



# Sermon-Based Small Groups

This outline includes the discussion prompts and the Bible text (backside) to the sermon with the respective title mentioned on the right side of this guide. You can also find the sermon at [www.manheimbic.org/sermons](http://www.manheimbic.org/sermons) if you look for it by date (see upper right corner).

**Connect**  
**Care**  
**Challenge**

Get to know each other. Connect, warm up to each other, fellowship. Just arrive after a long week of all kind of things. - Ask: Who are you personally?

Carry each others burdens. Share life's challenges and practice Soul Care. Cry together. Support each other. Pray together. - Ask: How are you doing?

Dive into God's word to learn from each others insight. Encourage & challenge each other to a godly life. - Ask: What is God teaching us today?

Before you get into these Discussion Prompts, read the Bible text(s) on the back of this document.

### Discussion Prompts

Working for God does not always guarantee smooth sailing. In today's sermon, Pastor Bryce has taken us along into the tough times Nehemiah was facing while working on God's project. We need to strategically be prepared to respond to any opposition that may arise. Today's discussion prompts will help you to stay focused, just like Nehemiah stayed on task. In order to do so, you need to walk through the three steps mentioned below:

#### 1. What is it that God has put on your heart to do? Your specific task you need to focus on.

This task can mean that you will be leading your own project as Nehemiah did. But it could also be fully supporting another leader's project, like Nehemiah's fellow citizens did. If necessary, go back to the sermon notes from September 5th and work on defining your project, the one assignment that God has given you!

#### 2. What are the things that distract you from staying on task?

Circle the distractions that are your pitfalls. Add the ones that you are aware of but are not listed.

Emotional distractions: Fear, worry, past hurts, shame, guilt, self-imagine, intimidation, pride.

Social distractions: Social Media, parties, sports events, TV shows, community projects.

Practical distractions: Physical limitation, location, workload, being busy, transportation, money.

Other distractions: \_\_\_\_\_

#### 3. What strategic defenses are you putting in place to keep you focused on God's project?

As a first response, we need to run to God. That's what Nehemiah did (Neh. 2:4-5; 4:4,9). But then we also need to set up our defenses. In the story of Nehemiah, we can see two key responses

1. Nehemiah resolved not to let his guard down and stay focused.
2. Nehemiah serves alongside others, seating a band of brothers.

As you are connecting with God, here are two questions to ponder in response to the enemy's attack:

- What is your resolution statement? What sentence could you write on a piece of paper that says "I will not..." or "Every time a distraction or a threat comes around, I will..."
- Who is my band of brothers that I am fighting with? Who is the group that might even be expecting me to take the lead defending God's work? If you can't think of a good team, start building one.

In this world and time, we will find opposition, especially when it comes to building God's kingdom. Be aware. Be prepared. And be connected with God. But always BE INTENTIONAL.

**Clarify**  
**Celebrate**

Know what's to do next, with the studies text, within the group, and in general. Have a mission for the week. - Ask: How do we apply what we have learned?

Celebrate life's success and God's provision. Worship God's presence. Time to brag about God. - Ask: What has God done in our life that deserves praise?

NEHEMIAH: Sacrifice & Leadership

They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. (Acts 2:42)





# Bible Text Study

## Read & Observe what the Text says!

Step 1: Take a pen, or even coloring pencils, and actively read the Bible text. Underline important insights. Put a box around words that seem significant to you. Wave-underline where you have a question. Make connections of themes.

Step 2: Write in the margins or in the text, why you underlined, put a box, or what it is you think about the text.

Step 3: Sum up what you think is the key truth that can be learned from the text, the Gold Nugget. Write that nugget down on the bottom of this page.

**Nehemiah 4:1-9** (NLT) Sanballat was very angry when he learned that we were rebuilding the wall. He flew into a rage and mocked the Jews, saying in front of his friends and the Samaritan army officers, "What does this bunch of poor, feeble Jews think they're doing? Do they think they can build the wall in a single day by just offering a few sacrifices? Do they actually think they can make something of stones from a rubbish heap—and charred ones at that?" Tobiah the Ammonite, who was standing beside him, remarked, "That stone wall would collapse if even a fox walked along the top of it!"

4 Then I prayed, "Hear us, our God, for we are being mocked. May their scoffing fall back on their own heads, and may they themselves become captives in a foreign land! 5 Do not ignore their guilt. Do not blot out their sins, for they have provoked you to anger here in front of the builders."

6 At last the wall was completed to half its height around the entire city, for the people had worked with enthusiasm.

7 But when Sanballat and Tobiah and the Arabs, Ammonites, and Ashdodites heard that the work was going ahead and that the gaps in the wall of Jerusalem were being repaired, they were furious. 8 They all made plans to come and fight against Jerusalem and throw us into confusion. 9 But we prayed to our God and guarded the city day and night to protect ourselves.

**Nehemiah 6:1-4** (NLT) Sanballat, Tobiah, Geshem the Arab, and the rest of our enemies found out that I had finished rebuilding the wall and that no gaps remained—though we had not yet set up the doors in the gates. 2 So Sanballat and Geshem sent a message asking me to meet them at one of the villages in the plain of Ono.

But I realized they were plotting to harm me, 3 so I replied by sending this message to them: "I am engaged in a great work, so I can't come. Why should I stop working to come and meet with you?"

4 Four times they sent the same message, and each time I gave the same reply.

**For the full reconstruction story, read Nehemiah 4-6.**



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