

# Welcome to New Life !

We are very pleased you are here. It is an honor to have you worshipping with us today! This information is provided to help you feel welcome and "at home."

## Worship in Singing & Giving

- We leave how to worship up to you as an individual. During **singing** worship some people remain seated, some stand, others kneel, many clap, and some lift their hands. The outward expression is not the issue - it is what is in your heart that counts. Just relax and enjoy the presence of God.
- If you would like to receive personal **prayer** during worship with singing, you may go to one of the Prayer Teams located at the back of the sanctuary.
- Invitation is given for **tithes and offerings**. If you are our guest, please do not feel obligated to contribute when God's tithes and offerings are received.

## Worship in Sharing God's Love

Expressions of greeting and God's love are extended to all, especially to our guests.

## Worship in Meditating on God's Word

Teaching from the Bible for about 35 minutes.

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We encourage you to use our **staffed Nursery** [which has a private nursing room] and **Children's Churches** during the service. Please ask an usher for assistance in locating the various rooms.

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## PREPARE WELL, BUT TRUST IN GOD

*"Avoid extremes ~ seek balance"*

Nehemiah 4:13-18

- Life is **too short** for us to have to learn only from our own mistakes.
- Hebrews 11:4b NLT** "Although Abel is long dead, he still speaks to us by his example of faith."

## How to Live a More Balanced Life

- Let's allow Nehemiah to mentor us in how to live a more balanced life.

**Nehemiah 4:13-18, 20** "Therefore I stationed some of the people behind the lowest points of the wall at the exposed places, posting them by families, with their swords, spears and bows. After I looked things over, I stood up and said to the nobles, the officials and the rest of the people, "Don't be afraid of them. **Remember the Lord, who is great and awesome, and fight for your brothers, your sons and your daughters, your wives and your homes.**" When our enemies heard that we were aware of their plot and that God had frustrated it, we all returned to the wall, each to his own work. From that day on, half of my men did the work, while the other half were equipped with spears, shields, bows and armor. The officers posted themselves behind all the people of Judah who were building the wall. Those who carried materials did their work with one hand and held a weapon in the other, and each of the builders wore his sword at his side as he worked. But the man who sounded the trumpet stayed with me." v. 20 "... Our God will fight for us."

- Nehemiah didn't respond presumptively, expecting God to protect while they did nothing to prepare themselves.
- Rather, he essentially did what he could in preparing the people -- then told them not to trust in their military skills, but in God.

### 1. USE YOUR **RESOURCES**, BUT DON'T **TRUST** IN THEM: TRUST IN GOD

- We sinners are wired to trust in our abilities, not God.
- God wants us to use our resources to do His work, but not to trust in these resources.

**Proverbs 21:31 HCSB** "A horse is prepared for the day of battle, but victory comes from the Lord."

**Psalms 20:7** "Some trust in chariots and some in horses, but we trust in the name of the Lord our God."

## - Digging Deeper -

### “Prepare Well, But Trust in God”

For personal or small group study

Week of April 26, 2009

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• Did you know it is neither right nor scriptural to work merely to provide for ourselves and our family? Rather we are to work, because that is God’s plan for us.

**1 Thessalonians 4:11-12 NLT** “Make it your goal to . . . work with your hands, just as we instructed you before. Then people who are not Christians will respect the way you live, and you will not need to depend on others.”

• We should work to earn a living, but we should not trust in our work -- but in God.

• It is your best interest to learn not to trust in your resources when you use them, but to trust wholly in God.

• All our abilities and resources are fallible, but God is not!

## 2. EXHAUST YOURSELF **WORKING** IN HIS GRACE

**1 Corinthians 15:10 NLT** “whatever I am now, it is all because God poured out his special favor on me—and not without results. For I have worked harder than any of the other apostles; yet it was not I but God who was working through me by his grace.”

**Colossians 1:29 NLT** “... I work and struggle so hard, depending on Christ’s mighty power that works within me.”

• God takes it personally how we work, prepare, and manage our time and family. He scorns a poor work ethic.

**Colossians 3:23 NET** “Whatever you are doing, work at it with enthusiasm, as to the Lord and not for people.”

• Preparing well is not **contrary** to trusting Him. It is faith in action.

• Christian life is primarily not about an “either/or” option; it is a **“both/and”**. We prepare well AND trust fully in God to give us His grace, not only to do the preparation work, but also to bring about His glory through our hard work.

### What challenges are you facing in life?

Are you living in denial that you have a problem and expect God to do all the work for you?

### What does a balanced trust in God and hard work look like in your challenging situation?

Today, honestly lay your challenge before God in prayer, then openly discuss with an important person in your life how you can respond to that problem in a balanced way -- working hard, but trusting in God, and not your hard work.

Did you have an “AHA” moment from the sermon or sermon notes? If so, what was it and how has it impacted you?

### GROUP DISCUSSION or PERSONAL REFLECTION

1. Describe a time in your life when you went to an extreme instead of staying balanced. In retrospect, how would balance have been a better choice? Why is it better to normally avoid extremes and seek balance?
2. Read Nehemiah 4:13-20. What do we learn from Nehemiah’s experience about how to physically prepare for our enemies and our stressful situations, and yet totally trust God with all of our hearts? How did Nehemiah cooperate with God in this venture? How can you apply these principles to the struggles of your day to day life?
3. **“And/or”** has been described as the *“tyranny of the or”* versus the *“genius of the and.”* What do you think this means? When can both be the right way to view something? How can we take both viewpoints to the extreme? How does it apply to what you have just read in Nehemiah 4:13-20? Is this an either/or situation or a both/and situation? Why? How could Nehemiah have gotten himself into trouble by choosing the wrong viewpoint?
4. Why do you work or run a business? Is it just to provide for your family? What does scripture teach about our reason to work? Read Genesis 2:15. Was this a part of the curse? Why or why not? What does God say about why and how we are to work? What is the balance? [1 Thessalonians 4:11-12; Colossians 1:29; 3:17, 23; 1 Corinthians 15:10; Proverbs 24:27-28, 30-34]
5. Break into groups of two or three and discuss what a balanced trust in God and hard work look like in your own personal challenging situations? What part does, or can, knowing and applying God’s Word to your situation affect your ability to respond by being prepared and yet trusting God?