

Study Guide: The Bridge to Better Begins on the Road of Restructure

Introduction

In life, it's important to pause and assess the current conditions of our lives in various areas: spiritually, emotionally, relationally, mentally, financially, and socially. We must ask ourselves: How are we doing? How are things going? How are we holding up? As we evaluate these areas, we must consider what could be improved. The key question to ponder is: **What if things were better?**

The Path to Better:

- Reflect on the statement: "The bridge to better begins on the road of restructure." What does this mean for your personal journey?
- How can you engage in a purposeful period of assessing your past, reviewing your present, and planning for a forward-focused future?

Discussion Questions

1. Which area of your life is most in need of restructuring, and why?
2. What is one practical step you can take this week to move towards a "better" version of your life?
3. How can you maintain hope and faith during the process of restructuring?

Point #1 Assess the Damage

Introduction

Before restructuring any aspect of our lives, we must first assess the damage honestly. This study guide is inspired by Nehemiah's journey in the Bible, where he personally inspected the walls of Jerusalem to understand the extent of the damage. Just as Nehemiah assessed the damage to begin rebuilding, we must also assess the damage in our lives to begin our process of healing and growth. Honest assessment is the foundation of effective restructuring.

Scripture Reference: Nehemiah 2:11-13 (NIV)

"I went to Jerusalem, and after staying there three days I set out during the night with a few others. By night I went out through examining the walls of Jerusalem, which had been broken down, and its gates, which had been destroyed by fire."

Key Themes

1. Assess the Extent of the Damage:

- Nehemiah begins his mission by examining the damage personally. He understands that to rebuild effectively, an honest assessment is essential.
- Similarly, we must assess the damage in our lives without sugarcoating or minimizing the facts. This honest evaluation allows us to identify the areas needing the most attention.

2. Face the Facts:

- Avoiding the truth or concealing the damage hinders progress. Confronting our challenges, fears, and mistakes opens the door to change and growth.
- Facing the facts, no matter how uncomfortable, fuels forward progress and helps prevent stagnation.

3. Questions to Consider:

- How bad is it? Assess your situation in various aspects of your life, such as finances, health, relationships, and personal responsibilities.
- What is the extent of the damage? Identify areas in need of attention and be specific about what needs to be addressed.

4. Avoid the Temptation to Conceal:

- There's a natural reluctance to admit faults or damages because of pride, fear, or shame. However, refusing to face the truth keeps us stuck.
- Change requires courage: the courage to confront, contend, and correct. Only by assessing honestly can we begin the process of restructuring and rebuilding.

Reflection Questions

1. Personal Assessment:

- What area of your life have you been reluctant to assess honestly? Why?

- How bad is it? Be specific about the damage. How much do you owe? How far behind are you? What are you avoiding?

2. The Importance of Honesty:

- Why is it crucial to assess the damage honestly before making changes? How does avoidance affect your ability to restructure effectively?
- Reflect on a time when avoiding the truth about a situation led to prolonged problems. What could have been different if you had assessed the damage honestly?

3. Taking Courageous Steps:

- What steps can you take to confront the areas that need restructuring in your life? How can you commit to facing the facts without denial or justification?
- How can asking God for help strengthen you to face your challenges and fix the areas that need restructuring?

Application Points

- **Examine the Walls:** Just like Nehemiah examined the walls of Jerusalem, identify the walls in your life that need to be assessed. What have you been avoiding, and what is the extent of the damage?
- **Face the Truth:** Be honest with yourself about where you are. Whether it's your finances, health, relationships, or personal habits, take a truthful look at the state of your life.
- **Commit to Change:** After assessing, take steps to correct and restructure. Remember, you can't fix what you refuse to face.

Discussion Questions

1. How do you feel when you think about assessing the damage in your life? What emotions come up, and how can you work through them?
2. What practical steps can you take this week to start assessing the damage honestly in a specific area of your life?
3. How can you support others in your community or circle of influence to assess and address the damage in their lives?

Closing Prayer

"God, help me to face this so that You can fix this. Give me the courage to assess the damage honestly, and the strength to make the necessary changes. Amen."

