

Devoted to Doing Ministry Together

Lesson 05 in the series: "Devoted"

I. Jesus gave us a God-sized mission that's impossible for us to carry out on our own.

"Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you."

Matthew 28:19-20 (NLT)

II. Nehemiah and the people of Jerusalem gave us a great example of how to tackle a God-sized task.

"I said to them, 'You know very well what trouble we are in. Jerusalem lies in ruins, and its gates have been destroyed by fire. Let us rebuild the wall of Jerusalem and end this disgrace!' Then I told them about how the gracious hand of God had been on me, and about my conversation with the king. They replied at once, 'Yes, let's rebuild the wall!' So they began the good work." Nehemiah 2:17-18 (NLT)

a. Everyone got involved.

"The Old City Gate was repaired by Joiada son of Paseah and Meshullam son of Besodeiah. They laid the beams, set up its doors, and installed its bolts and bars... Next was Uzziel son of Harhaiah, a **goldsmith** by trade, who also worked on the wall. Beyond him was Hananiah, a **manufacturer of perfumes**. They left out a section of Jerusalem as they built the Broad Wall. Rephaiah son of Hur, the **leader** of half the district of Jerusalem, was next to them on the wall... Shallum son of **Hallohesh and his daughters** repaired the next section." Nehemiah 3:6-12 (NLT)

Life Application: We are devoted to everyone engaging Christ's mission.

"I commend to you our sister Phoebe, who is a deacon in the church in Cenchrrea. Welcome her in the Lord as one who is worthy of honor among God's people. Help her in whatever she needs, for she has been helpful to many, and especially to me. Give my greetings to Priscilla and Aquila, my co-workers in the ministry of Christ Jesus. In fact, they once risked their lives for me. I am thankful to them, and so are all the Gentile churches. Also give my greetings to the church that meets in their home. Greet my dear friend Epenetus. He was the first person from the province of Asia to become a follower of Christ. Give my greetings to Mary, who has worked so hard for your benefit." Romans 16:1-6 (NLT)

b. Everyone did what they could.

"The Valley Gate was repaired by the people from Zanoah, led by Hanun. They set up its doors and installed its bolts and bars. They also repaired the 1,500 feet of wall to the Dung Gate. The Dung Gate was repaired by Malkijah son of Recab, the leader of the Beth-hakkerem district. He rebuilt it, set up its doors, and installed its bolts and bars. The Fountain Gate was repaired by Shallum son of Col-hozeh, the leader of the Mizpah district. He rebuilt it, roofed it, set up its doors, and installed its bolts and bars. Then he repaired the wall of the pool of Siloam near the king's garden, and he rebuilt the wall as far as the stairs that descend from the City of David." Nehemiah 3:13-15 (NLT)

Life Application: We are devoted to using all of our gifts.

"In his grace, God has given us different gifts for doing certain things well. So if God has given you the ability to prophesy, speak out with as much faith as God has given you. If your gift is serving others, serve them well. If you are a teacher, teach well. If your gift is to encourage others, be encouraging. If it is giving, give generously. If God has given you leadership ability, take the responsibility seriously. And if you have a gift for showing kindness to others, do it gladly." Romans 12:6-8 (NLT)

c. Everyone worked together side by side.

"**Next to him** was Nehemiah son of Azbuk, the leader of half the district of Beth-zur. He rebuilt the wall from a place across from the tombs of David's family as far as the water reservoir and the House of the Warriors. **Next to him**, repairs were made by a group of Levites... **Next to them**, Ezer son of Jeshua, the leader of Mizpah, repaired another section of wall across from the ascent to the armory near the angle in the wall. **Next to him** was Baruch son of Zabbai, who zealously repaired an additional section from the angle to the door of the house of Eliashib the high priest." Nehemiah 3:16-20 (NLT)

Note: "Next to him/them" is used 20 times in Nehemiah 3.

Life Application: We are devoted to doing ministry together.

