

# nehemiah

when God's call comes calling at work



God's calling and your vocation:  
an initiative of the navigators



Nehemiah: *When God's Call Comes Calling at Work*

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Getting Started

# Convictions and Calling



## INTRODUCTION

Nehemiah is one of the Old Testament’s heroes in terms of working out his faith “in fear and trembling” in the midst of a complex, difficult work situation. Like many of us today, Nehemiah was thrown into a task that was larger than what he could possibly accomplish on his own, and yet, his heart burned to see the job completed.

This study is not an exhaustive study of the topic of work. Instead, it provides an “insider’s view” into the heart, decision–making and leadership style of one person who responded with all he had to God’s call.

One of the key attributes of Nehemiah was his commitment to living out his convictions. To live fruitfully in response to God’s call, one of the things we need most is a small set of deeply held convictions. The goal of this study is to help build and deepen the convictions needed to live well in the workplace.

### Skills Needed

There are three skills that will make this study richer.

The first is **paying attention to the story**. The Bible contains many different formats: history, poetry, teaching and narrative. The stories in the Bible teach truth by *showing principles in action*. To get the most out of a book like Nehemiah, you need to pay attention to the action: What is God doing? What are His people doing? And how should their actions shape your own?

Skills Needed
Paying attention to the story
Digging into the details
• Observe
• Interpret
• Apply
Having good conversations

The second skill is **digging into the details**. One time–honored approach is *observe–interpret–apply*.

**Observe** means to pay attention to what is in a passage. The focus is on the objective facts and the plain meanings of the words.

**Interpret** means to think about the ideas that these observations stir up and the principles that the facts point to.

*Apply* means to take these meanings and work to see how they fit into your own life. Application is the step where you decide what you think God is asking you to do, think, believe or feel about what you have just read. Though digging into the details can be rich, it is just as important to think about how those details—and what they mean—apply to your own life. Sometimes, the impact is immediate: conviction, courage and hope come flooding in. Other times, you have to do a some thinking to see how God might be asking you to respond.

### Example

A common mistake is to jump to conclusions about what somethings means before making enough observations. For example, chapter three does not simply say that “everybody pitched in and they built the wall.” Broadly speaking, yes, that is what happened, but there are important details that greatly deepen our understanding of what happened. The first builder mentioned, for example, is the high priest (v. 1). (Why would it be important to mention the high priest first?) The verse also mentions that he was joined by his brothers. (Is this important?) The chapter goes on to describe people with different backgrounds making different contributions. Not every detail is as important as every other detail, but in general, it is the details that make a story rich and our interpretation of the story much more accurate. Applying this richer and more accurate understanding of the different types of people involved and their diverse contributions will be very different from applying a general idea that the passage is about “working together.”

If you are doing this study with others, the last skill is **having good conversations**. A small group works best when everyone in the group is committed to listening well, asking each other questions, sharing authentically and learning from each other.

**Earmark the following two pages of Study Skills so you can refer to them throughout the semester. They are designed to help you with Observations, Interpretations, Applications and Questions.**

## **BIBLE STUDY SKILLS**

### Some tips:

- WRITE as you work through a text. Thoughts clarify as you put pen to paper.
- We are dependent on God for this work so PRAY.
- You are trying to discover the author's intended meaning, so have an OPEN MIND. Seek what the text is saying, not what you want it to say.
- Ultimately this is a part of ongoing RELATIONSHIP with God, so consider as you go, "How does this invite me to trust God?"

## **OBSERVATION**

Observation is seeing and taking notice of things in the text. During observation you are seeking to answer, "*What did the Author say?*". It is the art of careful awareness and is the key to good Bible study.

### What are you looking for?

- An observation is anything you notice about the text, nothing is too small
- Some helpful categories to watch for:
  - **who** (names, titles, etc)
  - **what** (action, verbs, etc)
  - **when** (historical context, time/date)
  - **where** (locations)
  - **why** (motives)
  - **how** (tone, emotions, mood, action)
  - **context** (connection to the rest of the story and Bible)
  - **comparison** (watch for like/as, if/then, therefore)
  - **repetition** (words, themes in this chapter or book as a whole)
  - **God** (what is he doing? what does this reveal about him?)
- Each week the study has a different topic that will provide a lens to look through as well

## **INTERPRETATION**

Interpretation is drawing conclusions about the text, answering "*What does it mean?*". While there may be many implications (how it applies to life or effects the reader) there is one interpretation—what the author intended to convey. As you wrestle with your questions, you are seeking to understand why the Holy Spirit included this passage in the Bible.

### Some Keys:

- **Context:** Start by considering the immediate context of the chapter and book. Then consider your question within the larger context of the Bible and ultimately within the context of the gospel.
- **Clues:** Using the surrounding context, what clues do you see that can help you answer your question.
- **Cross Reference:** What other Scriptures speak to this issue? Biblical support is a helpful way to discern the intended meaning. And any conclusions you come to should not contradict other passages of Scripture.

## **APPLICATION**

Application is answering "*How does it effect my life?*". This is the appropriate next step to Bible study as it applies the observations about God and the lessons learned from the study to your life.

### Two Guiding Thoughts:

- **Surrender:** Application is a relational step, not just a dutiful way to try harder. God invites us to surrender to him, refusing to rely on ourselves and our efforts to make life work. Our obedience is designed to flow out of our trust in his love. As you apply the text, consider "How does this invite me to trust God?"
- **S.M.A.R.T.:** Steps of trust are aided by being Specific, measurable, accountable, realistic and time-bound.



## **QUESTIONS**

Questions help you see the text from new perspectives and can lead to greater observations, interpretations and applications. Here are a few to get you started. Find your favorites and use the space to add your own.

Who is in focus?  
Who do I relate with most?  
Who do I not want to relate with?  
Who is left out?  
Who else is mentioned?  
Who is compared?  
Who do I think of?  
Who is God using?  
Who could I tell this to?  
Who is a modern day parallel/example?  
Who is active?  
Who is included?  
Who is excluded?  
Who does this apply to?

What does this say about God?  
What does it say about people?  
What does it mean to \_\_\_\_\_?  
What is my reaction to?  
What are the boundaries to this verse?  
What do/did I expect to come next?  
What does it look like today?  
What synonyms would I use?  
What would be the opposite of this statement?  
What is comparable to this?  
What is the context here?  
What do we know about the audience?  
What do we know about the author?  
What jumps out at me?  
What is similar?  
What emotions does this bring out in me?  
What is the cause and/or effect?  
What does this remind me of?  
What would I have said here?  
What was author's emotion?  
What is the next logical step in this argument?  
What made him say this?  
What would it look like if more people knew/did this?  
What if this verse was left out of the Bible?

