

**“Rolling Up Our Sleeves”**  
**Nehemiah 2:11-20 \* January 24, 2010**

I. Some of the points we made about “vision” last week:

Most people can talk a good talk about what they’re going to do with their lives, but it usually falls short. Why?

**THE 7 P’S OF PLANNING**

P\_\_\_\_\_ - WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO? (VSS. 1 1-12)

A. Planning begins by identifying what the \_\_\_\_\_ - result is.  
Why begin here?

B. Some people wait for an outward sign to get them to change.  
How did Nehemiah know God was “speaking” to him?

C. So what’s one way I’m going to build up my life this year?

P\_\_\_\_\_ - WHAT WILL BE NEEDED TO CARRY THIS OUT?  
(VSS. 13-15)

A. What did Nehemiah do first before talking to anyone?

B. How can ‘disaster do-gooders’ actually hinder helping?

C. What do I need to do to get ready for what God wants me to work on this year?

P\_\_\_\_\_ - WHO IS GOING TO BE INVOLVED OR IMPACTED BY THIS? (VS. 16)

A. Why else did Nehemiah wait before announcing his plan?

B. What is chapter 3 all about? Why did Nehemiah include it in his book?

C. In my program for 2010, whose lives will be affected?

P\_\_\_\_\_ & P\_\_\_\_\_ - HOW WILL YOU COMMUNICATE THE VISION? (VSS. 17-18)

A. Everything that happens in life around us comes down to the power of \_\_\_\_\_.

B. Good vision-casting has three parts:

1. You identify the \_\_\_\_\_.

a. How did Nehemiah do this part well?

2. Provide a \_\_\_\_\_.

3. Give \_\_\_\_\_ for the solution.

C. How will I go about selling my program to others?

P\_\_\_\_\_ - HOW MUCH WILL THIS COST? (VS. 18A)

P\_\_\_\_\_ - HOW WILL WE KNOW IF IT’S BEING DONE WELL? (VS. 18B)

P\_\_\_\_\_ - WHAT OBSTACLES ARE LIKELY TO ARISE? (VSS. 19-20)

## **“Rolling Up Our Sleeves”** **Nehemiah 2:11-20 \* January 24, 2010**

*I. Some of the points we made about “vision” last week:*

*Most people can talk a good talk about what they’re going to do with their lives, but it usually falls short. Why?*

**Usually because they’ve never gotten down to brass tacks and come up with a workable, usable plan. Pastor Andy Stanley in an article called “Aiming At Your Dreams and Goals” writes: “It breaks my heart when people don’t connect the dots between the choices they make and the outcomes they experience. They’ve come to believe the popular notion that as long as their intentions are good...and as long as they do their best and try their hardest, it doesn’t really matter which path they take...But life doesn’t work that way.**

### **THE 7 P’S OF PLANNING**

**PROGRAM** - *WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO? (VSS. 11-12)*

*A. Planning begins by identifying what the **end** - result is. Why begin here?*

**It guides all the decision-making that follows.**

*B. Some people wait for an outward sign to get them to change. How did Nehemiah know God was “speaking” to him?*

**Nehemiah says, “I had not told anyone what my God had put in my heart to do.” Sometimes God does give us a burning bush. An outward sign. It happens. But more often than not, God reveals his plans and purposes to his people inwardly, silently, without flash and sizzle. Nowhere in the book of Nehemiah do we read that Nehemiah saw an angel, heard an audible voice, experienced anything that we would call supernatural or out of the ordinary. Nehemiah’s brothers come to him, report what’s going on in Jerusalem, Nehemiah feels holy discontent inside of him, he begins to mourn, fast and pray, and all of a sudden, there it is welling up inside of him – this vision, this idea, this still, small voice – you’ve got to go there and help your brethren. Don’t think that because**

**you’re not hearing voices or seeing visions that God isn’t talking to you. Start paying attention to the interior of your soul. Start paying attention to the burdens that are building up inside of you. The things that are knocking on the door to your heart. That is God’s Spirit, trying to get you to get with the program.**

*C. So what’s one way I’m going to build up my life this year?*

**PREPARATION** - *WHAT WILL BE NEEDED TO CARRY THIS OUT? (VSS. 13-15)*

*A. What did Nehemiah do first before talking to anyone?*

**He went and inspected the walls for himself. He needed to know if the ideas he had been working on back in Susa would actually work on the ground in Jerusalem.**

