

Wall, Work, Will

Part # 1: Brokenness

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Nehemiah was a person whose passion inspired him to do mighty things for God and for the nation of Israel. He was an unlikely leader who set an example of determination and problem solving for generations to emulate. His faith and trust in God was crucial in overcoming the obstacles in rebuilding the broken wall of Jerusalem.

Sometimes life is full and fun. Everything seems in balance. Life is good. But other times life is a struggle. Bad news can come in a moment and turn your life upside down. Suddenly you find your life or the lives of other people you care deeply about in broken pieces on the floor.

Nehemiah's example can be a tremendous resource in helping us deal with the broken walls in our lives...

Central Point...

Brokenness Revealed

In the midst of the turmoil that comes with trouble the crucial first step is to wake up from our denial and face our brokenness.

Why? Because:

Brokenness reveals our passions:

Nehemiah 1:1-4 *These are the memoirs of Nehemiah son of Hacaliah. In late autumn, in the month of Kislev, in the twentieth year of King Artaxerxes' reign, I was at the fortress of Susa. ² Hanani, one of my brothers, came to visit me with some other men who had just arrived from Judah. I asked them about the Jews who had returned there from captivity and about how things were going in Jerusalem. ³ They said to me, "Things are not going well for those who returned to the province of Judah. They are in great trouble and disgrace. The wall of Jerusalem has been torn down, and the gates have been destroyed by fire." ⁴ When I heard this, I sat down and wept. In fact, for days I mourned, fasted, and prayed to the God of heaven.*

Brokenness reveals our priorities:

Nehemiah 1:4-6 *When I heard this, I sat down and wept. In fact, for days I mourned, fasted, and prayed to the God of heaven. ⁵ Then I said, "O LORD, God of heaven, the great and awesome God who keeps his covenant of unfailing love with those who love him and obey his commands, ⁶ listen to my prayer! Look down and see me praying night and day for your people Israel.*

Brokenness reveals our shortcomings:

Nehemiah 1:6-8 *I confess that we have sinned against you. Yes, even my own family and I have sinned! ⁷ We have sinned terribly by not obeying the commands, decrees, and regulations that you gave us through your servant Moses. ⁸ "Please remember what you told your servant Moses: 'If you are unfaithful to me, I will scatter you among the nations.*

Brokenness reveals a plan of action.

Nehemiah 1:9-11 *But if you return to me and obey my commands and live by them, then even if you are exiled to the ends of the earth, I will bring you back to the place I have chosen for my name to be honored. ¹⁰ "The people you rescued by your great power and strong hand are your servants. ¹¹ O Lord, please hear my prayer! Listen to the prayers of those of us who delight in honoring you. Please grant me success today by making the king favorable to me. Put it into his heart to be kind to me." In those days I was the king's cup-bearer.*

Focal Point...

Beginning to Rebuild

Regardless of the contributing factors, we can make choices that will help ease the turmoil that comes with broken lives.

First, we must adopt a perspective that reflects God's truth...

The events that contribute to broken lives seek to steal the joy that God intends for us to enjoy.

John 10:9-10 *I am the door, and the person who enters through me will be saved and will be able to come in and go out and find pasture. ¹⁰ A thief comes to steal and kill and destroy, but I came to give life—life in all its fullness.*

Next, we must adopt a **plan** for our journey out of depression. We need to...

1. Be **patient**.

Acknowledging that the journey out of brokenness is a gradual process will help us avoid the frustration that results from **unrealistic** expectations.

Psalms 40:1-2 "...I waited and waited and waited for God. At last he looked; finally he listened. ² He lifted me out of the ditch, pulled me from deep mud. He stood me up on a solid rock to make sure I wouldn't slip."

2. Be **transparent**.

Admitting that we are vulnerable and that we need help will make us **accessible** to God and to others.

Psalms 130:1 "...Help, God—the bottom has fallen out of my life! Master, hear my cry for help!"

3. Be **confident**.

Accepting the truth in God's word and trusting in His **promises** will give us courage in the face of our own **weaknesses**.

Psalms 46:2-3 "We stand fearless at the cliff-edge of doom, courageous in seastorm and earthquake, ³ Before the rush and roar of oceans, the tremors that shift mountains. Jacob-wrestling God fights for us, God of angel armies protects us."

4. Be **persistent**.

Assuming a determined and unyielding stance will help carry us through **inevitable** difficulties to victory over a broken life.

Exodus 14:13 "Don't be afraid. Stand firm and watch God do his work of salvation for you today."

Turning Point...

A God-honoring response of brokenness should...

...increase our **faith** in God.

...increase our **trust** in God's **promises**.

...increase our desire for **others** to experience God's grace.

Our challenge:

Believers – simply ask, "*Father God – Am I willing to be broken before you?*"

Seekers – we can only genuinely encourage others when we respond to the One who ultimately encourages us. To invite Christ into your heart, simply pray,

Father God, I come before you today, asking you to save me. I invite your Son Jesus Christ into my heart to be my Lord and Savior. Please forgive me of sin in my life; cleanse my heart and my spirit. Father, I want to trust in your promises and accept that they are totally true. And with your help, guide me toward being the person you created me to be. In Jesus' name -- Amen