When will this be most useful?  
When was this written?  
When is this most true?

Where can I find similar verses?  
Where would obeying this take me?  
Where do I see this in action?  
Where is he going with this?  
Where is he coming from?  
Where is Jesus in all this?

Why did he use that word?  
Why didn't he say \_\_\_\_\_?  
Why did he say \_\_\_\_?  
Why is this in the Bible?  
Why in this chapter?  
Why in this book?  
Why is this important?  
Why this concept in this context?  
Why this verb?  
Why did God act this way?  
Why does he keep saying \_\_\_\_\_?

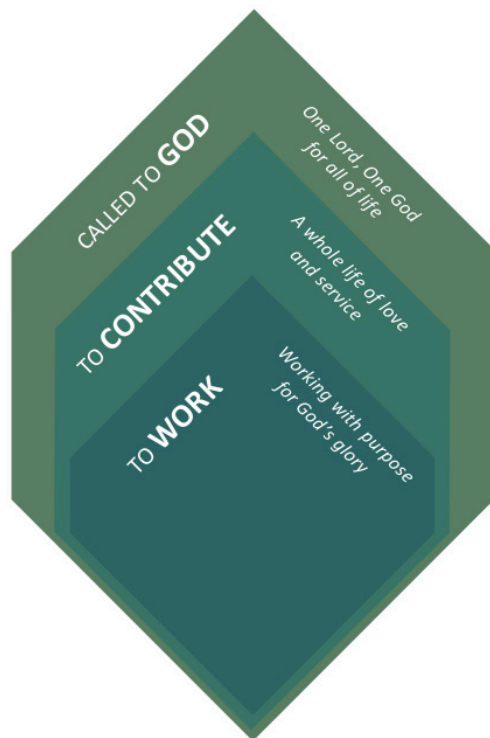
How is God rescuing those who cannot rescue themselves?  
How can I trust God in this?  
How do I see this in the world?  
How would this read from \_\_\_\_\_ perspective?  
How would the audience receive this?  
How does the author communicate the truth?  
How does the author think this is experienced?  
How can this be misconstrued?  
How can I re-communicate this truth?  
How can I use this in evangelism?  
How does this link to what we've already studied?  
How does this relate to faith? Hope? Love?  
How does it relate to Grace? Law?

## THE ROLE OF WORK

This study is not designed to cover everything that could be said about work. Instead, it looks at the topic of work and calling through the life of one person. “Work” is not the central theme of the book of Nehemiah, but it is its context.

The study will cover a few topics that are likely new to you, but mostly, it is meant to add depth to ideas (such as prayer, faith and commitment), this time, with a focus on work and calling. (If you are interested in a more topical study on work, please see *A Biblical Perspective on Calling, Vocation and Work*.)

One of the hardest questions to sort out is how *work* and *ministry* fit together. How does God’s call and guidance into a career fit into God’s call to influence the world around us and His even clearer call to intimacy with Himself? Here is one way to picture it:



**Called to God:** In this picture, everything starts with God and points back to God. The biggest, most important call on our lives is the call by God to himself. He wants all of us, all the time.

**Called to Contribute:** Inside this call to God, God asks us to join in his work of restoring and rebuilding every part of our world. We are called to contribute in every aspect of life through love, serving and doing what is good. This contribution includes work but also other areas: being a good neighbor, volunteering and other types of formal and informal contribution and investment in others.

**Called to Work:** Within this call to contribute, God leads most people into a career. The Bible teaches that it is not just how we relate to people at work that makes a difference. Very often, it is the work itself that provides a way for us to do good (for example, the farmer who grows food, the doctor who helps people get healthy or the engineer who helps design a safer vehicle). Work is not the “center of the bull’s-eye,” but it can be a very significant place for us to contribute and do our part in changing the world and making it a better place.

As you work through the book of Nehemiah, look for evidence of his priorities and convictions. In what ways do you see Nehemiah pursuing his work inside of a greater call to love and serve others? In what way do you see him serving others inside the even greater call to walk closely with his God?

## CALLING EXERCISE

Before you begin, take some time to examine your own sense of calling, even if it is not very clear yet. Don’t worry if your answers to the questions below are not “perfect.” You will have several chances to review later what you have written here.

1. What energizing action verbs best describe your motivations?  
These are the “big picture” outcomes that you hope to see in the people and world around you. For example, *inspire*, *create*, *empower*, *help*, etc. (If you are more of a detail person, you might want to start with question 3 and work your way back to question 2.)

2. What group of people do you most want to serve? For example, *the poor, those without Christ, coworkers, customers, family, those from a specific ethnicity or culture, etc.*

3. What words describe your spiritual gifts, unique talents or special abilities that help you serve others? For example, *giving, designing, building, serving, teaching, interceding, etc.*

Looking at your answers to the questions above, write a first draft of your life purpose statement. For example, you could write something like...

*“To educate and inspire disadvantaged children through teaching.”*

*“To protect people and our world by designing aircraft that are safer and use fewer resources.”*

*“To be a good mom and raise my children well.”*

When you are done writing, step back and reflect (if you have a friend around to talk with about it, even better) and ask yourself:

- Is your purpose consistent with how God has designed you?
- Is it compelling and significant to you?
- Does it inspire others?



- Do people agree that this statement describes your best contribution?
- Do you sense that your life purpose is truly meaningful? Could you be happy pursuing this purpose?

### **GETTING STARTED: EZRA, NEHEMIAH AND ESTHER**

In 538 BC, after Israel had spent 70 years in captivity, Cyrus, the king of the Persian Empire, adopted a policy of allowing deported people to return home. It took many decades, however, for the people of Israel to return, for the Temple to be rebuilt and for the wall around Jerusalem to be restored.

To help set the historical context, read Ezra 1:1–8 and make observations: What did God do to open the way for his people to return to Jerusalem?

How do you feel about God using a Persian king to help the people of Israel?

Early during the exile, God spoke to his people through Jeremiah, calling them to settle down and to work to bless the city where they were living as exiles:

*“Build houses and live in them; plant gardens and eat their produce. Take wives and have sons and daughters; take wives for your sons, and give your daughters in marriage, that they may bear sons and daughters; multiply there, and do not decrease. But seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the Lord on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare.” (Jeremiah 29:5–7 ESV)*

**How do you think this kind of living helped prepare the people to return to Jerusalem?**

**What impact did this approach to being exiles have on the king of Persia and the people of Babylon (Ezra 1:5–7)?**

## **PRAYER**

To close, spend a few minutes praying about your career and the people you work with (or will work with). Pray that God would use this study to deepen your love for him, your love for others and your understanding and ability to follow his call.

