helped you resist temptations and personal struggles? How has it allowed you to help others?

Read Acts 6:1-7 & Nehemiah 3:1-5

4. In the verses from the book of Acts, the church was presented with a complaint. How did the apostles respond? How did they take responsibility and seek to solve the issue?

5. Why should we seek the help of others once we are aware of the problems facing us? Why is it crucial for us to accept our personal limitations and ask for help when we need it? How can we actually harm the church and ourselves by attempting to solve every issue on our own?

6. Describe a time when you needed to use teamwork to solve a problem. What was your responsibility as part of that team? What gifts and abilities did your teammates bring to the table? What would you say is your responsibility within the church? What gifts and abilities has God given you to serve His people?

DEEPER STUDY QUESTIONS

Read Romans 12:3-8

7. What does it mean to think about yourself with “sober judgment?” How is this accomplished? What would be the opposite of sober judgment? How does the world attempt to pull us away from this type of thinking?

8. Why do we need to have humility in order to serve effectively in the church? What happens if we think too highly of ourselves? How does arrogance get in the way of the church’s mission?

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4 CONFLICT

Each session will begin with an opportunity to help you connect with and get to know one another.

What was your favorite playground game growing up as a child? What is one specific memory you have playing that game?

Play the "Session Four: Conflict" video lesson.

What stood out to you from the video?

**"CONFLICT IS INEVITABLE. BUT WORKING TOWARD PEACE IS REVOLUTIONARY—
FOR YOUR SOUL AND FOR THE WHOLE WORLD."**

— DUSTY FRIZZELL

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Read Nehemiah 4:1-15

1. Describe a time when you had a small conflict with a friend or a family member or a coworker. What was the cause of the conflict? How did it resolve? How do you feel when you find yourself in the middle of a conflict?

2. This story features three main opponents to Nehemiah: Sanballat, Tobiah and Geshem. Why did they have conflict with Nehemiah? Why do we find resistance whenever we try to make a change in the world? What are some examples of this?

3. What can you learn about a person through a conflict with them that you wouldn't otherwise know about them? What can you discover about yourself that you wouldn't otherwise know? Share an example of a time you discovered a person's true colors through having a conflict with them.

Read James 4:1-12

4. According to these verses, why do fights and quarrels arise between believers? How can we stop these conflicts before they even start? How can a deep relationship with God help us live in peace with others?

5. According to James, how do we seek peace and bring an end to conflicts and disagreements? Why do we need to apologize for our part in a conflict before healing can begin? Why is humility such a vital ingredient for making peace?

6. Describe a time when God brought peace to a situation of major conflict in your life. How did you find peace? How did God transform you through that experience?

DEEPER STUDY QUESTIONS

Read 1 Peter 4:1-19

7. In these verses, we learn that the world is confused when Christians seek to do the will of God. Why does this happen? What is the source of the confusion? How have you personally experienced this during your Christian walk?

8. Why should Christians be unsurprised when the world insults them or mistreats them due to following Christ? Why should Christians rejoice when they are treated in the same way the world treated Jesus? How can this be a revolutionary way to live and bring change to the world?

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5 JUSTICE

Each session will begin with an opportunity to help you connect with and get to know one another.

If you could have one superpower, which one would you choose? What would you choose to do with it?

Play the "Session Five: Justice" video lesson.

What stood out to you from the video?

"WORKING FOR JUSTICE TAKES A TOUGH MIND AND A TENDER HEART. A RIGHTEOUS ANGER HINGED TO CONSISTENT CHARACTER. AND A HUMBLE WILLINGNESS TO SEE YOURSELF FIRST IN THE BROKEN NATURE OF HUMANITY."

— DUSTY FRIZZELL

In the following section, you will explore Bible passages and take part in discussion to apply insights from this session. If time is a concern, please choose just a few questions to discuss in your group.

Read Nehemiah 5:1-13 & Ephesians 4:25-28

1. What is an issue of injustice in the world that breaks your heart or makes you angry? Why do you feel that passion?

2. When Nehemiah sees the injustices done in this story, he becomes angry. Why should Christians feel angry when they encounter injustice in this world? How can we harness our anger and frustration to move us to action without being controlled by it?

3. How does Nehemiah go about bringing justice to Israel? How does Nehemiah use his influence to help those in need? How can we as Christians use our influence in this world like Nehemiah did?

