

# UNLEASH THE POWER

INTENTION | INITIATION | INNOVATION

## ANNOUNCEMENTS/NEXT STEPS:

- LEADERS LAB, January 25, 2018 (Thursday) 6:30 Knox Church
- PRAYER AND FASTING WEEK, January 28 – February 4
- BAPTISM BASH, February 11, 1:30PM Microtel Pool

## PRAY TOGETHER FOR

- Boldness in initiating the plans God has approved in our lives.
- Strength as we pursue God's agenda together for Mosaic.
- For Mosaic Downtown plans and strategies

## GOAL FOR THIS STUDY:

Great things never happen by accident. Great things are accomplished by people who intentionally plan and take action. That's how God works, and that how He wants us to work. In this study, we will connect the two powerful forces of intention and initiation and how to turn our plans into reality.

**NEHEMIAH 2:20**, I replied, "The God of heaven will help us succeed. We, his servants, will start rebuilding this wall."

What turns a plan into reality? Action, which begins with initiation. Sunday's sermon by Pastor Jon Las gave us insight into the life of Nehemiah, a Jewish man who held a high-ranking position as cupbearer to King Artaxerxes of Persia. In the year 586 BC, the Babylonians invaded Israel and took thousands of Jews with them as captives. The reason why God allowed the Babylonians to conquer Israel is because they have been unfaithful to God and turned to idols. They were captives in Babylon for seventy years. The prophet Jeremiah writes about this in Jeremiah 29:10-14. As the time came for the fulfillment of God's promise, God raises Nehemiah out of his comfortable and important position in Persia to help rebuild their home, the city of Jerusalem. It's important to understand how Nehemiah received a burden for his homeland. It was his heart break over the news of Jerusalem's condition that led him to his destiny (Nehemiah 1:2-5). Pastor Jon shared that, "When God allows our hearts to break over a situation, it is because He is leading us to do something extraordinary about the situation." Based on Nehemiah's experience we find five key principles in releasing the power of initiation that can turn plans into reality.

**INITIATE YOUR PLANS FUELED WITH PRAYER (Nehemiah 1:11).** When Nehemiah heard about the condition of his people, his heart broke, he wept, he fasted and prayed. Nehemiah realized what he needed to do, so he came up with action points to pursue what God has placed in His heart. Pastor Jon shared, "Fulfillment doesn't start with getting what we want. It starts with wanting what God wants." Prayer is where the vision is born, the action points are conceived and the favor of God is sought.

**WHEN YOU HAVE THE FAVOR OF GOD, YOU'LL HAVE THE FAVOR OF THE RIGHT PEOPLE WHO CAN PROPEL YOU TO YOUR DESTINY (Nehemiah 2:4-9).** Nehemiah shares his intentions with the king. Immediately, as evidence of God's favor, the king asked, "How can I help?" (2:4). God gave Nehemiah the boldness to his concerns and needs to accomplish his goals which the king immediately granted, and more. Pastor Jon shared, "God's grace and favor were so heavy on Nehemiah that the King cannot say NO to his requests, because what he wanted to do was God's will. God will always provide what you need when you do His will.

**USE OPPOSITION TO FUEL YOUR GROWTH (Nehemiah 2:10).** Just because God's favor is on you, doesn't mean everyone else will be happy with you. When you obey God, there will always be opposition, because the last thing the enemy wants is for you to see your plans turn into reality. So, don't fear opposition but use it to inspire you to stay on track.

**TAKE AN INVENTORY OF WHAT GOD HAS ALREADY GIVEN YOU, NOT WHAT HE HASN'T (Nehemiah 2:12-15).** Nehemiah went to Jerusalem and inspected every area so he would know what to do next. When God calls us to build something broken in our lives, He wants us to take a careful look at what we have and rebuild it, not long just long for something new.

**INITIATE THE PURSUIT OF YOUR GOD-GIVEN RIGHT (Nehemiah 2:17-20).** When God tells us to do something, make sure you share it with others who may help turn plans into reality. Nehemiah simply shared a vision of rebuilding Jerusalem and his personal experience of God's favor. Nehemiah knew God's promise to restore Israel, all he did was to reclaim that promise by taking action over what he had every share, right and claim to.

## Connection and Action

Questions to promote conversation and connection

### Question:

If you knew you couldn't fail and money was not a problem, what would you like to do in the next 5 years?

## Bible and Belief

Questions to help believers develop a biblical point of view.

When you receive bad news about someone or something you care deeply about, is your first response like Nehemiah's? Why or why not?

Why does Nehemiah fast as part of seeking the will of the Lord? What does fasting teach us?

What does Nehemiah's grief over the state of Jerusalem reveal about his character? His affection for the Lord? His affection for his people?

Nehemiah secures the trust and respect of a pagan king without compromising his commitment to God. How can we do the same today with those in positions of authority over us?

Nehemiah uses his position of authority for the benefit of his people and the accomplishment of God's will, even at great personal risk. What wrong thinking causes us to protect ourselves rather than risk like Nehemiah?

What have Nehemiah's actions and words show about his character? List some character traits on the blank section on the left column. Which character traits do you wish develop in you more?

## Growing in Leadership

Questions to help people grow as leaders.

How is Nehemiah's decision to tour the city at night wise? When is it wise to do things on your own and when is it wise to seek the help of others?

On finding the situation in Jerusalem to be as dire as he heard, Nehemiah chooses hope over discouragement, issuing a call to rebuild. What does the people's response teach about how contagious a leader's attitude can be?

How does Nehemiah's example challenge you to think and act as a member of your gospel-centered community?

What good work would the Lord have you strengthen your hands to build? Where has He given you a vision to build His kingdom right now?

What broken down areas of your life is God calling you to pray and fast for, plan for and rebuild in 2018?