*B. How can ‘disaster do-gooders’ actually hinder helping?*

**By not preparing. They show up at disaster sites (like Haiti) but don’t bring enough food, don’t have their own shelter, have no transportation. They end up being just another refugee.**

*C. What do I need to do to get ready for what God wants me to work on this year?*

**PERSONNEL** - *WHO IS GOING TO BE INVOLVED OR IMPACTED BY THIS? (VS. 16)*

*A. Why else did Nehemiah wait before announcing his plan?*

**To get a feel for who these people were that he’d be working with. He needed time to sort out his players. OK, who are the power players here? Who are the movers and shakers? We’ve got our priests, our nobles, our officials – who though are the ones calling the shots. Who are the ones I have to get on board first. And who are the ones I have to watch out for?**

B. What is chapter 3 all about? Why did Nehemiah include it in his book?

It's a written record Nehemiah kept of which individuals and families who participated in the rebuilding of the city walls. He lists names, families, tribes, professions and then he describes which portion of the walls they worked on. It's a reflection of how much Nehemiah cared for these people whom he had never met before. How much he valued their individual contribution. If Nehemiah were just out for his own glory, just out to make a name for himself, this chapter wouldn't have been included here.

C. In my program for 2010, whose lives will be affected?

**PUBLICIZING & PROMOTING** - HOW WILL YOU COMMUNICATE THE VISION? (VSS. 17-18)

A. Everything that happens in life around us comes down to the power of **words**.

B. Good vision-casting has three parts:

1. You identify the **problem**.

a. How did Nehemiah do this part well?

First, he doesn't point fingers; he includes himself in the problem. Nehemiah doesn't say, "Look at the trouble you are in, your morons!" He says, "You see the trouble *we* are in." It's not me against you. It's us. We're in this together. You'll hear communication experts say all the time, When you're trying to get someone else to change, don't attack them. Show them how their behavior is affecting you. "Look, when you do this, it causing me to feel this way. Can we talk about this? This is affecting *us*." The second thing Nehemiah does well here is *he explains why the problem is a problem*. The people had gotten used to living in rubble. It no longer bothered them. Nehemiah reminds them of what they had forgotten. "Come, let us rebuild the wall of Jerusalem and we will no longer *be in disgrace*."

2. Provide a **solution**.

3. Give **support** for the solution.

C. How will I go about selling my program to others?

**PRICE** - HOW MUCH WILL THIS COST? (VS. 18A)

It is never unspiritual to ask the money questions. And you better have more to say than just, "Well, we just need to have faith. God will provide." Someone once said, *There is a fine line between faith and presumption*. The Bible is chock full of principles for using money well, and there's a reason why God put those principles there – that we should learn them and practice them. And if you ignore those principles and your life starts hemorrhaging financially, don't expect God to save your neck when you never listened to him in the first place. The financial piece is an important part of having financial peace.

**PROGRESS** - HOW WILL WE KNOW IF IT'S BEING DONE WELL? (VS. 18B)

This idea is imbedded in that last part of verse 18 where the people said, "Let us start rebuilding." So they began this good work." They *started* it. The work *began*. Implied in those words is the idea that this work will come in stages. There is a beginning, there will be a middle and there will be a finishing line. So how are we going to make sure we're staying on task? A good plan will always include ways to evaluate our progress. Benchmarks that will show us if we're staying on task, and guidelines for how to get back on course should we falter or lose our way.

**PROBLEMS** - WHAT OBSTACLES ARE LIKELY TO ARISE? (VSS. 19-20)

It's going to happen, dear friend. You set your life on a new course, you make a new plan for your life, you try to launch a new ministry or program, and suddenly you'll hear it, "What is this you are doing?" Squackers, resisters, mockers, protesters – some of them will be inside your head. Satan will certainly oppose you if your plan is to move in a new spiritual direction. Even family members and friends will question you if they don't understand.

**What do you do when that happens? Rivet your eyes on Jesus who birthed this program, this project within your heart. Look to your God for strength. That's what Nehemiah did. "I answered them by saying, "The God of heaven will give us success. We his servants will start rebuilding, but as for you, you have no share in Jerusalem or any claim or historic right to it." Get behind me, Satan. You run into God's arms, and talk those voices down.**