## SCRIPTURE MEMORY

*“But seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the Lord on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare.” (Jeremiah 29:7 ESV)*

## GOING DEEPER

For a more detailed timeline of the events leading up to Nehemiah, please read [Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther](#), a short paper by Navigator staff Dean Storelli, available at [human365.org](http://human365.org). (See the “Living in the World” section of the resource page.)





Nehemiah One

# Prayer and Calling



## WARM UP

Each study starts with a warmup section. These quotes are designed to “prime the thinking pump.” They are not all necessarily meant to be agreed with but to promote conversation and thinking. A few of the sessions also include some brief discussion questions to use before reading the main passage.

- “Non nobis solum nati sumus.” (“Not for ourselves alone are we born.”) Cicero
- “Prayer does not change God, but it changes him who prays.” Søren Kierkegaard
- “Prayer is not asking. Prayer is putting oneself in the hands of God, at His disposition, and listening to his voice in the depth of our hearts.” Mother Teresa
- “Leaders think and talk about the solutions. Followers think and talk about the problems.” Brian Tracy

### What is your reaction to these quotes?

Let’s look at the account of a man whose job facilitated God’s call.

**READ** Nehemiah 1 and make observations. *Pay attention to the steps in the process of God’s call to Nehemiah and any factors that helped open the door for him to step into the next chapter of his service to God, God’s people and the world around him.*

*Use the chart on the following page and refer back to pages 6a-6b for help with this step*

VERSE #	OBSERVATION	QUESTIONS	INTERPRETATION	APPLICATION

## REFLECTION/DISCUSSION

### Nehemiah's World

If the book of Nehemiah were to finish with the last sentence of this first chapter, what would you learn about Nehemiah?

How does prayer play a part in this chapter?

What is the link in this chapter between prayer and calling?

Do you think it's fair to say that calling is when our heart resonates with God's heart? Explain your answer using the details you see in this chapter of Nehemiah.

Treasuring what God treasures is another part of calling. **In Chapter 1, what does Nehemiah treasure that God also treasures? Who are the people that Nehemiah values? How does this value show itself?**



## Your World

When we have plans for ourselves, we call them dreams. When others have plans for us, we call them expectations. Expectations can run the spectrum from sharing your dreams to just being annoying. Are you willing to follow God's dream for you? **What dreams do you think God has for you in the workplace?**

**What makes submitting to God's dreams for us uncomfortable?  
What can make following God's plan exciting?**

Consider Ephesians 2:10 (ESV):

*We are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.*

One implication of this truth is that showing up — with our eyes wide open — is one of the keys to accomplishing God's work: we go *where* God wants us to go, looking for the his good and beneficial work prepared for us to walk into. **How does this perspective change our view of work and contribution? How might it change your job search?**

**Why does Nehemiah want you to know what he does for a living?  
Why does it matter?**

## WRAP UP

*Convictions* are deeply held beliefs. They are stronger than opinions and preferences, even stronger than beliefs. While *beliefs* include many things we think are true, convictions are things we believe with much more certainty.

*Commitments* are decisions we make, often in response to our convictions. For example, if I am convinced I need to eat well, I might make a commitment to eat three balanced meals a day. Other times, we make commitments as a part of developing deeper convictions. While I may not be absolutely convinced eating well is important, for example, I may still make a commitment to eating three good meals a day as a way to grow in a conviction that I am pretty sure is right.

**What is your takeaway from this discussion/reflection? Are there convictions you sense God is trying to build in you? Are there commitments he is inviting you to consider?**

Take a moment to reflect on your personal calling statement from the first session (pp. 5–7). **How has prayer been a part of developing that statement? How might prayer help you clarify your calling? Is there anything from Nehemiah or today’s discussion/reflection that you**

want to add to what you have written (or anything you want to delete or modify)? If so, rewrite your personal calling statement below.

## PRAYER

Finally, take a few minutes to pray. Pray about your calling, career and any commitments you sense God is inviting you into. If you are with a group, prayer first on your own and then, after a few minutes, pray together.

## SCRIPTURE MEMORY

*“O Lord, let your ear be attentive to the prayer of your servant, and to the prayer of your servants who delight to fear your name, and give success to your servant today, and grant him mercy in the sight of this man.”*

(Nehemiah 1:11 ESV)

## GOING DEEPER (OPTIONAL)

**What if** God has been waiting for all eternity for the perfect time to call you into existence, so that he can call you to be his partner in his plan?

**What if** God’s plan includes where you will find a job, when you find it and who you will work alongside?

**What if** pursuing your life, your work and/or career, is designed by God to give you *purpose*, to give what you do *meaning* and to give the accomplishment of who you are and what you do the richest *fulfillment*?

We are wired, like God, by God, to experience that very thing. Solomon wrote:

*I perceived that there is nothing better for them than to be joyful and to do good as long as they live; also that everyone should eat and drink and take pleasure in all his toil—this is God’s gift to man. (Ecclesiastes 3:12–13 (ESV))*

Having been created in God’s image, this is not surprising. We bear similarities that are undeniable. One of them is celebrating accomplishment. Like God, who ended each day of creation looking at his day’s work by saying, “Good!” we also enjoy looking at a well–done, finished product or project.

Achieving our part in God’s plan is fulfilling one’s call. This becomes the source of our greatest fulfillment!

**Take a few minutes to reflect on and write about any thoughts this chapter or these “what ifs” have stirred up for you. Are you encouraged? Confused? Have questions?**



Nehemiah Two

# Planning and Calling



## WARM UP

- “He who fails to plan, plans to fail.” Anonymous
- “If you board the wrong train, it is no use running along the corridor in the other direction.” Dietrich Bonhoeffer
- “If you don’t know where you are going, you will wind up somewhere else.” Yogi Bera
- “Planning is bringing the future into the present so that you can do something about it now.” Alan Lakein
- “Let our advance worrying become advance thinking and planning.” Winston Churchill
- “A life is either all spiritual or not spiritual at all. No man can serve two masters. Your life is shaped by the end you live for. You are made in the image of what you desire.” Thomas Merton

**What is your reaction to these quotes? Agree, disagree? Did one of them make you consider something you hadn’t?**

**READ** Nehemiah 2 and make observations. Pay particular attention to the dangers Nehemiah faced and any evidence of his planning.