By honestly assessing our circumstances, we can begin to restructure our lives effectively, moving forward in growth, healing, and purpose.

Point #2 Enlist Assistance

Introduction

After assessing the damage, Nehemiah understands the importance of enlisting assistance to rebuild Jerusalem's walls. He knew that the mission was too great for one person and required a collective effort. Nehemiah's call for help highlights the power of unity and the necessity of involving others in the rebuilding process. The journey to a place called "better" is not a solo endeavor but one that requires collaboration, cooperation, and community.

Scripture Reference: Nehemiah 2:17-18 (NIV)

"Then I said to them, 'You see the trouble we are in: Jerusalem lies in ruins, and its gates have been burned with fire. Come, let us rebuild the wall of Jerusalem, and we will no longer be in disgrace.' I also told them about the gracious hand of my God on me and what the king had said to me. They replied, 'Let us start rebuilding.' So they began this good work."

Key Themes

1. The Need for Collaboration:

- Nehemiah recognizes that rebuilding the wall is not a task for one person but a job for many. He enlists assistance because he understands that victory lies in unity, not individuality.
- The combined efforts of many can achieve what is impossible for one. When minds merge and hands help, the seemingly unachievable becomes achievable.

2. Enlisting Help in Our Lives:

- Like Nehemiah, we must assess the landscape of our lives and recognize the areas where we need help. Whether it's in our personal lives, careers, or

spiritual journeys, we need the support and assistance of others to reach our goals.

- Being a “lone wolf” or attempting to do everything alone can be a significant barrier to progress. Collaboration opens doors that would otherwise remain closed.

3. Identifying the Right People:

- Nehemiah’s team was willing and ready to work. He prayed for people who would be foundational, not detrimental, to the mission.
- Who are the people you need on your team? It’s important to surround yourself with those who will build and support the vision, not hinder it.

Reflection Questions

1. Identifying Your Need for Assistance:

- What areas of your life do you need assistance in? Be honest about the places where you feel overwhelmed or incapable of managing alone.
- Are there situations where you’ve been trying to handle everything on your own? How might enlisting help change the outcome?

2. Building Your Team:

- Who are the people in your life that you can turn to for support? Who needs to be on your team to help you get to a place called better?
- What qualities do you look for in people when seeking assistance? How can you ensure you have individuals who are willing to contribute positively to your journey?

3. The Power of Unity:

- Reflect on a time when working with others led to a successful outcome. How did the collaboration impact the result?
- How does involving others change the way you approach challenges? What benefits have you experienced from collective efforts?

Application Points

- **Enlist Help Where Needed:** Identify specific areas of your life where you need help and make a plan to seek assistance. This could be at work, home, church, or in personal projects.
- **Surround Yourself with the Right People:** Evaluate your current circle. Are the people around you helping you move forward or holding you back? Seek those who are purpose-driven and willing to work alongside you.
- **Embrace Collaboration:** Be open to collaboration and willing to accept help. Remember, you don't have to do everything alone; allow others to play their part in your journey.

Discussion Questions

1. Why do you think Nehemiah's approach to enlist assistance was so effective? What can we learn from his strategy?
2. What is one area of your life where you need to stop being a "lone wolf" and start enlisting assistance? What steps will you take to make this change?
3. How can you actively involve others in your journey toward improvement? What roles can you delegate, and who can you invite to the table?

Closing Thought

Enlisting assistance is not a sign of weakness but a demonstration of wisdom. Just as Nehemiah understood that the mission was too great for one, we must also recognize that our path to a place called better is not meant to be traveled alone. Surround yourself with people who uplift, support, and contribute to the vision, and watch as the impossible becomes possible.

Closing Prayer

"Lord, send people who are willing to work, who will be foundational for my furtherance, and who will build the vision and not tear it down. Help me to enlist the right assistance so that together, we can accomplish the mission You have set before us. Amen."

In the journey of life, remember that every helping hand and every willing heart is a step closer to better. Don't hesitate to ask for help—your victory lies in your unity!

