



People of faith do not settle for the way things are. They pursue the way things ought to be. Using the book of Nehemiah as an example, this series will explore what it means for The Hills Church to commit to a vision of the future that blesses nations and generations.

These questions are designed to extend the impact of the weekend message. Use them to go deeper in your personal study time, with your family and/or with a group.

1 Rick began by pointing out that “Forgotten pledges can lead to forsaken visions and forfeited futures.” How have you experienced that to be true personally and/or in life in general?

2 THROUGH PLEDGING... *Completing the wall just created the environment for his real goal—rebuilding the spiritual life of the Jewish people. Read Nehemiah 7:1-2.* What stands out to you the most about the first two things Nehemiah did (*put godly leadership in place and ensured the return of public worship*)? Why is that significant for them and what can we learn from it for today?

3 The future you build depends on where you pledge your allegiance. *Your destiny is determined by your devotions.* How was that the case based on Israel's past? How have you seen this play out in our your life? Follow up: **Read Nehemiah 9:38.** What stands out to you the most from what Nehemiah does here based on the context of chapters 8-10? Why was this such an important thing for them to do?

4 THREE PLEDGES #1 – To be loyal to the Word of God. *Nehemiah knew a restored wall could not protect a people who ignored scripture. Read Nehemiah 8:1-9.* What strikes you the most about how the different postures they had in response to hearing scripture? Why were they so willing to listen and so responsive to what they heard? Follow up: When have you recently been affected or convicted by scripture? What is one thing you need to change about how you connect with God through His Word?

5 THREE PLEDGES #2 – To be honest about our need for grace. *Awareness of the Word brought an increased awareness of sin. Read Nehemiah 9:1-3, 30-34.* Why do you think they grieved when they heard the law of God? Why does their confession include admitting the sins of their ancestors (see verse 2)? Follow up: In what ways are personal and corporate confession important to our relationship to God and other people?

6 THREE PLEDGES #3 – To be obedient when it's radical and costly. *The people began to realize that their future didn't depend on keeping up a wall but on keeping in God's will. Read Nehemiah 10:28-29.* Why was it important for them to separate themselves from the surrounding people? How about for us? Follow up: **Read Nehemiah 10:30-39.** What stands out to you the most about some of the promises they made? What is one promise you need to make that would be radical and costly today?

7 Rick closed by challenging us to “**Remember your pledge of allegiance to Jesus!**” Why is it important for us to see that pledging allegiance to Jesus is *more than* accepting a “get me into heaven” transaction... it is about pursuing a “how to live on earth” transformation? Why does “Transaction Christianity” not work? Follow up: With this in mind, what is one practical change you need to make to pursue transformation?

