

ST. BARNABAS CHURCH, SWANLAND - SMALL GROUP NOTES

Sharing Christ through friendship

W/c Feb 11th 2018 - Time to rebuild – lessons from Nehemiah: (3) – Opposition.

Bible readings: Nehemiah 4 and Luke 14:28-33

Welcome/ icebreaker	Share your experiences of dealing with local planning authorities (for yourself or a neighbour's property)
Worship	<i>Suggestions:</i> 67 Come and see; 718 Filled with compassion; 859 I will worship; 1725 Beneath the cross of Jesus; 1612 When the road; 1661 You chose the cross.
Word (refs.↓)	NB This Sunday's 10.45am sermon - and the sermon from 28 January - are now available to download at www.stbchurch.org.uk (click on the 'downloads' tab)
Luke 14:28-33	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What has been the most costly thing to you about following Jesus, either in your whole life or in the last 12 months. (If you can't think of anything, what do you think God might be saying about your decision to follow Jesus?)
Nehemiah 4 (all of it if possible, or at least vv.1-17)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make sure all know about this period of Israel's history (see last week's notes): • Nehemiah and the people building the wall faced opposition on four fronts in this chapter: can you identify what was being said in each case (vv.1-3; 7-8; 10; 11-12). In summary they were: A. Ridicule; B. Intimidation; C. Discouragement; D. Outright attack (threatened) • <u>A. Ridicule vv.1-6</u> How does Sanballat ridicule the Jews effort to rebuild the walls? How does Nehemiah respond (vv.4-6) What sorts of ridicule do Christians face today? What have you faced personally or are aware of others having to face? How did Jesus respond to mockery and incredulity (eg Matthew 27:27-31) • <u>B. Intimidation vv.7-9</u> What is the opposition this time and how is it dealt with? What examples can you give of people 'stirring up trouble' against Christians? Does 'Keep calm and carry on' work? (or 'Keep calm, pray and carry on?') • <u>C. Discouragement v.10</u> Even Nehemiah was not immune from opposition from within the people of God. His response isn't recorded: how do you <u>think</u> he dealt with it? What is the best way to deal with people within the church trying to discourage one another? • <u>D. Outright attack (threatened) v.11-23</u> (note the practical action taken, v.16-23) Does Nehemiah's approach seem right here? Is it always right under the threat of 'enemy attack' to stand firm in prayer and to take practical steps to counter it?
Witness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pray – for your mission link(s) and those with needs within your group. • What can you do this week to 'stand firm' for Jesus in prayer and practical action? • Start thinking about ways you might mark Holy Week and Easter together as a group