Read Nehemiah 5:14-19

4. How did Nehemiah live differently than the other Jewish governors and officials? How did his way of life bring about justice and equality in Israel? How can the way we live actually affect others around us?

5. In the video lesson, Pastor Dusty teaches that “righteous anger must be tied to consistent character.” Why is this true? Why should we seek to live a righteous and compassionate life before asking others to do the same?

6. How is God personally calling you to bring justice to this world? How is He asking you to serve those in need? How is He challenging you to share His love with those who need to encounter it? How will you take the first step this week toward making it a reality?

DEEPER STUDY QUESTIONS

Read Isaiah 58:1-12 & Matthew 6:16-18

7. According to these verses, what was the purpose of fasting? How can people take a spiritual practice that God intended for justice and turn it into something selfish? What are some other examples of this?

8. According to the prophet Isaiah, God's people will prosper as a whole when we serve the poor among us. Why is this true? Why does the world teach that we prosper only when we acquire wealth rather than give it away?

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6

COURAGE

Each session will begin with an opportunity to help you connect with and get to know one another.

What is an extreme sport—like skydiving or bungee jumping—that you want to try at least once?

Play the “Session Six: Courage” video lesson.

What stood out to you from the video?

“THE LORD IS MY LIGHT AND MY SALVATION—WHOM SHALL I FEAR? THE LORD IS THE STRONGHOLD OF MY LIFE—OF WHOM SHALL I BE AFRAID?”

— DAVID OF BETHLEHEM

In the following section, you will explore Bible passages and take part in discussion to apply insights from this session. If time is a concern, please choose just a few questions to discuss in your group.

Read Nehemiah 6:1-14

1. Share about a fear you have, whether it's a fear of something small or something legitimately terrifying. Why does that thing make you fearful? What are you afraid would happen if you encountered it?

2. In this story, Nehemiah's three opponents tried to intimidate him to stop him from finishing the wall around Jerusalem. What was their plan? How does the world try to intimidate us from our work as Christians, sharing the good news of Jesus? Why do they do this?

3. Share a story from your life when you had to summon the courage to do something that scared you. What did you feel right before you took the risk? How did you feel afterward? What is a situation in your life that tends to bring out your bravery?

Read 2 Timothy 1:3-14 & 1 John 4:18

4. What happens when we surrender to a spirit of fear? If we keep our faith in God quiet, how might we weaken it? Why do you think some Christians hesitate to share the truth of the gospel? Why might it be difficult for them to say something that is unpopular?

5. In 1 John 4:18, we learn that perfect love drives our fears away. How does this happen? How does the love of God personally give you courage to face your fears? Why do we tend to become less fearful when we become more compassionate?

6. Tell about a time when you shared something you thought or believed, even if it was intimidating to do so. What was the result? How can sharing our faith courageously empower us to grow more like Christ? How can sharing the gospel with others strengthen your faith?

DEEPER STUDY QUESTIONS

Read Judges 7:1-25

7. Why does the Lord take steps to whittle down Gideon's army and use such a strange method to attack the Midianites? Why does the Lord consistently lead us into situations that require courage? How does God act on our behalf when we are afraid?

8. Imagine you are a Midianite soldier, awoken abruptly by trumpets and the sound of smashing jars. What would you have thought was happening? How would you have reacted to what you heard and saw? How can fear lead us to act irrationally? How can it cause us to hurt ourselves instead of help ourselves?

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7

TRUTH

Each session will begin with an opportunity to help you connect with and get to know one another.

Other than the Bible, what is your favorite book—whether it's fiction or nonfiction? What makes that book stand out from all the others?

Play the "Session Seven: Truth" video lesson.

What stood out to you from the video?

"THE BIBLE IS AN ANCIENT COLLECTION OF EVENTS AND MOMENTS WITH AN EVER-PRESENT DIVINE ENERGY. IT TAKES SOME NUANCE AND PARSING OUT. AND THE FIRST GOAL IS UNDERSTANDING—BUT THE ULTIMATE GOAL IS OBEDIENCE."

— DUSTY FRIZZELL

In the following section, you will explore Bible passages and take part in discussion to apply insights from this session. If time is a concern, please choose just a few questions to discuss in your group.