*Use the chart on the following page and refer back to pages 6a-6b for help with this step*

VERSE #	OBSERVATION	QUESTIONS	INTERPRETATION	APPLICATION

## REFLECTION/DISCUSSION

### Nehemiah's World

Planning is key to most of our life. Without planning, we typically are planning for failure. This chapter opens nearly four months after the close of Chapter 1. Nehemiah has had time to think about the situation in Jerusalem. **What evidence do you see in this chapter that Nehemiah has been planning?**

**What possibilities, threats and opportunities did Nehemiah consider and solve?**

Chapter 1 tells us that Nehemiah was Artaxerxes's cupbearer. Chapter 2 opens with events that happen "on the job." Nehemiah's position could be called *royal wine taster*. "Sweet!" we might say, but let's look at the position.

- Nehemiah was on the front line of the king's personal defense. Wine tasting also meant testing for poison before it got to the king.
- Nehemiah's job profile had to include integrity and trust. He was regularly at the king's side.
- As the dialog between King Artaxerxes and Nehemiah reveals, Nehemiah was a trusted confidante, able to discuss the thoughts and intentions of the king.

**Why would God have Nehemiah working as a cupbearer when he was an excellent leader and project manager?**

## Your World

**What does this chapter teach us about the way God views our work?**

**As you think about your current and future places of employment, what might be a good prayer based on this chapter?**

**If the workplace is a part of God's calling in your life, and planning is a part of following God's call, what should you be planning now?**

## WRAP UP

What is your takeaway from this discussion? Is it something you need to know, to be or to do? Do any of the ideas here impact your own personal sense of calling? Your convictions and commitments? Your confidence in the process of being called by God?



## PRAYER

Pray about the opportunities and dangers you are each facing and for any plans you have made or need to make to help meet them.

## SCRIPTURE MEMORY

*And I said to the king, “If it pleases the king, and 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.” (Nehemiah 2:5 ESV)*

## GOING DEEPER (OPTIONAL)

If the last chapter teaches the importance of prayer in calling, this chapter teaches the importance of planning. Being called by God does not negate the need to plan, strategize or organize. In part, we love God with our minds by using them to discern, decide and develop solutions that honor him. Even so, you may be tempted to ask, “*Why plan if it’s God’s sovereign will anyway?*”

For me, the reason is partnership. I love the verses that say things such as “with God all things are possible” (Matthew 19:26 ESV) and “I can do all things through him who strengthens me” (Philippians 4:13 ESV). The words “with” and “through” are huge. God, who is sovereign and can do *anything* (actually *everything*) without us, chooses to be in partnership *with* and *through* those who follow him. Here are three questions to consider:

1. What does it mean to you when you think of God wanting to actively partner in the work of your life? How does it make you feel?

2. How might planning be a part of “learning to partner” with God?

3. If you think you are in a job that doesn't match your skill set or giftedness, what should be running through your mind? What planning might God want to partner with you in? Is it always a good idea to leave this kind of work? Never?



Nehemiah Three

# Teamwork and Calling



## WARM UP

- “One Goal!” Chicago Blackhawks Motto
- “The team with the best players wins.” Jack Welch
- “Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their toil. For if they fall, one will lift up his fellow. But woe to him who is alone when he falls and has not another to lift him up!” Solomon (Ecclesiastes 4:9–10 ESV)
- “The leaders who work most effectively, it seems to me, never say ‘I.’ And that’s not because they have trained themselves not to say ‘I.’ They don’t think ‘I.’ They think ‘we;’ they think ‘team.’ They understand their job to be to make the team function. They accept responsibility and don’t sidestep it, but ‘we’ gets the credit. This is what creates trust, what enables you to get the task done.” Peter F. Drucker
- “The players with the best team win!” Wayne Kuna

### **Which of these quotes caught your attention and why?**

**READ** Nehemiah 3 and make observations. In Chapters 1–2, the story is fairly easy to follow, but here, much of the drama is hidden in the details. To help see the “story underneath the story,” pay attention to the details of who is doing what work.

*Use the chart on the following page and refer back to pages 6a-6b for help with this step*

VERSE #	OBSERVATION	QUESTIONS	INTERPRETATION	APPLICATION

## REFLECTION/DISCUSSION

### Nehemiah's World

**In rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem? What different types of people were involved? Do you think this diversity is important?**

**What range of motivations, contributions and skills might these diverse people have brought into the mix?**

Look carefully at the different types of work required and the different levels of both difficulty and visibility. **How difficult do you think these differences made it to work as a team?**

**Before this project, what do you think the relationships between these people were like? How do you think this project affected them?**



**How did people end up working on the particular parts of the wall they worked on? Do you think Nehemiah assigned them positions?**

At least some of the people worked on the part of the wall adjacent to their house. (See vv. 10, 21, 23, 28 and 30.) **If you were rebuilding the wall on “Team Jerusalem,” how would working on the section next to your house impact your work?**

## **Your World**

**Why is it important to see calling as a team effort?**

**What are the dangers or shortfalls of approaching calling as a solo venture?**

**Sometimes, God “pre-builds” teams that we we can simply walk into. Other times, He asks us to partner with Him to build teams. What has**

**been your experience in joining teams or helping to form teams in the workplace?**

## WRAP UP

What is your takeaway from this discussion? Is there something you need to know, to be or to do? Can you write in one sentence a “best practice” from Nehemiah’s experience that you would like to see built into your own life? Is there a commitment God is inviting you to make?

## PRAYER

Does thinking about teamwork make you nervous? Are you worried about your ability to make a contribution? About others slowing you down? Pray about your concerns, and ask God for wisdom and grace as you consider your current or future teammates.

## SCRIPTURE MEMORY

*Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their toil. For if they fall, one will lift up his fellow. But woe to him who is alone when he falls and has not another to lift him up! (Ecclesiastes 4:9–10 ESV)*

## GOING DEEPER (OPTIONAL)

### Teamwork

By the time you finish college, most people are painfully aware of what it means to have a “slug” as part of a class project. (I know you know what I mean.) They never meet their responsibilities or commitments. The faithful

on the team are forced to pick up the slack and do more. When you get the “A” for the project, everyone is happy until the real worker bees realize the slug got an “A” as well. Ouch!!!

However, when a team works and accomplishes much more than what is expected or hoped for, the experience is a lifelong treasure.

Calling is seldom done in isolation. Or maybe we should say, seldom done well in isolation.

Calling is often a team sport.

