



City life: crowds of people, traffic congestion, asphalt and concrete, schools, government, culture, community . . . All of us know what it's like to live in a city. But did you know that God is in the process of building a city of his own right in the midst of our city? Although the story of the Bible starts in the garden (Gen. 1-2), it ends in a city (Rev. 21). And in between God invites us to join him in building his city right where we live. How do we do this? What does this look like? How do we deal with opposition? These are just some of the questions we are going to answer as we dig into the book of Nehemiah. I hope you are ready to let God use you to build his city in our city!

Discussion Questions: (Leaders please review each question and pick those that will be most beneficial for your group.)

1. Read Nehemiah 13. After experiencing God's great mercy, God's people made great commitments to the Lord (Nehemiah 10) and offered him great worship (Nehemiah 12). Yet in just a few short years they made great compromises. First they compromised God's word and became self-righteous legalists (Nehemiah 13:1-3). In what ways have you compromised God's word and become legalistic in how you measure your own spirituality and that of others?
2. After committing not to neglect God's temple (Nehemiah 10:32-40), God's people compromised by allowing Tobiah, the enemy, to live in the temple and by not tithing to support the work of God (Nehemiah 13:4-13). In what ways have you neglected supporting the work of the Lord at Pathway through your attendance, giving, and service?
3. God's people committed to honor the Sabbath and keep it holy (Nehemiah 10:31). Yet, in just a few short years their greed led them to compromise their trust in and honor of the Lord and his ability to provide (Nehemiah 13:15-22). In what ways have you allowed greed to keep you from resting in the Lord?
4. Prompted by God's mercy, God's people made a commitment to keep themselves pure and not marry pagans (Nehemiah 10:30). Yet in Nehemiah 13:23-28 they compromised their purity. How have you "married" people, things or ideas of the world? How are these hindering you from living a pure and holy life fully devoted to the Lord?
5. God's people compromised while Nehemiah stood firm in his confidence in the Lord (as exemplified by his prayers in vv.14, 22, 29 and 31). This teaches us, "It's not how you start with the Lord that matters most, but how you finish." In what or whom are you trusting - your past commitments to Jesus, or your present faith - as shown by your obedience to him? What sins do you need to confess and repent of to walk by faith in Jesus Christ today?