Read Nehemiah 8:1-18

1. What Bible verse would you say has impacted your life the most? Share about a time when that piece of Scripture helped you. How did it encourage or challenge you? How did it provide you with strength and comfort?

2. During the reading of God's word, Nehemiah and the other rulers tell the people to rejoice rather than grieve. Why should the Scriptures bring us joy rather than sorrow? How do you personally feel when you read the Bible?

3. Why do we need to obey the word of God instead of simply knowing what it says? How should understanding God's word lead us to obeying God's word? Is it possible to actually understand the Scriptures without obeying them?

Read 2 Timothy 3:14-4:5

4. When Paul says that all Scripture is "God-breathed," he means that God brought them to life and into existence. How would we view the Bible if we believed God had no part in it? How does the Bible provide us with wisdom that we could never gain from other people?

5. According to these verses, how does God use His word to transform us? What does that process feel like? Why might a person choose to reach for something they want to hear rather than the Scriptures they need to hear?

6. How has the word of God challenged you to obey this week? What do you believe God is specifically calling you to do through His word? How will you take the first step toward answering this call?

DEEPER STUDY QUESTIONS

Read Psalm 119:105-112 & John 5:39-40 & Hebrews 4:12

7. In Psalm 119:105, it says that God's word is a lamp for our feet and a light for our path. To what is God's word leading us? What is at the end of the path where we are heading? How has God's word personally guided you on this path?

8. In Hebrews 4:12, the writer says that the Bible is "living and active." What does this mean? Why should we treat the Bible as a conversation partner rather than a textbook? How does your interaction with a verse of Scripture change when you come back to it a second time or a third time or a fourth?

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8

REVIVAL

Each session will begin with an opportunity to help you connect with and get to know one another.

If you were suddenly given an extra hour every day for an entire year, how would you use that extra hour?

Play the “Session Eight: Revival” video lesson.

What stood out to you from the video?

“GOD WAITS FOR YOU TO COME HOME FOR THE FIRST TIME. TO RETURN AGAIN. AND FOR REVIVAL TO INVADE YOUR SOUL... HE RUNS TO YOU. NOT TO SAY, ‘I TOLD YOU SO.’ BUT WITH ARMS WIDE OPEN. FULL OF GRACE AND CELEBRATION!”

— DUSTY FRIZZELL

In the following section, you will explore Bible passages and take part in discussion to apply insights from this session. If time is a concern, please choose just a few questions to discuss in your group.

Read Nehemiah 9:1-3, 29-33

1. How have you changed your mind within the past year, whether it's a small matter or a big thing? What is something you used to think that you no longer believe?

2. In these verses, the Israelites acknowledge that their bad choices led to bad consequences. Why is this step essential for true repentance? Why do we need to recognize what we've done wrong in the past in order to move toward God in the present?

3. After admitting their unfaithfulness, the Israelites remember God's faithfulness. Why does God's faithfulness inspire us to come back to Him, no matter how far we've fallen from Him? Why should we trust Him above all others? How has God personally shown His faithfulness to you?

Read Luke 19:1-10

4. In this story, Zacchaeus completely changes his behavior after a single encounter with Jesus. Why do you think his heart changed so much? Without using names, who is one person in your life who needs to discover the love of Jesus? How do you think their lives would change after encountering one simple act of compassion?

5. Zacchaeus used to care about wealth, but after this story, he cared more about doing good for others. Why do you think his values changed so radically? What happens to us when we change what we care about? If you had to rank the five most important values in your life, how would you put them in order?

6. Share how God has revived your heart in the past. How did He pick you up when you had fallen down? How did He remind you of His love? How did He welcome you back with open arms?

DEEPER STUDY QUESTIONS

Read Matthew 19:16-30

7. What did the young man in this story value more than following Jesus? Why did the young man's wealth keep him from following Jesus? How do our values and priorities impact the decisions we make?

8. Why does Jesus ask us to value Him above everything else? What kind of lives would we lead if we valued something more than Christ? Why is it so difficult to value Christ and His kingdom more than the things of this world?

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THANKFULNESS

Each session will begin with an opportunity to help you connect with and get to know one another.

What is your favorite praise song? What does it highlight about God?

Play the “Session Nine: Thankfulness” video lesson.

