





HILLSIDE STUDENTS



Nehemiah | Week 1

CONNECT

  Set out snacks! Add new students to the groups app! Take Attendance!

  Play **Look Up Look Down!** Choose a person who will give out directions, then have everyone stand in a circle and begin by looking down. When the leader says “look up”, everyone must look up and look straight at another student (it might be straight ahead or sideways and even to the person next to them.) There must be no looking at the ground, above heads etc. If 2 people make eye contact, both people are out and must sit in the middle until everyone is out. The people who are out can help watch for others making eye-contact. When the leader says, “look down”, everyone must look down again until they are told to “look up”.

WATCH

  **Set up Discussion:** What is your automatic response when things go wrong? When you lose the game or fail the exam? Do you let your emotions get the best of you? Do you try to fix things on your own? What if there was actually a better way? Let's grab our Bibles, open up to Nehemiah, and jump into this week's video!

 **Pre-Video Question:** Have your group answer one or both questions below!

- If your life had background music, what song would play during your day?
- What would you do if you suddenly had the power to turn everything you touch into cheese?

Split up into smaller groups and navigate the discussion below:

READ + DISCUSS

- **Begin this week by working through the SOAP worksheet and spending time in prayer in your groups.**
- What stood out to you from the video?
- **Read Nehemiah 2:4-5.** What is the first thing Nehemiah does in this passage?
- What example does Nehemiah give us for how we should handle difficult decisions?
- What are some areas of your life where you could practice doing this?
- **Read Nehemiah 1:5, then read 1 John 5:14-15.** What does John say we can be confident in? Why?
- What are some ways we can know our prayers are aligned with God's will for our lives?
- What is the benefit of going to God *first* in difficult decisions or hard times?
- **Read Philippians 4:6-7 and Romans 12:12.** When should we go to God in prayer? What should we take to God in prayer?
- How are you going to do that this week?

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Our goal as Christians should be to become a people guided by prayer – we are to live lives in communion and communication with our Father. To be a people of prayer means to be people who come to God first and foremost in all things, and seek His will above our own desires or expectations. It's about being people who listen for His voice, align our ways with His ways, and model our thoughts after His thoughts.

In doing so, we can bring even our deepest sorrows and anxieties, like Nehemiah's, to Him, and exchange them for the fullness and peace that Jesus offers. Prayer allows us to set aside our worries in trusting that God is sovereign. Even when we are overwhelmed, He loves us and cares for us deeply, and He is infinitely greater than we could ever imagine. Let us find peace and rest in this holy dialogue of prayer, trusting that the One who spoke light into existence invites our prayers and hears them as a Father hears His children.

Leaders, start your discussion by having students go through the SOAP worksheet. Let your time be filled with prayer and encourage students to pray out loud throughout the night.

Nehemiah 2:4-5 ⁴ *The king said to me, "What is it you want?" Then I prayed to the God of heaven, ⁵ and I answered the king, "If it pleases the king and if your servant has found favor in his sight, let him send me to the city in Judah where my ancestors are buried so that I can rebuild it."*

Nehemiah 1:5 ³ *Then I said: "Lord, the God of heaven, the great and awesome God, who keeps his covenant of love with those who love him and keep his commandments,"*

1 John 5:14-15 ¹⁴ *This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. ¹⁵ And if we know that he hears us—whatever we ask—we know that we have what we asked of him."*

Philippians 4:6-7 ⁶ *Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. ⁷ And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."*

Romans 12:12 *"Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer."*

SOAP METHOD

Scripture: Read this passage.

⁹ “This, then, is how you should pray:

“Our Father in heaven,

hallowed be your name,

¹⁰ your kingdom come,

your will be done,

on earth as it is in heaven.

¹¹ Give us today our daily bread.

¹² And forgive us our debts,


as we also have forgiven our debtors.


¹³ And lead us not into temptation,


but deliver us from the evil one.’


Matthew 6:9–13 (NIV)

Observe: Look back at the verses you read and take notes about the following things.

 **Star:** Draw a star next to anything that sticks out to you from the passage.

 **Question Mark:** Draw a question mark next to anything that you have a question about in this passage.

 **Arrow:** Underline or draw an arrow to any word(s) that help you remember what you want to take away from this passage.

 **Recap:** In your own words, summarize the verses you just read.

Apply: Answer the questions below to help you apply this passage to your life.

What is one question I would want to ask God about this passage?

What is God trying to teach me or show me from these verses?

What am I going to do about it?

Pray: Write out a prayer to God based on what you just read!
