

Text: Is this the year you make progress?



Recap of Last Week

- Big goals, big dreams? *All things are possible with God. Mark 10:27*
- Be sure to pray about your goals and ask God for His wisdom and guidance. You want to make sure that your goals are in line with the will of God for your life.
- Make sure that your goals are **Specific** and **Realistic**. Set a goal and then set a time to get started and a time in which you hope to accomplish your goal.

No progress for a long time... Why?

- John 5: 1-9
 - The man had been an invalid for 38 years
 - Jesus asked him, “Do you want to get well?”
 - The man replied, “I have no one to help me into the pool... While I am trying to get in, someone else goes down ahead of me”
 - Jesus said, “Get up! Pick up your mat and walk.”
- **The man made no progress towards a healing for a long period of time. Why?**
- **What message is the Lord sending us by placing this man’s story in His Word?**

How bad do you want
to get well?

Are you willing to do the work that it
takes to make your life better?

In this lesson, we meet the Bible character, Nehemiah.
Nehemiah had a big goal.
He wanted to rebuild the wall of Jerusalem.



Nehemiah's Challenge

- Nehemiah 1: 1-4
 - Nehemiah gets bad news. **He mourns, fasts, and prays.**
 - Nehemiah asks for God to hear his prayer and then **he confesses sin.**
 - Nehemiah **asks God to grant him success and favor.**
- **How do you react when confronted with a challenge?**
 - **Do you allow the challenge to overwhelm you?** In faith, do you see yourself overcoming the challenge?
- **What do you ask God for in prayer? Do you ask for strength, for a solution, for wisdom, for guidance or for favor?**

Nehemiah sets a goal, a time and solicits help.

- Nehemiah 2: 1-5, 12, 17
 - Nehemiah asks God for favor before he approaches King Artaxerxes
 - Nehemiah prays again before telling the King what he wants
 - Nehemiah sets his goal to rebuild the city in Judah
 - Nehemiah sets a time
 - Nehemiah seeks help from others to help him reach his goal

Order your steps like Nehemiah

- Weep and mourn for *a short time* and then get up!
- Seek God earnestly
- Confess sin
- Ask God for favor
- Pray consistently and ask God for guidance as you work towards your goal
- Set a goal
- Set a time
- Seek help from others

Nehemiah's Vision

Nehemiah has a vision of a better
Jerusalem that has its' walls rebuilt
and is safe and stable

Your Vision

What is your vision for your life?

Crafting Your Vision Statement

- When you see yourself six months from now or a year from now, what do you hope to see?
- Come up with your own, “I am...” statements
- Here are some examples, “One year from now...”
 - I am closer to God
 - I am serving the Lord more effectively
 - I am in a better position on my job
 - I am in a new job
 - I am at peace
 - I am in less debt
 - I am less stressed out
 - I am in better health
 - I am back in school
 - I am in a new home
 - I am in a better place in terms of my relationship with an acquaintance or loved one

Combine your “I am” statements
into paragraph form.

The resulting paragraph should read
like a mission statement for your life.

Sample Vision Statement

- By the end of 2010, I am closer to God with a clearer understanding of His will for my service to His church and His mission. I am spending quality time with Him consistently and becoming more of the child that He wants me to be. I am more organized and productive both personally and professionally; and am therefore less stressed daily. I am more health-conscious and actively doing those things I should do to be at my best both physically and emotionally. I am more family-focused and spending more quality time with my wife and children.
- **Homework:**
Craft your own vision statement for your life.

Join us for our next lesson.
We will continue in our study of
Nehemiah and his big goal.