



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 “*Building a future with God is not something to be done dutifully; it is something to be done joyfully.*” Are you more prone to do things “dutifully” or “joyfully”? What have you learned about yourself with that in mind?

2 A WALL IS DEDICATED! *Nehemiah was not ready to dedicate the wall until he had challenged the people to rededicate their lives to God.* **Read Nehemiah 12:27-31, 38-43.** What stands out to you the most from this chapter? Follow up: What was the source of their joy and what impact did it have?

3 We don’t celebrate the vision; we celebrate the God of the vision. *The future we can anticipate depends on who or what we celebrate.* Why was worship the appropriate and best response to the completion of this massive project? Follow up: Rick mentioned that “*If we pursue our vision dutifully it will get exhausting. If we pursue our vision joyfully it can be exhilarating even though it will be hard.*” What are some practical things we can do to make sure our pursuit of the vision is done joyfully and not dutifully?

4 WHEN GOD IS CELEBRATED... holiness is a joy. *God wants the vessels that wear His name to be clean.* Why is that true and what evidence of this do you find in Nehemiah’s story? Follow up: **Read Ephesians 1:4.** Why is being holy so important? How has pursuing a life of holiness brought joy to your life and to others?

5 WHEN GOD IS CELEBRATED... worship is a joy. *Nehemiah did not think worship was something to be endured; he thought worship was something to be enjoyed.* How has that been your experience? Follow up: **Read Romans 14:17.** What is the connection between the Kingdom of God and joy? Why is that important to remember?

6 WHEN GOD IS CELEBRATED... sacrifice is a joy. *Nehemiah knew what it would take to keep the party going. Building a future is no fun when there are no funds.* **Read Nehemiah 12:43-47.** What is one thing you notice about how the people responded in these verses? Follow up: **Read 2 Corinthians 8:2-3.** In what ways do generosity and joy go together? How should this inspire us to give? **Read Matthew 13:44** and reflect on these 2 questions Rick asked: *Do we believe in the future of the kingdom of God more than anything else we could build? Does our joy back up what we say we believe?*

7 Rick closed by reminding us that “**The joy of the Lord is our witness to nations and generations.**” *Nehemiah wanted their celebration to be a proclamation.* What would it look like practically for people to hear our joy? Close by reading **Romans 15:13** as a prayer as you continue to **Ask for Nations and Generations.** Note: you can learn more about Harvest Weekend here: thehills.org/harvest.