Point #3 Anticipate Resistance

Introduction

In any mission, resistance is inevitable. As Nehemiah set out to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem, he encountered opposition from Sanballat, Tobiah, and Geshem, who mocked and ridiculed the efforts. This teaches us that every journey toward betterment comes with its challenges. Resistance is not a roadblock but a reality that strengthens our resolve. Anticipating resistance equips us to face it with faith, wisdom, and determination.

Scripture Reference: Nehemiah 2:19 (NIV)

"But 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."

Key Themes

1. Expect Opposition:

- Every mission comes with side opposition. There is no winning without warfare, no opportunity without opposition, and no triumph without a challenge. Nehemiah's experience teaches us to expect resistance whenever we set out to do something significant.
- Not everyone will support your efforts. Some may mock, criticize, or actively work against you. It's essential to recognize that everyone who is with you may not be for you.

2. Discernment as Defense:

- Use discernment to distinguish between genuine supporters and those who secretly seek to sabotage your progress. True allies will align with your aspirations, while others may be present to exploit your weaknesses.
- Be wise, watchful, and willing to distance yourself from those who wish you well in words but work against you in deeds. Surround yourself with individuals who truly champion your cause.

3. Resistance Refines Resolve:

- Anticipate resistance as a part of the process. Challenges and criticism will come, but resistance isn't a reason to retreat; it's a reason to rise. Facing opposition refines your resolve, strengthens your character, and enhances your persistence.

- By foreseeing friction, you can foster fortitude, ready to transform every obstacle into an opportunity to outlast, outthink, and outwork the opposition.

4. God's Assurance:

- Nehemiah's response to his critics was rooted in his faith: "The God of heaven will give us success." Remember that if God is for you, no opposition can prevail against you.

Reflection Questions

1. Recognizing Resistance:

- Think of a time when you faced resistance while working toward a goal. How did you handle it? What did you learn from that experience?
- Why is it important to anticipate resistance instead of being surprised by it?

2. Discernment and Defense:

- How can you identify those who genuinely support you versus those who may secretly sabotage your efforts?
- What steps can you take to ensure that your circle is filled with true allies? How can discernment help protect your mission?

3. Strengthening Resolve:

- What challenges are you currently facing that feel like resistance? How can you reframe these obstacles as opportunities to strengthen your resolve?
- How does anticipating resistance change the way you approach your goals? How can you prepare proactively for the pushback you might encounter?

4. Faith in the Face of Opposition:

- Reflect on Nehemiah's declaration, "The God of heaven will give us success." How does faith help you endure resistance?
- How can you lean on God's strength when facing criticism and opposition in your personal or professional life?

Application Points

- **Prepare for Pushback:** Expect that not everyone will support your mission. Anticipate resistance so that you are not caught off guard. Plan your response to critics and be ready to adjust your approach as needed.
- **Strengthen Your Circle:** Regularly evaluate the people around you. Ensure that your inner circle consists of those who genuinely support your mission and are willing to work alongside you.
- **Use Resistance as Fuel:** View resistance as an opportunity to grow stronger. Allow the challenges to refine your strategies, fortify your faith, and enhance your persistence.

Discussion Questions

1. Why is it important to anticipate resistance rather than react to it? How does this proactive mindset help in handling criticism and challenges?
2. How can discernment play a crucial role in protecting your mission? What are some practical ways to sharpen your discernment?
3. How can you maintain a positive and determined attitude when faced with opposition? What scriptures or affirmations help you stay focused and faithful?

Closing Thought

Resistance is a reality of any worthwhile mission. It is not meant to deter you but to develop you. Anticipating resistance allows you to prepare mentally, spiritually, and strategically, ensuring that each setback is simply a setup for greater success. When you face opposition, remember Nehemiah's confidence: **"The God of heaven will give us success."** Let that assurance anchor you in every challenge.

Closing Prayer

"Lord, help me to anticipate resistance and prepare my heart and mind for the challenges ahead. Grant me the discernment to recognize true supporters and the courage to stand firm in the face of opposition. Strengthen my resolve, and remind me that You are with me, giving me success. Amen."

Stay strong, stay focused, and let every resistance refine your resolve and propel you forward on your mission.