

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**SMI Week 5**

**Day 1**

**Nehemiah 5:1-19**

Read Nehemiah 5:1-19 and answer the following questions.

1. What was the “great outcry” all about? What needs are going unmet? What do you think brought on the economic crisis?
2. What three groups are most affected by this crisis? How does this affect their common desire to finish the project building the walls?
3. Why does Nehemiah get so angry at the nobles and officials? What are they doing to the people?
4. Read Lev. 25:36-42 and Ezekiel 22:12-13. What is “usury” (verse 7) and how was it a problem during the wall-building effort? How do these passages explain the anger Nehemiah has toward the nobles and officials?
5. How does Nehemiah seek to make sure the nobles and officials make their ways right?

**Nehemiah 5:1-19**

Read Nehemiah 5:1-19 and answer the following questions.

1. In your church this past year, what financial crisis or other problems may have hindered your service to God and others? In what ways do you react like or unlike Nehemiah?
2. How does Nehemiah act wisely in his response to the crisis? How does he show generosity?
3. What changes does Nehemiah make in the governor's office for the sake of his people (vv. 14-19)? What does he hope to gain in return for his personal sacrifice? What leadership lessons can you learn from this?
4. How do you think Nehemiah made ends meet during this time of sacrifice? What does this passage show us about Nehemiah's trust in God's provision?
5. Nehemiah shows us that loving God and others may require personal sacrifice. What privileges and rights are you willing to give up so that God's work can prosper? What do you think you may need to sacrifice in order for the SMI ministry to prosper?
6. Nehemiah saw a social problem, an injustice, and he became upset enough to do something about it. What social concerns do you have today? What is something you will commit to do this week in an attempt to effect change for God's glory?

**Nehemiah 5:1-19**

Read Nehemiah 5:1-19 and answer the following questions.

1. How can socio-economic differences cause problems in a church (youth group) or between believers?
2. Why do you think so many Christians today are in such deep debt? What does this say about our level of contentment? Our level of trust in God?
3. Many Christians say "I would give more if I had more income." And yet, when raises come, oftentimes there is no substantial increase in the amount they give. Why do you think this is?
4. The greedy and selfish nobles were robbing their own fellow Jews. What effect do you think this extortion had on the morale of the wall builders? How can greed and selfishness impact a group in a negative way?
5. Greed and selfishness do not always have to be centered around money. What are some other ways greed and selfishness show up in a group?
6. What do you need to change in your life to be more giving and selfless? What can you do differently in SMI or youth group that will help us move from greed and selfishness toward love? What financial need (of an individual or in your church) can you meet today?

**Nehemiah 5:1-19**

Read Nehemiah 5:1-19 and answer the following questions.

1. Read Proverbs 19:23. How does the fear of the Lord prevent us from sinning? How did the fear of the Lord keep Nehemiah from sinning?
2. Read Luke 22:25-27. What did Jesus say in this passage about leadership? What evidence do you see in Nehemiah 5 that he lived out the principles in these verses?
3. John MacArthur said, "Our society replaces people with things, conversation with entertainment. By so doing, we have lost the simple joys of life, which center on relationships, the essence of Christian fellowship. Material things can pull believers away from those vital relationships with God and others." Do you agree or disagree with this statement? Why or why not?
4. How do you see the above statement illustrated in Neh. 5? How do you see it in the church (youth group)? What specific things can you do to help overcome this problem?
5. Consider your track record of dealing with people. Are you (like the rich Jews of Nehemiah's day) an opportunist who thinks only about material things—how you can get ahead, get more stuff, and prosper? Or are you a servant like Nehemiah who uses your gifts, resources, time and treasure to bless others and build them up? How can you be more like Nehemiah?

**Nehemiah 6:1-19**

Read Nehemiah 6:1-19 and answer the following questions.

1. Were you ever bullied or picked on as a child? What was the experience like? What eventually happened?
2. What new threat does Nehemiah now face? What were the intentions of Nehemiah's enemies?
3. Why did Nehemiah refuse the meeting with them? What reason did he give for not coming to the meeting? What can you learn from this?
4. Describe the most intense spiritual warfare you've ever experienced. What were you trying to do? How were you being thwarted or challenged?