

People...are the Burden!

They said to me, "The remnant there in the province who survived the captivity are in great distress and reproach, and the wall of Jerusalem is broken down and its gates are burned with fire."

Nehemiah 1:3 (NASB)

Observation

There is nothing more dear to the heart of God than people. Nehemiah did not get a burden to build walls; he got a burden for "the remnant." The remnant was the group of Jewish people who lived in Jerusalem and were in great trouble because of the broken down walls. To Nehemiah, people were the burden. Without the walls to protect them, they struggled to be the blessing God intended them to be.

As believers, we can care about a lot of things, but people matter the most. As we look to God for a burden, we must always realize that the burden will be rooted in a love for people. As you open your eyes and heart and look around our city, our number one concern must be lost people. When we understand that our burden is for people, everything becomes really clear.

Why do we build, give, love and serve? Because people matter to God and they matter to us. We have thousands of reasons, and those reasons are people. God is calling us to stretch as a church, step out in faith and generosity, and provide space and ministries to reach more people. It is only when a burden for people has entered our hearts that we are able to sacrifice to see souls saved and lives changed. Nehemiah understood that whatever God was calling him to was because of a love for people. People are the burden!

Application

Take time to write down the names of four people you know or encounter at work or around town (ask, if you don't know their names) who you hope will be impacted by the Gospel and the ministries our church will be able to do as each of us fulfill our commitment to Open: Next Chapter. Take time each day to pray for these people and to remind yourself why you are doing what you are doing. Pray that God would deepen your burden for the people around you.

Write your names here
