

Home Group Discussion Questions

Nehemiah 13 – 28th November

Can you describe a 'mountaintop' experience for you in your faith? A time when you felt particularly close to God, enjoyed being with God's people, or perhaps something significant was happening?

Last week, in Nehemiah 8 we saw the people coming together for a something like a festival – hearing from God's word, drawing near to him and rejoicing together. In Chapters 9 and 10 we see them confess their sins and make commitments to God about how they will live according to His laws. Read Nehemiah 10:30-33 for a brief summary of just some of those commitments.

As we come to the end of Nehemiah, in Chapter 13 we see the community have slipped back, from their 'mountain top' experience and the commitments they have made. Read through chapter 13 and pick out the different issues Nehemiah finds in the community. (You might want to break into groups and look at v1-14, 15-22, 23-31)

Why do you think they slipped back from their commitments?

Why do you think we slip back from our 'mountaintop' experiences? Or from commitments we have made to God? (On Sunday we looked at the Parable of the Sower in Matthew 13 to see what Jesus says about why sometimes the message of God doesn't take root)

Does this make you realise any commitments that you need to move forward with again?

It's a slightly depressing end to the book of Nehemiah! But perhaps a realistic one. We are all works in progress. We see Nehemiah hasn't given up on the people, but continues to work to reform the community, and continues to keep his focus upon God. Note his brief prayers in v14, .22, v31.

How can we keep focused on God even when times are hard? When we, or others, might not be making the progress we would hope?

Spend some time in prayer, that we would persevere through difficulties. Share with one another if there are commitments you need God's help to fulfil and pray for one another.