What stood out to you from the video?

“SPEAK TO ONE ANOTHER WITH PSALMS, HYMNS AND SPIRITUAL SONGS. SING AND MAKE MUSIC IN YOUR HEART TO THE LORD, ALWAYS GIVING THANKS TO GOD THE FATHER FOR EVERYTHING, IN THE NAME OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST.”

— PAUL OF TARSUS

In the following section, you will explore Bible passages and take part in discussion to apply insights from this session. If time is a concern, please choose just a few questions to discuss in your group.

Read Nehemiah 12:27-31, 38-40, 43-47

1. If you could throw a party of appreciation for one person who has impacted your life, who would it be? How would you celebrate them? What kind of gift would you give to demonstrate your gratitude to them?

2. Nehemiah and the people of Judah went to great lengths in this story to show their thankfulness to God. Why did they do this? In what ways do Christians show their thankfulness to God? How do you personally thank God for what He has given you?

3. In this story, the Levites purified themselves before offering their thanksgiving to God. Why should we purify ourselves from sin before offering our thanks to God? How can our sin twist our hearts and make it difficult for us to be thankful?

Read Psalm 147:1-14

4. Why is it good to sing praises to our God? How does praise and worship affect us and transform us? How does it bring us close to God?

5. From these verses, what reasons do we have to thank the Lord? If the Lord was standing in front of you right now, and you had the opportunity to thank Him personally for one thing, what would you choose? Why?

6. Share a time when you were affected or transformed during a moment of praise and worship. What do you remember specifically about that moment? What was said or sung that moved you so deeply?

DEEPER STUDY QUESTIONS

Read 1 Corinthians 11:17-34

7. One of the words Christians have used throughout history for the Lord's Supper is the word "Eucharist," which comes from a Greek word meaning "to give thanks." How do we "give thanks" by taking the Lord's Supper? How were the Corinthian Christians turning the Lord's Supper into something different than what Jesus intended it to be?

8. Why should we examine ourselves before taking the Lord's Supper? How do we do this? What does it mean to take the Lord's Supper in an "unworthy manner?" How can we avoid this?

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10 REFORM

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What is the most important quality you look for in a friend?

Play the “Session Ten: Reform” video lesson.

What stood out to you from the video?

“WE ALL NEED HELP REMEMBERING AND RETURNING TO THE VALUES OF FOLLOWING CHRIST AND BUILDING A GODLY LIFE. THE WORD FOR THIS IS ACCOUNTABILITY.”

— DUSTY FRIZZELL

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Read Nehemiah 13:15-22

1. This story might look strange to us today, but honoring the Sabbath day was one of the main ways the Israelites honored God. Why do you think the Israelites forgot what should have been valuable to them? Why do Christians forget what should be valuable to them?

2. Why did Nehemiah go to such great lengths to restore the holiness of the Sabbath day? Why do we need people in our lives who will remind us of what we ought to value? Why is it harmful to us to surround ourselves with people who say only what we want to hear?

3. Who is a person in your life who keeps you accountable? Who is a person who will always tell you the truth, no matter how much it might hurt? How have they challenged and encouraged you?

Read Galatians 6:1-5 & Hebrews 10:23-25

4. Galatians 6:1 tells us to restore our fellow believers gently. How do we do this? How do we make sure we are correcting a brother or sister with kindness and love rather than harshness and judgment?

5. How have the months of isolation due to COVID-19 affected you? Why do we need to connect with others, even if it's over the Internet or the phone? Why do we need a community of believers to keep us strong? How can a lack of community damage our Christian walk?

6. How do you believe God is calling you to encourage your fellow believers today? What message of inspiration has God laid upon your heart to share with others? How can we continue to encourage and uplift our fellow believers during this difficult season?

DEEPER STUDY QUESTIONS

Read Psalm 141:5 & Revelation 3:14-22

7. Why is it kind to rebuke fellow believers and turn them from evil? How is correcting someone a loving act? On the other hand, why is it unloving to stay silent while a person heads toward sin?

8. In Laodicea, they had an issue with lukewarm water. It was useless, neither cold enough for drinking nor hot enough for bathing. After reading these verses, how do you think the Laodicean Christians had become useless to themselves and others? How did God intend to make them useful to themselves and others? Why does God seek to make us useful?

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