

NEHEMIAH

Re: BUILD
Re: NEW
Re: FORM

Re: GROUP

STUDY GUIDE: Rebuilding Together

Nehemiah 3, 1 Corinthians 3, and Ephesians 4

Theme: The Importance of Unity and Diverse Contributions in God's Work

INTRODUCTION

This study guide explores the biblical passages of Nehemiah 3, 1 Corinthians 3, and Ephesians 4 to understand the principles of unity, collaboration, and the diverse roles within God's mission. We will examine how these principles were demonstrated in the rebuilding of Jerusalem's wall and how they apply to the building up of the church today.

I. A GROUP EFFORT (NEHEMIAH 3:1-32)

- Read Nehemiah 2:17.
 - What was the state of Jerusalem that Nehemiah described?
 - What was Nehemiah's challenge to the people?
 - What was the people's response? What does this reveal about their initial willingness?
- Read Nehemiah 3:1-5.
 - Who were some of the first groups mentioned as participating in the rebuilding? What were their roles (e.g., priests, men of Jericho)?
 - What was significant about the Sheep Gate being the first to be rebuilt and consecrated? How does its proximity to the temple relate to its purpose?
 - What does the mention of the "men of Jericho" suggest about the breadth of participation?
 - What was the role of the people working on the Fish Gate? What does this tell us about the variety of skills and backgrounds involved?
 - What is notable about the Tekoites? What does their example (and that of their nobles) teach us about individual participation in God's work?
- Read Nehemiah 3:6-12.
 - What other diverse groups and individuals are mentioned in this section? List some of their professions or affiliations (e.g., goldsmiths, perfumers, rulers, daughters).
 - What does the inclusion of such varied people suggest about who is called to participate in God's work?
 - What is significant about Shallum and his daughters working together?
- Read Nehemiah 3:13-31.
 - List some of the other gates mentioned and briefly describe their function or significance.
 - What does the variety of gates and their purposes suggest about the different needs and aspects of a community?
- Read Nehemiah 3:32.

- Where did the rebuilding work conclude? Who were the groups involved in finishing this section?
- What is the significance of the goldsmiths and merchants completing the connection near the Sheep Gate?

Reflection on Section I:

- What does Nehemiah 3 teach us about the nature of God's work? Is it typically an individual or a collective effort?
- How does the chapter highlight the importance of different people with different skills and backgrounds working together?
- What personal applications can we draw from the example of those who willingly participated in rebuilding the wall? What about those who didn't?

II. STILL A GROUP EFFORT (1 CORINTHIANS 3:10-17)

- Read 1 Corinthians 3:10-11.
 - What analogy does Paul use to describe his role in the Corinthian church? What is the foundation he laid?
 - What warning does Paul give to those who build upon this foundation?
 - What is the singular, irreplaceable foundation of the church?
- Read 1 Corinthians 3:12-15.
 - What different types of materials can be used to build upon the foundation? What might these materials represent in the context of church building?
 - How will the quality of each person's work be tested? What will be the consequences of building with inferior materials?
 - What assurance is given to those whose work is burned up? What does this imply about the importance of the foundation versus the building itself?
- Read 1 Corinthians 3:16-17.
 - What powerful metaphor does Paul use to describe the church? What does this imply about God's presence within the church?
 - How seriously does God take the destruction of His "temple"? What are the implications for those who harm the church?

Reflection on Section II:

- How does Paul's analogy of building on a foundation relate to the rebuilding of the wall in Nehemiah? What is the "foundation" for the church?
- What does this passage teach us about the responsibility of each believer in contributing to the church?
- How can we ensure that we are building with "gold, silver, and precious stones" in our involvement in the church?

III. IT TAKES ALL KINDS (1 CORINTHIANS 12:12-15 & EPHESIANS 4:11-16)

- Read 1 Corinthians 12:12-15.
 - What analogy does Paul use to illustrate the unity and diversity of the church?
 - How does Paul emphasize the importance of each member, even those who might feel insignificant?
 - What is the danger of individual members feeling like they don't belong if they don't have a particular "gift"?
- Read Ephesians 4:11-13.
 - What specific roles or gifts did Jesus give to the church? List them.
 - What is the purpose of these gifts? What is the ultimate goal of equipping the saints?

- What is meant by "the unity of the faith" and "the knowledge of the Son of God"?
- Read Ephesians 4:14-16.
 - What are some of the negative consequences of a church that is not unified and mature?
 - What is the importance of "speaking the truth in love"?
 - How does Paul describe the role of Christ as the head of the body?
 - How does the proper functioning of each part contribute to the growth of the whole body? What does it mean for the body to "build itself up in love"?

Reflection on Section III:

- How do the analogies of the building and the body complement each other in understanding the church?
- How does Ephesians 4 connect the equipping of believers with the building up of the body of Christ?
- What are some practical ways we can recognize, encourage, and utilize the diverse gifts within our church community?
- How does "speaking the truth in love" contribute to the building up of the church?

CONCLUSION:

- Review the main themes explored in Nehemiah 3, 1 Corinthians 3, and Ephesians 4. How do these passages collectively paint a picture of God's work in the world and the role of His people?
- How does the rebuilding of the physical wall in Nehemiah serve as an illustration for the building up of the spiritual body of Christ, the church?
- What are some concrete ways you can apply the principles of unity, collaboration, and utilizing diverse gifts in your own involvement in the church and God's mission?
- Reflect on the question posed at the end of the original text: "What is my part?" Spend some time in prayer, considering how God has gifted and called you to contribute to the building up of the church.

FURTHER DISCUSSION:

- Discuss specific examples of how different people with varying skills and backgrounds can work together in your church or community to advance God's kingdom.
- What are some potential obstacles to unity and collaboration within a church, and how can they be overcome?
- How can leaders in the church effectively identify and equip individuals to use their unique gifts?