



Bloomington Campus Sermon Study - 9.27.2026

Leader's Corner

Calling + Character

Nehemiah 2:1-10

Main Idea // God forms our character through everyday obedience so we are ready to step out in faith when He opens the door.

Main Passage // Nehemiah 2:1-10

Main Practice // Identify one place where God is inviting you to obey—even if you are waiting, afraid, or unsure of the outcome—and take one concrete step this week.

Leader Summary // Nehemiah's opportunity before the king looks like a defining moment, but it was actually the result of months of prayer, waiting, and faithful obedience. God had been shaping Nehemiah long before the door opened. When the moment came, Nehemiah was afraid—but ready. He responded with humility, courage, preparation, and dependence on God. Help your group see that stepping out in faith often begins long before the “big moment” with the small acts of obedience shaping who we are becoming.

Prayer and Praise

Opening Question:

Where have you seen God open an unexpected door or provide an opportunity you weren't expecting?

Worship Suggestions:

- * Trust in God — Elevation Worship
- * Yes I Will — Vertical Worship
- * Available — Elevation Worship

Pray Together:

God, thank You that You are at work even while we wait. Shape our character in the ordinary places of our lives. Give us courage to obey when we are afraid, humility to depend on You, and wisdom to prepare faithfully. When You open a door, help us recognize it and be ready to walk through it. We trust Your hand even when we cannot control the outcome. Make us people who say yes to You. Amen.

Group Discussion

Read Nehemiah 2:1–10 together.

1 — READY WHILE WAITING | vv. 1–2

Approximately four months have passed since Nehemiah first heard about Jerusalem and began praying.

- * What do you notice about Nehemiah when we compare Nehemiah 1:4–11 with 2:1–2?
- * Why do you think God sometimes allows a season of waiting between a burden and an opportunity?
- * How can the small choices we make while waiting shape who we become?

Push it personally: Where might God be forming something in you right now even though nothing seems to be happening yet?

2 — MOVING THROUGH FEAR | vv. 2–5

Nehemiah says, “I was very much afraid.” And then he speaks.

- * What does that tell us about the relationship between fear and courage?
- * What might Nehemiah have done if he had allowed fear to make the decision for him?
- * How do you normally respond when obedience feels risky—move forward, hesitate, avoid, overthink?

Key Thought: Courage isn’t the absence of fear. Sometimes courage is simply obedience while fear is still present.

3 — HUMBLE, BOLD & PREPARED | vv. 3–8

Notice the combination in Nehemiah: he honors the king, makes a bold request, and has specific answers when the king asks what he needs.

- * Where do you see humility in Nehemiah? Where do you see boldness?
- * Why do we sometimes treat dependence on God and careful planning as opposites?
- * What does Nehemiah teach us about doing both?

4 — TRUSTING THE OUTCOME | vv. 8–10

Nehemiah says, “The gracious hand of my God was on me.” Yet by verse 10, opposition has already appeared.

- * Why is it important that God’s favor did not mean the absence of difficulty?
- * What happens to our faith when we assume obedience should produce an easy outcome?
- * How could believing that God’s hand is still present change the way we respond to resistance?

Ultimately, our obedience begins with Jesus. He obeyed perfectly on our behalf, and His Spirit is now forming obedience in us. We aren’t trying to prove ourselves to God—we are learning to respond faithfully to the God who has already shown us grace.

Practice

GROUP PRACTICE // “THE NEXT YES”

Give everyone a minute of silence and ask:

Where is God asking me for obedience right now?

It may be something big—but encourage people not to overlook something ordinary.

I’ve been waiting on: _____

I’m afraid of: _____

I sense God asking me to: _____

My next faithful step is: _____

Invite people to share their next step with one other person. Pray specifically for one another—for courage, wisdom, and faithfulness.

THIS WEEK //

Don’t wait until you feel completely ready or completely unafraid. Take the step you identified.

Then pay attention: What is God forming in you through your obedience?

Further Study

Luke 16:10 — Faithfulness in small things matters. God often forms us through ordinary obedience before entrusting us with more.

Joshua 1:6–9 — Courage grows from confidence in God’s presence, not confidence in ourselves.

Philippians 2:8–13 — Jesus’ obedience becomes both our salvation and the foundation for God’s continuing work within us.

James 2:14–18 — Biblical faith eventually moves. Trust in God becomes visible through action.

CLOSING QUESTION

What is God building in you so He can build something through you?

And maybe even more simply: What’s your next yes?