

TALK IT OVER

REBUILDERS SERIES | PART 1

21 JUNE 2026

NOTES TO LEADERS

1. Thank you to everyone who gave so generously to our Nation Changers Month projects. We have reached our funding goal. There are still some opportunities to get involved and volunteer on a couple of projects.
2. Steve reflected on people who could live and die without ever meeting a follower of Jesus. Visit the Joshua Project (https://joshuaproject.net/people_groups) and pick a people group to pray for as a LifeGroup.

SCRIPTURES

NEHEMIAH 1:1-4

The words of Nehemiah son of Hakaliah:

... while I was in the citadel of Susa, ² Hanani, one of my brothers, came from Judah with some other men, and I questioned them about the Jewish remnant that had survived the exile, and also about Jerusalem.

³ They said to me, 'Those who survived the exile and are back in the province are in great trouble and disgrace. The wall of Jerusalem is broken down, and its gates have been burned with fire.'

⁴ When I heard these things, I sat down and wept. For some days I mourned and fasted and prayed before the God of heaven. ⁵ Then I said:

'Lord, the God of heaven, the great and awesome God, who keeps his covenant of love with those who love him and keep his commandments, ⁶ let your ear be attentive and your eyes open to hear the prayer your servant is praying before you day and night for your servants, the people of Israel. I confess the sins we Israelites, including myself and my father's family, have committed against you...

NEHEMIAH 1:11

I was cupbearer to the king.

START TALKING

1. What stood out to you from Sunday's message? What challenged you or encouraged you?
2. What has God been doing in your world - what can we celebrate?

START THINKING

1. Read Nehemiah 1:1-4. What stands out to you about how Nehemiah responded when he heard the walls of Jerusalem were still broken down?
2. Steve said the Bible treats work as a calling, not a curse, that we "get to work" rather than "have to work." How does seeing your vocation as a God-given opportunity change the way you approach your daily work?
3. Steve challenged us to ask the right questions and really listen, rather than only giving advice or telling our own stories. Why do you think genuine listening is so difficult, and so powerful?
4. Steve prayed, "Lord, move my heart with the things that move Yours." Why is this such an important prayer for us to pray? Why do you think we are often reluctant to pray a prayer like that?

START SHARING

1. Where do you see "broken walls" right now, in your own life, your family or your community, that God might be calling you to help rebuild?
2. Is there something God has been stirring in your heart that you have not yet acted on? What would a first step look like?
3. Steve reflected on people in certain countries who could live and die without ever meeting a follower of Jesus. When you sit quietly with that, what stirs in you, and is there a next step in it for you?

START PRAYING

1. Praise God that He specialises in restoration, that He takes the broken and burned places of our lives and rebuilds them for His glory.
2. Pray Nehemiah's heart over us: "Lord, move our hearts with the things that move yours," and give us courage to act on what He stirs.

START DOING

This week, pray "Lord, move my heart with the things that move yours," and ask Him to show you one broken wall in your life, your family or your community, where He is calling you to be a rebuilder. Then take one step towards it.

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SUMMARY OF SUNDAY'S MESSAGE

This Sunday, we started a new series called Rebuilders, based on the book of Nehemiah. Steve opened with the question: What does a rebuilder look like?

He began with the historical backdrop. Much of the Old Testament follows the people of Israel in the land God had promised them. After centuries there, and after repeated warnings that turning from God carried consequences, they were overrun by the Babylonians. Jerusalem, the most important city in the Bible, was defeated: the temple destroyed, the walls torn down, and the gates burned with fire. Many Jews were carried into exile. In time, the Babylonian empire fell to the Persians, the largest empire the world had yet seen, stretching from India to Egypt and Greece. Nehemiah was a Jewish man living in Susa, around 1,600 kilometres from Jerusalem, holding the trusted, high-access role of cupbearer to the king.

The story opens when Nehemiah's brother arrives from Judah. Nehemiah asks about the Jewish remnant and about Jerusalem, and the report is grim: *"Those who survived the exile and are back in the province are in great trouble and disgrace. The wall of Jerusalem is broken down, and its gates have been burned with fire."* Nehemiah 1:3. City walls in that day meant protection and status, so a city with broken walls was a city in disgrace, and these had lain broken for around 140 years. When Nehemiah heard this, he *"sat down and wept... mourned and fasted and prayed before the God of heaven."* Nehemiah 1:4. The rest of the book follows him to the king, back to Jerusalem, and into the enormous task of rebuilding those walls.

It is a deeply relevant story, because we live in a world of broken walls too: in families, communities, relationships, and in our faith, hope and purpose. It is easy to feel overwhelmed by the rubble around us. But Nehemiah reminds us that God specialises in restoration. He takes burned stones and rebuilds them for His glory, and He is still looking for people whose hearts will be moved to rebuild the walls in their own lives, families and communities. Steve drew out three marks of such a rebuilder.

1. A rebuilder sees their vocation as a God-given opportunity.

The word 'vocation' comes from a root meaning "to call," and it is bigger than a job or an occupation. Whatever we do and wherever we do it, God can use us for His glory. Scripture calls us to work hard and warns against laziness, because work in the Bible is a calling, not a curse.

Strikingly, work was given to humanity in Genesis before sin entered the world, in God's perfect garden. So we do not merely have to work; we get to work. Nehemiah risked his life daily as cupbearer, yet he treated his position as an opportunity rather than a burden. Do we see our work the same way?

2. A rebuilder asks the right questions and listens to the answers.

Nehemiah questioned the men about the remnant and about Jerusalem (Nehemiah 1:2), and that one act of asking and listening set off an extraordinary chain of events. Most of our greetings stay at the surface, but if we genuinely care, we ask deeper questions and stay present for the answer. With Sunday being Father's Day, this lands especially on fathers: our children often need us to ask about them and truly listen more than they need our advice or our stories of how hard things were in our day. Our Father in heaven models this. He constantly asks questions, not because He lacks the answers, but because He wants to see what is in our hearts.

3. A rebuilder allows their heart to be moved.

When Nehemiah heard the news, he wept, mourned, fasted and prayed (Nehemiah 1:4). Letting our hearts be moved is costly; it asks something of us emotionally. The danger is that when we have looked at the same rubble for years, we grow numb and conclude that this is simply how things have always been. These walls had been broken for 140 years, yet Nehemiah let his heart be moved. So many of us carry thin skins and hard hearts: easily offended, quick to ask how things affect us. God wants to give us the opposite, a thicker skin and a tender heart, moved by what moves His. And the things at the very top of God's heart are people and their eternal destiny, including those in parts of the world who could live and die without ever meeting a follower of Jesus.

Steve opened and closed with one simple prayer: "Lord, move my heart with the things that move yours." Notice that before Nehemiah did anything, he prayed. He spoke to the God of the world about the world (Nehemiah 1:4-11): he worshipped God's greatness, he confessed sin, and he asked for help. Nehemiah points us forward to Jesus, the ultimate Rebuilder of broken lives. We were never meant to clear the rubble in our own strength, but as our hearts are moved and we pray that prayer, God begins to rebuild: in us, our families, our communities and the nations.