**What is your experience as a member of a team?**

**When is a team critical?**

**What do you think God thinks about teamwork?**

### **Imagine...**

Imagine yourself outside of the walls of Jerusalem as a resident spectator. You're not a Jew. You have always lived in the area, and you have never seen anything but debris where it looks like a wall once stood. You're walking by the day the project begins. There isn't a wall up, and yet, there is something surrounding the city that has never been there before. What is it? *It is a wall of people.*

Before God used Nehemiah to make a wall of stone, He used Nehemiah to make a wall of people, united in one work, regardless of abilities or talents, having one calling, repairing the wall of God's city. **What does this picture tell us about the pursuit of a career that is wrapped in God's calling?**

## Nehemiah Four

# Threats, Opposition, and Hinderances



## WARM UP

- “I have learned over the years that when one’s mind is made up, this diminishes fear; knowing what must be done does away with fear.” Rosa Parks
- “It always seems impossible until it’s done.” Nelson Mandela
- “It is only through labor and painful effort, by grim energy and resolute courage that we move on to better things.” Theodore Roosevelt

**Which of these quotes stirred a reaction in you? What was that reaction?**

Before you read this chapter, think for a minute about perseverance. It’s hard enough to complete a complex or difficult task without help. It’s especially hard to “keep on keeping on” when there is opposition or danger. **What causes people to persevere? What makes them stick to it despite the odds?**

**Do you know a person of perseverance? What makes them that way?**

**Is there a difference between perseverance and being stubborn? If you think there is, what is the difference? Which are you?**

**READ** Nehemiah 4 and make observations. Note the different types of obstacles Nehemiah and the people faced and what helped them persevere.

*Use the chart on the following page and refer back to pages 6a-6b for help with this step*

## REFLECTION/DISCUSSION

### **Nehemiah's World**

**Where were the threats to Nehemiah's and the people's calling coming from and for what reason?**

**What kept the people working despite the presence of a threatening army?**

Some possible answers...



VERSE #	OBSERVATION	QUESTIONS	INTERPRETATION	APPLICATION

- Confident leadership
- A good defensive strategy
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**What evidence do you see that Nehemiah knew his Bible? How did this knowledge help him face danger?**

**If calling is something that comes from God, why would God allow threats?**

### **Your World**

**As you look forward to or look around at your workplace, what threats do you see to your calling?**

**How do each of the following help you persevere in the pursuit of your calling despite threats or opposition?**

- Scripture?
- Prayer?
- Other followers of Christ?
- Knowing your calling?

## **WRAP UP**

**What is your big take-away from this discussion?**

**If you were to create a “best practice” statement to help you persevere when your calling is threatened, what would it be? Is it something you need to know, to be or to do? Are there commitments God is inviting you to make now that could help you deal with threats later?**

## PRAYER

Pray for the strength to persevere in light of any current challenges.

## SCRIPTURE MEMORY

*So we built the wall. And all the wall was joined together to half its height, for the people had a mind to work.*  
(Nehemiah 4:6 ESV)

## GOING DEEPER (OPTIONAL)

Discouragement has many sources. It can come from others, from a project gone wrong or from an impossible task that seems to have no end. But the most serious discouragement often comes from within. Previous failures and disappointments can taint and discolor one’s motivation, courage and optimism. Unchecked, discouragement can lead to a deep sense of futility and to new failures.

Midway through Chapter 4, Nehemiah reports this sign of discouragement:

*In Judah it was said, “The strength of those who bear the burdens is failing. There is too much rubble. By ourselves we will not be able to rebuild the wall.”*  
(Nehemiah 4:10 ESV)

While Jerusalem’s enemies were carrying on a campaign of psychological warfare and threats, the rubble from the old wall was a picture of past disobedience and faithlessness. Every person working on the wall was staring at the wreckage of the cataclysm that had occurred to the generations before them.

In a sense, accomplishing their calling required first moving the massive debris from past failures. (And the debris was massive: the wall was 2.5 miles in circumference, averaged nearly 40 feet high and was over 8 feet thick.) In my life and yours, calling can be seriously hindered if we don’t first clear away the rubble from past disappointments, failures and missteps. Consider these questions:

**What debris from your past (or present) can potentially hinder the pursuit of your calling?** (I wish I could tell you I had a short list. Unfortunately, it’s not. Here are just two: *people-pleasing* and *anger*. Moses had the latter, and it constantly hindered his calling.)

**In addition to this list, might there be other debris that you just can’t see?** (In my experience, the answer to this question is almost always, “yes.”) The JoHari Window shows us why that is the case.

<p><b>KNOWN SELF</b></p> <p>Things we know about ourselves and others know about us</p>	<p><b>HIDDEN SELF</b></p> <p>Things we know about ourselves that others do not know</p>
<p><b>BLIND SELF</b></p> <p>Things others (spouse, close friends) know about us that we do not know</p>	<p><b>UNKNOWN SELF</b></p> <p>Things neither we nor others know about us (only God knows)</p>

**Would you be willing to ask someone about your “Blind Self?”**

**How would you go about getting a look into your “Unknown Self”?**

(King David gave his strategy in Psalm 139:23–24.)

**What are the components of a good strategy to deal with past rubble?**

**What strategies will keep new rubble from piling up again?**

Despite being a serious topic, there is some great news: God is in your corner. He is the partnering God. Despite being completely sovereign and in no need of help, he chooses to accomplish his plan side-by-side with you. Here are verses I take as promises to keep me moving—despite the debris and challenges.

*The Lord will fulfill his purpose for me; your steadfast love, O Lord, endures forever. Do not forsake the work of your hands. (Psalm 138:8 ESV)*

*He who calls you is faithful; he will surely do it. (1 Thess. 5:24 ESV)*

*And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ. (Philippians 1:6 ESV)*



## Nehemiah Five

# Justice and Calling





## WARM UP

- “If you see in a province the oppression of the poor and the violation of justice and righteousness, do not be amazed at the matter, for the high official is watched by a higher, and there are yet higher ones over them. But this is gain for a land in every way: a king committed to cultivated fields.” Solomon (Observations, not approval, by King Solomon, Ecclesiastes 5:8–9 ESV)
- “He who loves money will not be satisfied with money, nor he who loves wealth with his income; this also is vanity.” Solomon (Ecclesiastes 5:10 ESV)

**What do you think of Solomon’s observations?**

Before you begin, **how would you define justice? Injustice? Oppression?**

**What motivates people toward injustice?**

**READ** Nehemiah 5:1–19 and make observations. As you read, make a list of the greedy, unjust behaviors going on within Jerusalem (vv. 1–11) and note any action steps taken by Nehemiah to turn the situation around.

*Use the chart on the following page and refer back to pages 6a-6b for help with this step*

## REFLECTION/DISCUSSION

### Nehemiah's World

Chapter 5 of Nehemiah's memoir starts off with a disaster in the making.

