TOPIC: IT'S TIME TO BUILD!

We need to rebuild prayer and unity out of the rubble in our lives. Are you ready? It's time to build!

KEY POINTS

- September 11, 2001: Al Qaeda terrorists hijack two passenger jets and fly them into the "Twin Towers" of the World Trade Center in New York City, in America's financial headquarters.
- The Twin Towers and surrounding buildings were destroyed. Approximately 2,700 people were killed and 6,000 wounded.
- The foundations for a new building began on April 27, 2006. This building – the One World Trade Center – is now the tallest structure in New York City, surpassing the height of the previous towers and the Empire State Building.
- We have a spiritual enemy who seeks only to steal, kill and destroy, terrorize our hearts, tire our minds, tear apart our unity and tranquilize our praise. He wants to take you and your family down, and destroy the Church.
- The prophet Nehemiah was the Israelite cupbearer to the Persian King Artaxerxes I. He was a good man and he had a good job. He had an enviable life with many privileges.
- BUT - t here was something that made him uncomfortable. Something that wouldn't let him sleep at night.
- His brother Hanani brought him a devastating report about their homeland, Judah: "The wall of Jerusalem is also broken down, and its gates are burned with fire" (Nehemiah 2:17).
- The walls their forefathers laboured to build had crumbled. Walls that had once kept them safe now lay waste. Nehemiah was grieved; a great sense of responsibility overcame him. He didn't send Hanani or someone else. He sacrificed convenience for the call; self-service for self-sacrifice.

REBUILD PRAYER

- The first thing Nehemiah did was pray (1:4).
- We've been called this year to persistent prayer. We have to rebuild prayer. Before we do anything else, we've got to pray.
- Whatever you are building (education, career, family, ministry), start with prayer. Prayer will give direction. Prayer will bring instruction. Prayer will bring answers and God will give you favour.
- After he had prayed, Nehemiah knew *what* had to be done and had God's favour and direction to do it.
- He made an appeal before the King for his homeland. He requested leave from his duties, which the King granted, along with providing help and resources.
- 1 Chronicles 16:11 (NIV) says, "Look to the LORD and his strength; seek his face always."
- Many times we are consumed with seeking God's hand, but don't take time to seek His face. If we will learn to seek His face, He will provide—even from the most unexpected places.

REBUILD UNITY

- Nehemiah went back to Jerusalem and gathered the people We read about this in Chapter 2. Chapter 3 outlines how ALL the families listed united and came together, each family taking responsibility for building a part of the wall.
- Working together, the Israelites rebuilt the entire wall to half its original height in just 52 days. How?
- Nehemiah 4:6 tells us, "…for the people had a mind to work."
- They were united in mind, in vision, in purpose. And because they were UNITED with a mind to WORK, they accomplished what seemed impossible.
- It's amazing what can happen when God's people unite.

KEY SCRIPTURE: Nehemiah 2:17-18

- Unity is more than just being together–sitting next to one another week after week. We have to be united in purpose, put aside our personal agendas and vendettas, preferences and differences and unite in the work God calls us to.

REBUILD WITH RUBBLE

- "…when Sanballat heard that we were rebuilding the wall…he was furious and very indignant, and mocked the Jews…and said…'Will they revive the stones from the heaps of rubbish—stones that are burned?'" (Nehemiah 4:1-2 NKJV).
- You've been through some things. You've been torn down. Burned. Trampled on. You feel forgotten. But God wants to revive you and use you. He can revive stones from heaps of rubbish.
- Don't let the rubbish around you keep you from revival. God will use your rubble for revival!
- There will always be 'Sanballats' around:
- **"Spectators"** who watch, and find fault—but never do anything to help; **"Commentators"**- always talking, mocking; **"Dictators"** telling everyone else what to do; **"Agitators"** sowing discord, stirring up drama; **"Hesitators"** - it takes more time to convince them than to do the job itself; **"Imitators"** pretending.
- God is calling the **Demonstrators**.
- When we seek His face, make ourselves available, and unite – the Lord will send blessings from unlikely places, not only to restore, but to do a greater work! He will use weary stones to do wondrous works.
- Haggai 2:8-9 (NKJV): "'The silver is Mine, and the gold is Mine,' says the LORD of hosts. 'The glory of this latter temple shall be greater than the former,' says the LORD of hosts. 'And in this place I will give peace,' says the LORD of hosts."
- The question today is: Are you ready to put your hand to this good work? It's time to build!

DISCUSSION/REFLECTION TOOLS

1. Share how you have seen the importance of prayer in your life, or in that of someone close to you, when trying to accomplish something.
2. Discuss the roots of disunity. Why do we/others find it hard to co-operate with each other?
3. Compare possible outcomes of a project when i) one person has to do it alone (or insists on doing it alone); ii) a group that is in conflict works on it; or iii) a group works together co-operatively.
4. From scripture and your own experiences, describe how God uses "rubble" to accomplish great things for Him.
5. Which aspect of rebuilding will you focus on first?

Prayer Time

Lord, please help me. My brother, my sister, will you help me? I want to do my part to build the Kingdom of God. In Jesus' name.

L.G. ice-Breaker: What are your favourite group games/activities? Do you usually prefer things you do with a group or things you do alone?

WEEK OF SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2017

NOTES

Meditate as you read through/listen to this week's message. If it helps, use symbols for your notes.

(Reminds me/Confirms) (New idea) (Think about)

(Do this) (Speaks to my heart) (Must share)

PRAYER NEEDS/THANKSGIVINGS