



10-15-17 Sermon Discussion Guide

“Obscure Names Recorded Forever”



Context

Our Christian Education theme for year is “Game On!” We are encouraging people to be fully engaged participants in the ministry of First Presbyterian Church. Throughout this year, the second Sunday of each month will be our “Game On Sundays.” We’ll explore how we play this game as Christians and what we need in order to play it well. This fall, in the remaining weeks, we are going through the Old Testament book of Nehemiah. This book describes events that take place in the Persian Empire and in Jerusalem during the 5th century BC. The nation of Israel was under the rule of the Persians. Nehemiah was an Israelite servant of the king, Artaxerxes. This story is important for us today because it shows the incredible impact one person can have when God gives them a passionate calling. In these coming weeks we’ll explore the calling of Nehemiah and how God used him to change history.

Checking In

Since the last time your group has met, how have each of you experienced God at work? What have you celebrated? What have you mourned?

Introduction

When have you been recognized for doing something great? How did it make you feel when people recognized you?

Discussing the Text – Nehemiah 3:1-32

1. If you had to summarize this chapter (with all its difficult names to pronounce...) how would you summarize it?
2. Why do you think Nehemiah would write a chapter like this? What’s the value in preserving a specific list like this? Why would it have been preserved all these years and kept in Scripture?
3. As you read through this long list, does it include people from all socioeconomic backgrounds? What might be the significance of this?

So what?

1. Do you believe people would have been proud to be included in this list? Why or why not?
2. What role does recognition play in the church? Should we publicly recognize people who serve or give within the church? What’s the benefit of this practice? What’s the downside?
3. When have you worked on a project with people from various backgrounds or ages? What did you learn from working on that project together? How did it challenge you and help you grow?
4. When have you worked on a project that would have impossible to complete alone? When have you seen the church work on projects that needs multiple people to complete it? How does working together help you experience the power of God at work in your life? When is it better to work on projects with other people as opposed to working alone? How do you know?
5. What is a project or passion God has given you that requires the help of other people? How are you making progress toward that goal? How could others help you advance it further?

Prayer

Share something you for which you are thankful and/or something for which you need support. Have the group pray for people they work with this week – whether in their church, their job, some type of non-profit, or within their family.