

**The Wall
Driven to Tears
Sunday, April 6, 2008**

What causes you to weep? In the Old Testament, in the book of Nehemiah, we see that a disappointing report of the condition of the city of the Jerusalem and the state of people drives Nehemiah to weep and mourn and fast for months. What is it that causes such an overwhelming response from this man? Why was his heart so distraught when he heard about the ruins of the buildings and the walls of this once great city and the shame and disgrace it brought to the people of God. Join us for this message as we unpack the first chapter of Nehemiah and are challenged in the way we view our city and the people around us today.

Questions

Reread the passage of scripture Nehemiah 1:1-11

1. Discuss with your group the patterns of behaviour that God's chosen the people, the Israelites, had recycled leading up to this time of Nehemiah. What are some the patterns that we get into in our relationship with God?
2. Much of Nehemiah is a journal, revealing this man's thoughts as he related to his God and the people around him. Discuss with your group times when you have kept a journal. What is it about journaling that allows you to share feelings and thoughts that are near to your heart?
3. Even though Nehemiah had probably never been to Jerusalem, his heart was still drawn there as an Israelite with a history with God. Describe some attachment you may have with another culture or country because of some experience or history you have had over the years.
4. Describe a time with your group when you have put up a "wall" in a relationship. A wall that shut down rather than enhanced it. How are walls used in our culture to put boundaries or limitations on relationships or partnerships? Describe a time when you have intentionally "built" something to restore or establish a relationship or partnership with someone. A Time where you have had to intentionally worked on something and it has been met with positive results.
5. Share with the group the last time you were driven to tears. Describe the circumstance and why you wept. What drives you to tears? Have you seen this change throughout your life? If you feel comfortable in your group, share what restricts or obstructs tears in your life. Discuss what drove Jesus to tears in the gospels.
6. Discuss in your group the ACTS (Adoration, Confession, Thanksgiving, Supplication) principle for praying to God. Notice in Nehemiah's prayer in chapter one, that these areas are covered. How does this type of prayer influence the way you are praying to God?

Pray for one another. Pray for the preaching team, that God would use this series in Nehemiah to surprise us and to build something new and fresh and solid in our lives and the life of the church.