**Viewers’ Choice Awards**

**Difference Maker**

**November 13, 2022**

1. In the month of Kislev in the twentieth year, while I was in the citadel of Susa, Hanani, one of my brothers, came from Judah with some other men, and I questioned them about the Jewish remnant that survived the exile, and also about Jerusalem. (Nehemiah 1:1-2)  
   When I heard these things, I sat down and wept.(Nehemiah 1:4)  
   **Question**: Have you ever heard such bad news, not counting someone’s death, that caused you to sit down and weep?
2. **The first characteristic of a Difference Maker is Pain.** I sat down and wept. For some days I mourned and fasted and prayed before the God of heaven. (Nehemiah 1:4)

**Question: Why do you think pain is a part of a difference maker’s life?**

1. **The second characteristic of a Difference Maker is Prayer.**

Read Nehemiah 1:4-11   
**Question:** Why do you think Nehemiah went to such extremes of prayer and fasting?  
**Question**: Do you think that prayer and fasting make a difference? Why or why not?  
**Question**: Why do you think Nehemiah did not do anything until he had prayed about it?

1. Nehemiah did more than pray, but he didn’t do anything until he prayed.  
   **Question:** Are you more inclined to act about something and then pray or pray and then act?
2. **The third characteristic of a Difference Maker is Petition.**

…And because the gracious hand of my God was upon me, the king granted my requests. (Nehemiah 2:8)  
**Question:** What are some of your petitions or requests that you have asked for on behalf of God?

1. Pastor John said, “Nehemiah walked before he talked; he investigated before he initiated.”  
   **Question**: How well do you investigate a problem before you engage or initiate in conversation?
2. You see the trouble **we** are in… (Nehemiah 2:17)

Discuss Pastor John’s statement, “Difference makers identify with problems before they

specify solutions.”

1. “Time in, erodes awareness of.”—Any Stanley  
   **Question:** How is this true in our lives?
2. Come let’s rebuild the wall of Jerusalem, and we will no longer be in disgrace. I told them about the gracious hand of my God upon me and what the king had said to me. (Nehemiah 2:17-18)…and they began the good work.(Nehemiah 2:18)  
   **Question:** How quick are you to go to work on a problem when you see it?
3. **The fourth characteristic of a Difference Maker is Proactive.**When Sanballat the Horonite, Tobiah the Ammonite official and Geshem the Arab heard about it, they mocked and ridiculed us. “What is this you are doing?” they asked. “Are you rebelling against the king?”(Nehemiah 2: 19)  
   **Question:** How was Nehemiah proactive in his leadership?  
   **Question:** Would you be considered a person who is a person who is proactive for God? Why or why not?
4. **The fifth characteristic of a Difference Maker is Persistence.**

“Though a righteous man falls seven times, he rises again.” (Proverbs 24:16)

So the wall was completed on the twenty-fifth of Elul, in fifty-two days.(Nehemiah 6:15)

**Question**: On a scale of 1-10 how persistent are you for God?

1. **The sixth characteristic of a Difference Maker is Pleasure.**

Ezra read from the Book of the Law from daybreak to noon…and all the people listened attentively to the Book of the Law.(Nehemiah 8:3)

Go and enjoy choice food and sweet drinks, and send some to those who have nothing prepared. This day is sacred to our Lord. Do not grieve, **for the joy of the Lord is your strength.** (Nehemiah 8:10)

“You have made known to me the path of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand.” (Psalm 16:11)

Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him who endured such opposition from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart. (Hebrews 12:1-3)

**Question:** How does this characteristic of pleasure reflect in your personal life as a Christ follower?

1. What is your main take away from this message and how will it affect the way you live in the next 7 days?