**What was going on? Why were these things a threat to Nehemiah's calling? To the city?**

Doing justice requires courage and making commitments to...

- Discern right from wrong
- Act for what is right regardless of the risk
- Stop wrongful acts and wrong thinking in oneself and challenge wrongs in others and institutions
- Follow through so that wrongs are not repeated

VERSE #	OBSERVATION	QUESTIONS	INTERPRETATION	APPLICATION

**What evidence do you see that Nehemiah made these commitments?**

**How were his actions received?**

**How did Nehemiah model justice and generous living? (vv. 14–19)  
Are these things he had to do?**

### **Your World**

**As you look around your community and the world today, where do you see injustice and a need for the commitments listed above?**

**In Nehemiah's day, what motivations do you think were driving these people's unjust behaviors? How might these same motivations get you in trouble in the workplace?**

**What would be better motivations in the workplace?**

## **WRAP UP**

**Review the calling statement you wrote in the introduction to this study (pp. 5–7). Are there ways you hope your work can contribute to justice? Are there things you feel called to do or would like to do outside of your career that resonate with God’s heart for justice?**

**Are there new commitments you need to make in light of God’s call to justice?**

**Are there dangers you see in your career that might challenge some of your commitments?**

## PRAYER

Pray for justice in your relationships, local area, country and the world.

## SCRIPTURE MEMORY

*Now there arose a great outcry of the people and of their wives against their Jewish brothers. For there were those who said, "With our sons and our daughters, we are many. So let us get grain, that we may eat and keep alive."*  
(Nehemiah 5:1–2 ESV)

Or

*O Lord, who shall sojourn in your tent? Who shall dwell on your holy hill? He who walks blamelessly and does what is right and speaks truth in his heart. (Psalm 15:1–2 ESV—  
See "Going Deeper" below.)*

## GOING DEEPER (OPTIONAL)

Take a minute to read Psalm 15. **According to this Psalm, what are the markers of an upright, just person in God's eyes?**

**According to Psalm 15, how would you describe the access to God that is given to the upright?**

The Hebrew word translated “blamelessly” (v. 2 ESV) is a picture word. It pictures a person who is walking down the street at noon on a sunny day and who is not casting a shadow. **How does justice relate to “not casting a shadow”?**

**How will you avoid “casting shadows” on your journey in the workplace?**

Nehemiah Six

# Courage and Calling





## WARM UP

- “One ought never to turn ones back on a threatened danger and try to run away from it. If you do that, you will double the danger. But if you meet it promptly and without flinching, you will reduce the danger by half. Never run away from anything. Never!” Winston Churchill
- “I learned that courage was not the absence of fear, but the triumph over it. The brave man is not he who does not feel afraid, but he who conquers that fear.” Nelson Mandela
- “Courage is grace under pressure.” Ernest Hemingway
- “One isn’t necessarily born with courage, but one is born with potential. Without courage, we cannot practice any other virtue with consistency. We can’t be kind, true, merciful, generous, or honest.” Maya Angelou

**Did any of these quotes make you stop and think? Why?**

Before you consider Nehemiah’s experience, **what has been your experience with courage? Was it triggered by some event, something that took you by surprise or a person who challenged you to your very core? Have you ever “borrowed” the courage of someone else?**

**How is courage portrayed in entertainment? Do you agree with these portrayals? What do you think makes someone courageous?**

**READ** Nehemiah 6 and make observations. Keep track of the kinds of attacks Nehemiah faced. You may also want to read the passage again, this time, putting yourself in Nehemiah's shoes as you read. Try to imagine what it would be like to be attacked that way yourself.

*Use the chart on the following page and refer back to pages 6a-6b for help with this step*

## REFLECTION/DISCUSSION

### Nehemiah's World

**In what ways was Nehemiah threatened and attacked?**

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- 
- 
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VERSE #	OBSERVATION	QUESTIONS	INTERPRETATION	APPLICATION

**As you put yourself in Nehemiah’s shoes, what did these attacks feel like? What did you notice about these attacks?**

**How do you think the numerous open letters sent to Nehemiah affected “public opinion”?**

**As you look at the different ways Nehemiah was attacked, which do you believe were the most dangerous to the completion of the task he was called to? What do you think about Sanballat’s strategy of attacking the work by attacking its leader?**

### **Your World**

**Nehemiah faced many different kinds of attacks. For you personally, what kinds of attacks would make your workplace the most uncomfortable or dangerous? What is the worst that could happen?**

Many people report that they spend the first month of a new job just learning the ropes, navigating leadership styles and getting to know the real values of the company or team. Along the way, they realize there are

no Christ followers, which means there is no Christian witness. That's when they sense the deep need—and the unmistakable call—to see the workplace filled with more believers. Unlike Nehemiah, who had to build a wall, our workplaces often have walls that must come down: there are environments, biases and practices that keep people apart and keep the potentially good work of the company from going forward. **Does this describe any of the places you have worked? Where you work now? If you found yourself in this scenario, what would scare you?**

**In your experience, are faith and paralyzing fear mutually exclusive?**

**What practices will you begin *now* to develop and strengthen your courage in the face of future threats?**

## WRAP UP

**No matter what dangers you face, here are a few promises you can be assured of in your life.**

*“Greater is He that is in you, than he that is in the world!”*

*“I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.”*

*“His strength is perfected in weakness.”*

*“My God will accomplish all that concerns me.”*

**Look for the location of these promises in the Bible.** If they aren't already, commit them to your heart and mind.

**What other passages of Scripture give you strength and courage?**

**What is your takeaway from today's discussion? Make a “best practice” statement that describes something you must know, be or do.**

## PRAYER

Pray about current or future challenges you see in your workplace, and ask God for the courage to face them.

## SCRIPTURE MEMORY

Choose one of the promises from the Wrap Up or this one:

*But I said, “Should such a man as I run away? And what man such as I could go into the temple and live? I will not go in.” (Nehemiah 6:11 ESV)*

## GOING DEEPER (OPTIONAL)

I know a young woman who was born with severe cerebral palsy. She could not survive if it weren't for her parents and other caregivers. Yet, she is fiercely courageous. At last count, she has had over 80 brain surgeries and has fought back some of the worst bacterial infections ever known. Her spirit is unstoppable. Unable to speak, she expresses courage without words. Her eyes flash with intense fortitude and her face lights up with a joyful and sure confidence in God. Grace under pressure! She is a hero of courage.

