Sermon Discussion Questions

Midnight Ride          Nehemiah 2          June 27, 2020

Getting Started:

In this sermon we will gain a roadmap on how to navigate a good-cause versus a God-calling.

A wise seminary professor once said, “There are many things you CAN do. Find the one thing you MUST do.” As you take inventory of your skills, passions, and God given talents, what is He calling you to do that only you can do and only you must do?

Going Deeper:

When to Stand Up: (Vs. 1-8)

See the Opportunity: “Why is your face sad, seeing you are not sick?” (Vs. 2)

Seize the Opportunity: “What are you requesting?” (Vs. 4)

Permission from the King: “if your servant has found favor in your sight, that you send me to Judah, to the city of my fathers' graves, that I may rebuild it.” (Vs. 5)

Protection from the King: “let letters be given me to the governors of the province Beyond the River, that they may let me pass through until I come to Judah,” (V. 7)

Provision from the King: “and a letter to Asaph, the keeper of the king's forest, that he may give me timber to make beams for the gates of the fortress of the temple, and for the wall of the city, and for the house I shall occupy.” (Vs.8a)

Pleasure from the King: “And the king granted me what I asked, for the good hand of my God was upon me.” (Vs. 8b)

When we see a terrible injustice, something that has been done that is not right, or something that needs to be restored, we have to stand up and do something!

Nehemiah has heard that the city walls of Jerusalem were destroyed and he wants to
rebuild the city to its former glory. As the trusted cup-bearer to the king, Nehemiah risked his life and asked for everything he would need to accomplish this project. If you have identified a person, place, or project that needs to be redeemed, is there a person or group you need to speak to in order to advance your cause?

What to Take Up: (Vs. 9-15)

Clarify the Calling: “Then I arose in the night, I and a few men with me. And I told no one what my God had put into my heart to do for Jerusalem.” (Vs. 12)

Consider the Condition: “I inspected the walls of Jerusalem that were broken down and its gates that had been destroyed by fire.” (Vs. 13)

Count the Cost: “Then I went up in the night by the valley and inspected the wall, and I turned back and entered by the Valley Gate, and so returned.” (Vs. 15)

Anytime we try to make right something that has been wronged, we will often meet up with opposition from the powerful ones who like things just the way they are. It is always wise to take a careful inventory and make sure we understand the forces arrayed against us before we start our work. “Ready, aim, fire” works much better than “Ready, fire, aim.” Nehemiah chose to do a secret nighttime examination of the city walls so the enemies of Judah wouldn’t see what he was planning. What things will you need to do very carefully before you can get started?

Who to Wake Up: (Vs. 16-18)

Is it Conceivable?: “You see the trouble we are in, how Jerusalem lies in ruins with its gates burned.” (Vs. 17)

Is it Believable?: “Come, let us build the wall of Jerusalem, that we may no longer suffer derision.” (17b)

Is it Obtainable?: “I told them of the hand of my God that had been upon me for good, and also of the words of the king who had spoken to me.” (Vs. 18)
Once you have your plan in place, you then need to recruit others to join in with you. Help them see how God has led you and resourced you to this place. Who are your people that you can invite into your vision with you?

**How to Rise Up:** (Vs. 19-20)

- **Expect Adversity:** “they jeered at us and despised us” (Vs. 19)
- **Engage in Necessity:** “Then I replied to them…” (Vs. 20)
- **Exalt the Priority:** “The God of heaven will make us prosper” (Vs. 20)
- **Establish Unity:** “and we his servants will arise and build, but you have no portion or right or claim in Jerusalem.” (Vs. 20)

As you get started, know that there will be detractors who will try to talk you out of your righteous project. Remind them and yourself that you are following the leading of the powerful and personal God and that only those who have faith and trust Him will see and experience His reward. How confident are you about God’s leading in your venture? You’ll need to be convinced of it because adversity is coming.

**Take Away:** Father, give wisdom to know what to do, courage to act despite fear, and grace to trust God for the outcome!

**Prayer:**