

Alley Rundown—September 4th-6th, 2021

Today's Bible Story: Makin' Plans (Nehemiah Plans to Rebuild the Wall) • *Nehemiah* 1:1–2:18

Today's Key Question: What around you needs to be done?

Today's Bottom Line: Don't wait for someone else to do what needs to be done.

Monthly Memory Verse: "Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord." (Colossians 3:23a NIV)

CG: *Dude Perfect Filler Videos*

"What's up, everyone! Great to see you all today!" It's September, and that means back to school! I know, I know, for some—or *most*—of you, the thought of school elicits a collective groan. Some of you have been virtual for over a year. Some of you haven't seen the inside of a real classroom in months. ZOOM or Google Classroom learning or maybe cramming a week's worth of homework on a Sunday night."

"I don't know about you, but one thing I learned throughout the past year or so is that I really missed people. I missed hanging out. I didn't realize what I had until it was totally gone!

"Another strange side effect of the pandemic was seeing things completely change because there weren't people to mess them up. For example, rivers, waterways, and canals started clearing up, because there weren't people or boats to kick up debris. Wildlife started returning to areas where they were scared off by people and machinery. Sea life flourished because people weren't out fishing. Air pollution was down worldwide because factories were shut down and people weren't driving. And the craziest thing? According to manufacturing.net, '*Seismic noise fell by as much as 50 percent in some areas. Reduced travel and industrial activity mean fewer vibrations in the Earth's crust. With less noise, scientists could identify and predict events like earthquakes more accurately.*' Ridiculously enough, all of that sheltering in place did some work to clean up the planet."

"But before the pandemic, things didn't look so rosy. Let me ask you—and I want you to be honest—how many of you would just walk by a cup, or a napkin, or trash on the ground or in your own house because it's not yours to throw away? (*Pause for hands up or a few responses.*)"

"What about a shopping cart you find in the middle of a parking lot? Or a playground that is falling apart? What kinds of things would you walk right past because you think, 'Eh, they've got people who take care of that stuff. It's not my problem.'"

"I'm sure there are lots of times when we've all thought to ourselves, *they'll* take care of it. And whatever we happen to be seeing at the time, that can be classified as an S.E.P. (*Pause.*) That stands for 'Someone Else's Problem.' Someone else, some 'they,' will handle it. It's not yours, after all. You didn't make the mess. Not your fault. It's an S.E.P."

"Let's be honest. We can be pretty selfish sometimes. We care about our own needs and don't even see what might need to be done around us. Dishes in the sink, a pile of laundry, that stuff outside your room or on the stairs that's been literally sitting there for months and you step over it every time—you see it but do nothing. Sometimes, we might even see what needs to be done but assume that someone else will take care of it. It's not our job, right? '*They'll* take care of it."

(beat) It's an S.E.P."

"But what if *you* were 'they'? Hear me out. What if *you* were the one who saw something and did something about it? What if *you* didn't wait for someone else to take care of the problem staring you in the face? Could you even make a difference? Could one person actually make things better?"

"These are great questions, and they're at the heart of the Bible story this morning. It's so important to God's One Big Story that this guy even has a book in the Bible named after him. His name is Nehemiah; let's check it out with the help of this week's Episode!"

CG: Lesson Video (Runtime: 16:00)

"I think one of the coolest things about this story is how God was with Nehemiah the whole time. He gave him the right words to say to the King. He helped him across the hard journey to get to Jerusalem. He moved on the hearts of the officials and the people of Jerusalem to inspire them to help with the wall."

"And God was going to help Nehemiah create a plan to make it all happen. God was with Nehemiah, and He was helping him accomplish a humungous task. God's with us, too, and He can do big things through us just the same!"

"The first step? Noticing that something needs to be done. The next step? Doing something about it. Showing initiative means getting things done, not waiting for someone else to do it. That's what Nehemiah did when he started rebuilding the wall around Jerusalem. Don't just see what needs to be done, *do* something about it. When Jesus saw a need, He did something about it. He healed people who needed healing. He taught people who needed to learn. And Jesus took care of our greatest need when He died on the cross for our sins."

"See a need, fill a need. Jesus did it for us. Now we can do it for others! As you head to your Small Groups, think about this question:

Slide: Key Question

"What around you needs to be done? What projects could you do that would fix a problem? What things, like the wall, are laying in ruins that you could take care of? You'll dig deeper in your Small Group, but before we head there, let's pray and ask God to show us things that maybe we haven't noticed before."

Lead group in a prayer related to what they just heard. After prayer, lead offering then dismiss kids to Small Group.

OFFERING:

Here in Parkview Kids, we bring our offering each week to help support (your Campus Child) learn more about Jesus just like we do here in Parkview Kids. Here's a picture of (your Campus Child)! If you brought your offering you can bring it up now as we dismiss to Small Groups.

Orland Park: Michael and Valeri, New Lenox: Daniel, Homer Glen: Victor