

October 28/29, 2023

"The Credits"

Pastor Aaron Buer



SPEND DAILY TIME WITH GOD AS YOU READ, THINK, PRAY + ACT.

2023 SPIRITUAL PRACTICES

Intentional activities to deepen our relationship with God and mold us to be more like Jesus.

NOVEMBER PRACTICE Bible Meditation

Day 1 Nehemiah 3 | The Credits

Eliashib the high priest and his fellow priests went to work and rebuilt the Sheep Gate. They dedicated it and set its doors in place, building as far as the Tower of the Hundred, which they dedicated, and as far as the Tower of Hananel. The men of Jericho built the adjoining section, and Zakkur son of Imri built next to them. Nehemiah 3:1-2

The rebuilding of Jerusalem's wall is finally underway. The people capture Nehemiah's vision and work at every point along the wall. Skilled and unskilled alike pick up tools and begin restoring both the wall AND the honor and reputation of the God of Israel.

Unlike the drama and tension of this story so far, this part of the rebuild can be easy to ignore. Unfamiliar names and distant places can make it seem like there's not much here for us today. But this part of the rebuild matters. We learn a lot as we read the names of people from 2,500 years ago and what they contributed to a significant rebuilding project.

This week, we discover three lessons about what it means to live a life of significance. Rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem brings glory to God. It's the same when we invest in our church community and serve each other. Meaning and significance are found in serving as we help others rebuild. Lives and families are restored, and God gets the glory.

IN YOUR CHAIR TIME TODAY Reflect on what it means to have a life of significance and how that aligns with God's definition of success. Journal about your life 5-20 years from now. What makes your life significant? How does this align with what God says?

Day 2 Nehemiah 3:2-7 | Not for You

Next to them, repairs were made by men from Gibeon and Mizpah—Melatiah of Gibeon and Jadon of Meronoth—places under the authority of the governor of Trans-Euphrates. Nehemiah 3:7

It isn't only the residents of Jerusalem rebuilding the city's walls and gates. Nehemiah notes that men from Jericho (18 miles away), Gibeon (six miles away) and Mizpah (eight miles away) are also actively involved. People invest in this project even though it isn't for their security and benefit. These walls will protect someone else's family. But here they are—cutting wood, hammering metal and hanging gates. All for the benefit of someone else.

We all want lives of significance. We desire to be a part of something that matters. We want our lives to count. Some of the most significant work we can do in life is for others. This means taking the focus off us and helping someone else. This can look like giving two hours a week to help second-grade boys know Jesus. We might give an hour a week to coach a family in getting their finances in order. We might invest two nights a month to mentor a couple attempting to rebuild their marriage.

Lives of significance include investing in others and their own rebuild. It means to "value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of others" ([Philippians 2:3-4](#)). We help others build or rebuild their lives so their lives can also glorify God. Investing in others, our church and the next generation makes a difference.

IN YOUR CHAIR TIME TODAY Pray a prayer of openness to serving others in their rebuild. Ask God to give you a heart that wants to serve and is gladly willing to be inconvenienced to do so.

Day 3 Psalms 1:1-3 | Bible Meditation

Blessed is the one who does not walk in step with the wicked or stand in the way that sinners take or sit in the company of mockers, but whose delight is in the law of the Lord, and who meditates on his law day and night. Psalms 1:1-2

Christians practice spiritual disciplines in concert with the Holy Spirit to deepen our relationship with God and mold us into Jesus's character. This month's spiritual discipline is **BIBLE MEDITATION**. Bible meditation involves thinking deeply about the truths God has revealed in his Word. This focused thought leads to deeper understanding and living out God's Word.

The Psalmist gives a beautiful visual of a person who prioritizes meditation on God's Word. He describes this person as a healthy tree yielding fruit in season. This implies roots that go deep into and are nourished by God's Word. They bring about the fruit of obedience through the power of the Holy Spirit. This person seeks guidance from God's Word rather than people around them who do not follow or know God's ways.

Bible Meditation means not rushing past the words but letting them linger in our minds. It can mean we sit with a familiar passage to soak it in to change us. It's not just reading for information that passes through our heads and is gone. Instead, it means allowing the Word to occupy our minds to shape how we think, speak and act. The Holy Spirit then enables us to become doers of the word and not just hearers ([James 1:25](#)). Meditation leads to obedience, which results in the blessed life the Psalmist describes—a life ordered around the Word of God.

IN YOUR CHAIR TIME TODAY Ask God to help you grow through **BIBLE MEDITATION** this month. Pray through [Psalms 1:1-3](#) slowly word-by-word or phrase-by-phrase. Ask the Holy Spirit to make it come alive in you and for help to understand the words as you meditate on them.

Day 4 Nehemiah 3:28-30 | In Front of You

Above the Horse Gate, the priests made repairs, each in front of his own house. Next to them, Zadok son of Immer made repairs opposite his house. Next to him, Shemaiah son of Shekariah, the guard at the East Gate, made repairs. Nehemiah 3:28-29

Some in Jerusalem do not need to look far to see the work that needs to be done. It is right out their front door! The significant work for them is right in front of them. No need to walk to the opposite side of the city. Just open the door and get to work. They know how important this part of the rebuild is. It is essential work but may not have gotten done if they didn't do it. It is right in front of them.

In our efforts to make our lives matter, we don't always consider the opportunity right in front of us. We might not recognize it or think it's significant. This can include the neighbors who need their driveway cleared this winter or the impromptu grocery aisle conversation with a friend facing a struggle. It also includes the everyday work of raising children. Many of the people we see each day—co-workers, classmates, teammates and others—are probably involved in a rebuild of some sort and could use our help. We can ask God to open our eyes to see those around us, and where he desires we step in and come alongside to serve them.

IN YOUR CHAIR TIME TODAY Consider who is right in front of you and ask God to show you what you might do to help. If this is work you're already doing, ask God to give you the strength to continue and see the work through to completion. "God, open my eyes today to the people around me. Help me see and love them as you do. Show me any places you are inviting me to step in and serve. Give me the courage and strength to follow your lead. Amen."

Day 5 Nehemiah 3:3-9 | Next to Them

Meremoth son of Uriah, the son of Hakkoz, repaired the next section. Next to him Meshullam son of Berekiah, the son of Meshezabel, made repairs, and next to him Zadok son of Baana also made repairs. Nehemiah 3:4

One worker's section ends, and the next one begins. Nehemiah records they worked shoulder-to-shoulder on this significant project. While rebuilding the wall side-by-side, they probably didn't see eye-to-eye on everything. This team includes a diverse group of people from both Jerusalem and towns miles away. Some are possibly older with more experience, while others are younger with more strength and energy. But to finish the work, they must work together to accomplish the goal.

This is also a picture of the church of Jesus Christ. We come together with various backgrounds, experiences, stages of life and perspectives. Yet, Jesus meets each of us uniquely with his grace and forgiveness and brings us together. Now, because of the cross, we have more in common than we do differences. This also means we have something significant to do together. Jesus is building his church, and each of us has a role in it. Shoulder to shoulder, we serve together.

We are created, called and gifted to serve in the church. The Holy Spirit gifts us in some way to serve his church. Sometimes it means stepping in to fill a need. Other times it involves using our unique gifts to serve each other. Participating in the life of the church is some of the most significant work we will ever do.

IN YOUR CHAIR TIME TODAY If you are not currently serving in the church, find a place to jump in at adabible.org/info/serving-needs and begin to serve. If you are already serving, consider who you can invite to join you where you serve. A personal invitation is often the best way to get others involved in serving.