

LIFE GROUP SERMON SUMMARY QUESTIONS

NEHEMIAH SERIES

These questions are for the **September 4, 2016** sermon, "The Promise Prayer." Please read the sermon passage (Nehemiah 1:1-11) together out loud.

Sermon Outline:

IN TRYING TIMES, BEGIN WITH PRAYER . . .

1. **Honoring God's sovereignty, seeking Him day and night (4-7)**
 - A. When your heart is heavy and breaking, begin with prayer (not planning).
 - B. Pray the Scriptures back to the Lord (Nehemiah prays Deuteronomy 7).
 - C. "Prayer is not pulling God's will to my will, but bending my will to his." E. Stanley Jones
2. **Recalling God's promises, and how he disciplines and restores (8-10)**
 - A. You must know the Word before you can ask God to remember His Word. Do you?
 - B. Discipline may be awaiting you. Restoration comes after discipline.
 - C. God is sovereign, and you are the servant. Never reverse these roles.
3. **Desiring God's attentiveness, requesting success and mercy (11)**
 - A. Future leaders must be prayerful today. Prayerful and humble.
 - B. Ask less for the gifts that God brings, and more for God himself. This is 'success.'
 - C. As your will aligns with God, be bold. Nehemiah asks for "success . . .today." (v. 11)

Life Group Discussion Questions

1. Based on #1, above: What plans are you pursuing and working in your life today that you have not sufficiently prayed about? Are you willing to stop working that plan? Why? Why not?
2. Based on #1, above: Do you "pray the Scriptures back to God"? Which are your favorite? How did you start? What have you learned about God? How has this affected your prayer life?
3. Based on #2, above: It's easy to reverse the "God is sovereign," and "I am servant" roles without even knowing it. In what area are you most tempted to try to be "sovereign"? How do you war against this temptation? Can you imagine giving God this situation fully, trusting him completely with both the process and outcome? Is he really the sovereign?
4. Based on #2, above: Restoration comes after discipline. In what ways have you seen God follow this pattern in your life? How did the discipline prepare you for future success?
5. Based on #3, above: Success is not stuff, or 'the right answer' from God. Success is having, knowing, understanding and applying God's Word to your life. Success is having God in the midst of difficult circumstances, and holding on for dear life. In what ways are you successful?