**Who are some of your “heroes in courage”? What challenges have they faced? What have they done in the face of these challenges that you admire?**

Nehemiah pursued his calling in the face of lethal enemies. In the workplace, our enemies aren't necessarily lethal, but pursuing your calling in the world's workplace can threaten your pocketbook and even your career. **What challenges do you see ahead in your career that will require courage?**

Nehemiah Seven

# Leadership and Calling





## WARM UP

- “If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more and become more, you are a leader.” John Q. Adams
- “No institution can possibly survive if it needs geniuses or supermen to manage it. It must be organized in such a way as to be able to get along under a leadership composed of average human beings.” Peter Drucker
- “As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another.” Solomon<sup>1</sup>
- “People development should be a daily event, integrated into every aspect of your regular goings-on.” Jack Welch
- “The delicate balance of mentoring someone is not creating them in your own image, but giving them the opportunity to create themselves.” Steven Spielberg
- “Show me a successful individual and I’ll show you someone who had real positive influences in his or her life. I don’t care what you do for a living—if you do it well I’m sure there was someone cheering you on or showing the way. A mentor.” Denzel Washington

**Which of these quotes stands out to you and why?**

**READ** Nehemiah 7. As you do, take note of how Nehemiah invites others into leadership. What is he paying attention to?

*Use the chart on the following page and refer back to pages 6a-6b for help with this step*

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<sup>1</sup> Proverb 27:17

VERSE #	OBSERVATION	QUESTIONS	INTERPRETATION	APPLICATION

## REFLECTION/DISCUSSION

### **Nehemiah's World**

**What did Nehemiah do to keep the vision alive? What does he do to get others to own the scope of the calling and take leadership? Why do you suppose he takes this critical step?**

**What does “faithful” and “fear of the Lord” have to do with being a qualified leader? (v. 2)**

**Why were gatekeepers important? (v. 3)**

**Why was a regiment of guards established around the city? (v. 3)**

**Why were priests important, and why was their genealogy so strictly enforced? (vv. 39–65)**

Being pushy, being outgoing and many other things can be easily confused with true leadership. **Looking at the example of Nehemiah, do you think leadership is mostly a matter of what you do, what you say or who you are? Or is it some mix of these three? Is it something else?**

**What other biblical examples do you or your group know of leaders who invited other people to join them or carry on their leadership after them?**

### **Your World**

Everybody leads something. **What kind of leadership has God been developing in you? How has it been developed? Who has God used, and what circumstances have contributed to your growth in leadership?**

Thinking about your calling—to God, to a life of love and service and to work—**what kind of partners do you need? What parts of your calling, as you best understand it, would be better advanced if you had someone to help shoulder the load?**

**What kind of investment might these potential partners need? If you cannot give them what they need yourself, how might you arrange for them to get the helping and training they need?**

Character is central to leading, to developing other leaders and to joining others in the pursuit of their calling. **Give yourself a character “SWOT.” In what areas of character are you Strong or Weak. In what areas are there an Opportunities? In what areas are there Threats?** (If you are in a small group, share your SWOT evaluation of yourself in pairs.)

## **WRAP UP**

**What is your takeaway from this discussion? What is it that you need to *be* before you get around to the *do* of calling?**

**Are their new convictions or commitments in the areas of leading, investing or character development that God is inviting you into?**

## PRAYER

Pray about the issues this study has stirred up. (Discussing leadership can be difficult.) Ask God for the ability to move forward boldly, wisely and with grace.

## SCRIPTURE MEMORY

*Now when the wall had been built and I had set up the doors, and the gatekeepers, the singers, and the Levites had been appointed, I gave my brother Hanani and Hananiah the governor of the castle charge over Jerusalem, for he was a more faithful and God-fearing man than many. (Nehemiah 7:1–2 ESV)*

## GOING DEEPER (OPTIONAL)

Once a great task is accomplished and a vision has become reality, it is easy to let vision begin to coast, diminish, fade or disappear. (Read Nehemiah 13 for evidence of the dream tending toward a nightmare.)

We think more of accomplishing a task when we think of calling, but you can see from Nehemiah's account that his calling included developing people and inviting others into that task. Nehemiah knew God's vision was not a walled city but a godly nation. With the completion of the wall, Nehemiah would have to return to his "day job" back in Persia. Others would have to take his place. Their job wasn't simply to keep the walls in good repair—they would have to grow the nation of God to the next level.

In some way, great or small (even if it is "only" by example), calling always requires helping others take responsibility to bring God's dream into reality. God's leaders, often called shepherds, live a life of developing others leaders to carry on Gods plan. **Think about someone you know who has invested in the lives of those "next to be called"? (While it is easy to think about "superstars," don't overlook the more normal example of "everyday stars," people who perhaps operate on a**

**smaller stage but with no less passion and heart.) What was their motive? How did they do it? How qualified do you think they felt? If you are in a group, share your thoughts with one another.**

Some business leaders—for example, Steve Jobs (1955–2011, cofounder of Apple) or Sir Richard Branson (born 1950, founder of Virgin Group)—seem to have engines that keep them pursuing the illusive next level of accomplishment. Leaders of the church such as Athanasius or Mother Teresa seem never to have ceased pursuing the thing God has pursued them for. **Are all callings “God-sized” and, as a result, never totally complete? Do you think a call can have a time limit? Is calling over once God’s plan is accomplished or does it continue on in some way?**

## Nehemiah Eight, Twelve, and Summary

# Dedication, Celebration, and Calling





## WARM UP

- “Celebrate what you want to see more of.” Thomas J. Peters
- “The more you praise and celebrate your life, the more there is in life to celebrate.” Oprah Winfrey
- “How important it is for us to recognize and celebrate our heroes and she-roes!” Maya Angelou
- “Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!” Apostle Paul (Philippians 4:4 NIV)
- “I think we all sin by needlessly disobeying the apostolic injunction to ‘rejoice’ as much as by anything else.” C.S. Lewis
- “So I saw that there is nothing better than that a man should rejoice in his work, for that is his lot.” Solomon (Ecclesiastes 3:22a)

**Which of these quotes challenges you to celebrate a little more, and why?**

**READ** Nehemiah 8 and 12:27–43 and make observations. How did the people respond to hearing God’s Word? What do you notice about the connections between the Scriptures, repentance, obedience and celebration?

