



NEHEMIAH

GOD REBUILDS & RESTORES

Courage in Action

October 13 & 14 // Jim Johnson

An Honest _____

Nehemiah 1:11-2:8, Ezra 4:17-24

A _____ Request

Nehemiah 2:4-5

A Humble _____

Nehemiah 2:8

TIME WITH GOD: If you don't currently have a Bible reading plan, you can download "Our Time with God" at spcc.tv/resources

REFLECTIONS: Whether you're using SPCC's reading plan or a different one, think about your time hearing and responding to Jesus this week. As you journaled your conversations with Him, what is one thing you felt Him speaking to you about?

SERMON DISCUSSION QUESTION: Is there something God impressed on your heart through Jim's message this weekend? Are there any questions you have?

Perhaps, as many have suggested, Nehemiah's alarm at the king's comment on his dejection sprang from sudden awareness of a breach of etiquette—for a servant's private feelings are usually best kept to himself, especially if they strike a jarring note. But while this makes good sense, the reason surely lies deeper. Nehemiah has resolved to speak out 'today' (1:11). He may have even decided to precipitate the enquiry by allowing his feelings to be obvious. Now the moment has come, and if he mishandles it there will not be another. Further, he will be asking the king to revise his policy, for the decision against Jerusalem had been official. True, the decree had left a loophole for change (see Ezra 4:21), but so quick an about face would be a great deal to anyone; and 'a king's wrath is a messenger of death.' - Derek Kidner, Tyndale OT Commentary

MY PERSPECTIVE: Describe something you've done that required a lot of courage.

DIGGING DEEPER:

Then I was very much afraid...(Neh. 2:2b)

Read the following verses: Joshua 1:9; John 14:27; Hebrews 13:5-6. Is there something God calls you to be or do that triggers some fear (or insecurity) in you? Describe your fear.

Having courage to step out and obey like Nehemiah doesn't always result in what people would call "victory" or "success." Read Hebrews 11:1 through 12:13. Describe what these verses teach us about Christian courage, obedience, and reward.



Not all that I believe has become conviction...A conviction is something that holds us. A belief adorns our life. A conviction defines it. A belief helps us live better. A conviction does that also, but it's also what we'd die for...

*The road ends about a half mile from the pinnacle. Here we parked the truck and pulled out a massive duffel bag, big enough to stuff an elephant in. It contained the paraglider and two harnesses, one for Claudio, one for me. We had to haul this to the top. The trail was steep and narrow. The bag was heavy and cumbersome. Paragliding for the first time has stood for me as a vivid illustration of the distinction between a belief and a conviction. The paraglider was one thing and then became the other. When I was helping heft the equipment up the mountain trail, it was a thing I held. I could have put it down at any time. If the trail had been much longer or steeper, I might have abandoned the thing altogether as too unwieldy, requiring too much work. To walk away would have been embarrassing, but not catastrophic. It would have meant a loss of face and a hundred dollars, but little else. But after I stepped off the cliff, the paraglider held me. I'd have abandoned my rigging only under the worst delusion. To unhitch myself would have been disastrous. It would have been fatal. I've spent the last thirty years trying to move my faith from belief to conviction, from something I hold to something that holds me. My test for when I've crossed that line, stepped over that edge, is simple: if I unhook myself from this now, would it simply be embarrassing, or ruinous? When it's the latter, I know belief has become conviction. — Mark Buchanan, *Your Church Is Too Safe**

MY RESPONSE:

The good hand of God was upon me (Neh. 2:8)

Describe something which required courage that God has helped/is helping you do.

Describe something God is calling you to do, perhaps a next step He is asking you to take. In what ways will you have to trust God in order to take this step?