“Two people are better off than one, for they can help each other succeed. If one person falls, the other can reach out and help. But someone who falls alone is in real trouble. Likewise, two people lying close together can keep each other warm. But how can one be warm alone? A person standing alone can be attacked and defeated, but two can stand back-to-back and conquer. Three are even better, for a triple-braided cord is not easily broken.” Ecclesiastes 4:9-12 (NLT)

d. Everyone had ownership of the task.

“Benjamin and Hasshub repaired the section **across from their house**, and Azariah son of Maaseiah and grandson of Ananiah repaired the section **across from his house**... Above the Horse Gate, the priests repaired the wall. Each one repaired the section immediately **across from his own house**. Next Zadok son of Immer also rebuilt the wall **across from his own house**... while Meshullam son of Berekiah **rebuilt the wall across from where he lived.**” Nehemiah 3:23-30 (NLT)

Life Application: We are devoted to carrying out ministry in our homes, families, and community.

“Please give my greetings to our brothers and sisters at Laodicea, and to Nympha and the church that meets in her house.” Colossians 4:15 (NLT)

Note: Sadly, some people won’t get involved no matter what.

“...the Tekoites made repairs; but their nobles did not put their shoulders to the work of their Lord.”
Nehemiah 3:5 (NKJV)

III. Because Nehemiah and his people devoted themselves to God’s work, He helped them.

“So on October 2 the wall was finished—just fifty-two days after we had begun. When our enemies and the surrounding nations heard about it, they were frightened and humiliated. They realized this work had been done with the help of our God.” Nehemiah 6:15-16 (NLT)

Note: Because we are devoted to the commission Jesus gave us, we are confident God will help us too!

“So we keep on praying for you, asking our God to enable you to live a life worthy of his call. May he give you the power to accomplish all the good things your faith prompts you to do.” 2 Thessalonians 1:11 (NLT)

“I am certain that God, who began the good work within you, will continue his work until it is finally finished on the day when Christ Jesus returns.” Philippians 1:6 (NLT)

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Connect Group Questions

1. Describe the best team (softball team, sales team, volunteer team, etc.) of which you have ever been a part. What made it so special? What part did you play?
2. Read Hebrews 10:23-25. What would your Connect Group look like if everyone became fully devoted to motivating everyone else to acts of love and good works?
3. Read Romans 12:6-13 & 1 Corinthians 12:7-12. What gifts or talents has God given you? How can you use them to strengthen the body of believers at Centerpoint?
4. Read Nehemiah 3:6-12. (Don’t worry about pronouncing names.) How does it make you feel to learn that people from many different careers and backgrounds rebuilt Jerusalem’s wall together? Why do you think it was important to Nehemiah to record the names of everyone who helped?
5. Read Nehemiah 6:15-16 & 2 Thessalonians 1:11. Share a time in your life when you were convinced that God helped you accomplish something?
6. Read Colossians 4:15. In what ways do you think the church meeting in Nympha’s house resembled your Connect Group? Centerpoint started meeting in a living room in Prattville ten years ago, and we have started ministries in other cities via living room gatherings also. Why do we do this?
7. Spend some time as a group praying for Centerpoint.
 - Ask God to strengthen us to carry out His work.
 - Ask God to show us what gifts He has given us and how to use them together.
 - Ask God to bless us with unity, teamwork, and great communication.
 - Ask God to give each of us ownership of our mission.

- Ask God to show us how to get everyone involved.

Nehemiah 2:17-18 Spiritual renewal often begins with one person's vision. Nehemiah had a vision, and he shared it with enthusiasm, inspiring Jerusalem's leaders to rebuild the walls. We frequently underestimate people and don't challenge them with our dreams for God's work in the world. When God plants an idea in your mind to accomplish something for him, share it with others and trust the Holy Spirit to impress them with similar thoughts. Don't regard yourself as the only one through whom God is working. Often God uses one person to express the vision and others to turn it into reality. When you encourage and inspire others, you put teamwork into action to accomplish God's goals. (Life Application Study Bible)