*Use the chart on the following page and refer back to pages 6a-6b for help with this step*

VERSE #	OBSERVATION	QUESTIONS	INTERPRETATION	APPLICATION

## REFLECTION/DISCUSSION

### Nehemiah's World

Over the 70 years of captivity in Babylon, the Jewish people had no access to the Temple (it had been destroyed), and access to the Torah was limited. As a result, many people had never heard Scripture read. The reactions of the people were strong: they stood, worshipped and wept (vv. 5–6, 9). **Imagine being in the crowd, hearing God's Word, after weeks of work rebuilding the wall and after years of exile. What do you think was going through people's hearts and minds as they heard the Scriptures being read out loud in this public assembly? Think about all the possible reactions that were going on in their hearts.**

**How and why did repentance play a part in this "celebration"?**

In God's redemption plan, the finished wall was only one step toward the final victory. It was built, but God's people were still in subjugation to the Medes and Persians. **Why do you think it was important for the people to rejoice and celebrate at this time?**

The first act of obedience was...more celebration! (8:13–18) **Why do you think this was an important step? How did more celebration lead to more Scripture reading, and how do you think this mix encouraged future obedience?**

## Your World

How has God's Word been involved in shaping your sense of calling?  
In shaping the things you celebrate?

Are there times when you have been stirred to repentance while on your journey to graduation and the workplace? Has any of that repentance lead to celebration?

What have been some of the highlights in God's guidance and God's help during your training and education, or, if you are working, in getting and starting your work? Is there a way to create some godly celebration of these victories?

In the life of Nehemiah and in the response of the people, obedience to God's call accomplished the impossible. In celebrating, the people of God were stirred to new levels of joyful obedience. **What has been your experience in how obedience is tied to celebration? How does obedience encourage more obedience?**

## WRAP UP: SUMMARY OF NEHEMIAH

Review any previous notes from the discussion sessions. **What are a few of the key elements of work and calling that you learned from the account of Nehemiah?**

**Is there anybody you could/should/might want to share them with?**

You started this study with some work on your own personal sense of calling. Along the way, we asked you to revisit your calling. **Now that you are done, is there anything you want to add, change or delete from what you have written about your own calling?**

**What are the 2–3 most important convictions God has been building in you through this study?**

Review the takeaways and commitments you have made through this study. **Which of these are the most important to you as you think about your calling and career?**

**How will you keep these commitments alive in your life?**

## PRAYER

Pray and celebrate. Thank God for accomplishments, big and small, that you have experienced recently.

## SCRIPTURE MEMORY

Choose one of these translations or another version of the Bible.

*Then he said to them, "Go your way. Eat the fat and drink sweet wine and send portions to anyone who has nothing ready, for this day is holy to our Lord. And do not be grieved, for the joy of the Lord is your strength."*

(Nehemiah 8:10 ESV)

*Then he said to them, "Go, eat of the fat, drink of the sweet, and send portions to him who has nothing prepared; for this day is holy to our Lord. Do not be grieved, for the joy of the Lord is your strength." (Nehemiah 8:10 NASB)*

*He continued, “Go home and prepare a feast, holiday food and drink; and share it with those who don’t have anything: This day is holy to God. Don’t feel bad. The joy of God is your strength!” (Nehemiah 8:10 MSG)*

## GOING DEEPER (OPTIONAL)

It’s difficult *not* to celebrate an accomplishment. Especially if the accomplishment has something to do with securing your livelihood or protecting or improving your life. We bear God’s image in our relationships and in our ability to work, and in the area of celebration as well: God couldn’t wait to celebrate creation, so he followed each creative explosion with a resounding, “That’s good!” Even if we’re simply painting a fence, it’s hard not to step back and admire the job once it’s done.

On the other hand, the DNA of what some people might call the “darkside” of a “Puritan ethic” permeates the hidden thinking of many. It often throws a wet blanket on celebration, especially if it is related to the accomplishment of something “sacred.” (What makes something sacred or holy is another great topic for discussion!)

**If you were to ask the average person, “What are the components of a good celebration?” what would they say?**

**How do you celebrate accomplishments?**

**What do you believe God has to say about celebrating? Can you point to any evidence for your opinion of God's opinion?**

**What have you celebrated lately?**



# Tips for Group Leaders

## TIMELINE

This study is divided into nine sessions. The first lays some important groundwork that will help make the rest of the study flow more smoothly and includes an exercise on calling that will be referred to in later studies. Most sessions can be discussed in approximately one hour, though the first and last sessions may take a little longer. Outside preparation, especially for the first and last sessions, is strongly encouraged.

## DISCUSSING QUESTIONS

To make leading the study easier for people with many different levels of experience, we have written more questions than most groups will be able to cover. This study does not present a comprehensive theology of work and vocation.<sup>2</sup> **The central goal of this study is to build convictions.** Good leadership of this kind of study will require high attention to facilitating good discussion and less worry about making sure every question gets answered. Sometimes, you will find that the best questions are the ones not on the page but the ones that are raised in the discussion itself.

Many of the questions in the study are designed to encourage participants to process their convictions in the context of their vocations. Because the focus is on application, often, there is no one right answer. As you lead the discussion, do not worry if there is some initial ambiguity. Ambiguity at the beginning often leads to more thoughtful and deeper convictions as time passes.

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<sup>2</sup> For a broader study, please see *A Biblical Perspective on Calling, Vocation and Work*.

## EXPERT OR FACILITATOR?

You do not have to be an expert leader or a teacher with all the answers to facilitate and guide these discussion sessions. Rather, consider yourself a fellow journeyer in the group. The goal is not to teach but to explore and discover together.

Jesus often guided a conversation through asking questions. A primary skill of a good facilitator is the ability to listen to other people's responses and ask followup questions. This skill requires the discipline of listening well. On the other hand, do not be afraid of being part of the discussion yourself. From time to time, you should also share your thoughts as well.

# Other Resources

Other resources from The Navigators' *God's Calling and Your Vocation* series:

*Daniel: Thriving at Work as an Exile* by Ralph Ennis

*A Biblical Perspective on Calling, Vocation and Work* by Ronni Bernardi, Dean Storelli, and John Teten

*Exploring Your Life Purpose* (a workbook to help you understand yourself and find your life purpose)

## About the Author

During Wayne's 26 year career in the global toy industry, he served God as a partner at the world's largest toy inventing firm, Marvin Glass and Associates and later at Wayne Kuna and Associates in Oak Park, IL. He holds over 50 patents, and his toy concepts have been sold all over the world. In 2001, Wayne received his Masters of Arts in Biblical Studies from the Moody Graduate School, where he also served as the Men's Chaplain. From 2003-2010, he served Oak Community Church in Hinsdale, IL as their lead pastor and in 2010 began serving as an adjunct professor at The Moody Bible Institute. That same year, Wayne was approached by The Navigators to launch their workplace ministry in Chicago. In 2012, he became the Founder/Director of Soul Priority, dedicated to giving men and women in the workplace the biblical perspective needed to find new purpose and meaning in their careers and at their place of work.