PASTOR RICK'S Daily Hope

MAKING A PLAN TO IMPROVE YOUR LIFE

Building A Better Future
Rick Warren

Principle 1 – Get dissatisfied with your current situation! Get a *"Burden."*

Principle 2 – Start with what needs changing inside me! "*My Soul."*

Principle 3 – Write down a simple plan to get started.

WHY SHOULD I MAKE PLANS?

1. BECAUSE _____

"'I know the plans I have for you,' says the Lord, 'plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you a hope and a future.'" Jeremiah 29:11 (NIV)

"God is not a God of disorder." 1 Corinthians 14:33 (NIV)

2. BECAUSE _____

". . . Stick to the path and be safe."" Proverbs 4:26 (TLB)

"Everything should be done in a fitting and orderly way."
1 Corinthians 14:40 (NIV)

3. _____

"Live life with a due sense of responsibility, not as those who do not know the meaning of life but as those who do. Make the best use of your time . . . Don't be vague but grasp firmly what you know to be the will of the Lord."
Ephesians 5:15-17 (PHILLIPS)

NEHEMIAH'S 7 STEP PLANNING MODEL

Nehemiah 1:11-2:9

STEP 1: _____

"O Lord, please hear my prayer! Listen to the prayers of those of us who delight in honoring you. . . ." Nehemiah 1:11 (NLT)

". . . Give your servant success today by granting him favor in the presence of this man. . . ." Nehemiah 1:11 (NIV)

". . . In those days I was the king's cup-bearer." Nehemiah 1:11 (NLT)
"If you want to know what God wants you to do, ask him, and he will gladly tell you, for he is always ready to give a bountiful supply of wisdom to all who ask him."
James 1:5 (TLB)

STEP 2: _____

"Four months later, when Emperor Artaxerxes was dining, I took the wine to him."
Nehemiah 2:1 (GNT)

"A wise man thinks ahead; a fool doesn't and even brags about it!"
Proverbs 13:16 (TLB)

STEP 3: _____

"Artaxerxes was king. He wanted some wine, so I took some and gave it to the king. I had not been sad in his presence before. So the king said, 'Why does your face look sad even though you are not sick? Your heart must be sad.' Then I was very afraid." Nehemiah 2:1-2 (NCV)

WHAT NEHEMIAH DID WITH HIS FEAR:

1. HE _____

"I was badly frightened, but I replied, 'Sir, why shouldn't I be sad? For the city where my ancestors are buried is in ruins, and the gates have been burned down.'" Nehemiah 2:2-3 (TLB)

2. HE _____

"The king said to me, 'What is it you want?' Then I prayed to the God of heaven."
Nehemiah 2:4 (NIV)

STEP 4: _____

"I answered the king, 'If it pleases the king and if your servant has found favor in his sight, let him send me to the city in Judah where my ancestors are buried so that I can rebuild it.'" Nehemiah 2:5 (NIV)

STEP 5: _____

"Then the king, with the queen sitting beside him, asked me, 'How long will your journey take, and when will you get back?' It pleased the king to send me; so I set a time." Nehemiah 2:6 (NIV)

STEP 6: _____

"I asked him to grant me the favor of giving me letters to the governors of West-of-Euphrates Province, instructing them to let me travel to Judah. I asked also for a letter to Asaph, keeper of the royal forests, instructing him to supply me with timber for the gates of the fort that guards the Temple, for the city walls, and for the house I was to live in." Nehemiah 2:7-8 (GNT)

"A sensible man watches for problems ahead and prepares to meet them."
Proverbs 27:12 (TLB)

Jesus: “If you do not carry your own cross and follow me, you cannot be my disciple. But don’t begin until you count the cost. For who would begin construction of a building without first calculating the cost to see if there is enough money to finish it?” Luke 14:27-28 (NLT)

STEP 7: _____

"The emperor gave me all I asked for, because God was with me."
Nehemiah 2:8 (GNT)

We may make our plans, but God has the last word." Proverbs 16:1 (GNT)

"Instead, you ought to say, 'If it is the Lord’s will, we will live and do this or that.'"
James 4:15 (NIV)

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ENLISTING SUPPORT FOR YOUR DREAM

Building a Better Future
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Nehemiah 2:8-20

- **NO DREAM IS BUILT WITHOUT _____**
  "I asked the King to help me by giving me permits for safe travel through the territories on my journey to Jerusalem . . . I also asked him to supply the timber for building from his royal forest . . . The king gave me everything I asked for because God's gracious favor was with me . . . The King even sent army officers and soldiers on horses to escort me!" Nehemiah 2:7-9

- **NO DREAM IS BUILT WITHOUT _____**
  "Now when Sanballat and Tobiah heard I was coming to assist the welfare of the Jews in Jerusalem, they became very upset and disturbed."
  Nehemiah 2:10

HOW TO GAIN SUPPORT FOR YOUR DREAM

1. _____
   "There is a right time and right way to do everything." Ecclesiastes 8:6 (GNT)

   "When I arrived in Jerusalem, I stayed quiet for 3 days." Nehemiah 2:11

   ***While Waiting*: Reenergize! Pray! Observe! Learn!**

   Build curiosity!

2. **MAKE SURE** _____
   "It's stupid and shameful to decide before knowing the facts!" Proverbs 18:13

   "I set out during the night with a few men. I had not told anyone what my God had put in my heart to do for Jerusalem. There were no mounts with me except the one I was riding on. By night I went out through the Valley Gate toward the Dragon well and the Dung Gate, to inspect all the broken-down walls of Jerusalem, and all the city gates which had been destroyed by fire." Nehemiah 2:12-13

   "Then I moved on to the Fountain Gate and the King's Pool, but there was so much rubble there wasn't enough room for my donkey to get through; so I went up the valley by night, examining the wall. Finally, I turned back and reentered at the Valley Gate." Nehemiah 2:14-15

3. _____
   "There is a time to be silent and a time to speak." Ecclesiastes 3:7

   "The local officials did not know where I'd gone or what I was doing, because I had said nothing yet to the people or priests or nobles or officials or anyone else who would be doing the work." Nehemiah 2:16

   "I had not told anyone what my God had put in my heart to do." Nehemiah 2:12

WHAT TO SAY TO ENLIST SUPPORT

4. _____
   "Now I said to them, 'You can see the trouble we are in . . . Come, let us rebuild.'"
   Nehemiah 2:17

5. **PAINT A PICTURE** _____
   "I told them, 'You can see the trouble we're in: Jerusalem lies in ruins and our gates have been destroyed with fire!'" Nehemiah 2:17

6. **APPEAL** _____
   "Let us rebuild the wall of Jerusalem, so we will no longer be living in disgrace." Nehemiah 2:17c "end our humiliation" "no longer ashamed"

7. _____
   "I also told them about how God had been with me and graciously helped me in my conversation with the king in gaining his support." Nehemiah 2:18

   "They all responded, 'Let us start rebuilding now!' So together they began this good work." Nehemiah 2:18

8. _____
   "Come, let us rebuild the wall now!" Nehemiah 2:17

9. _____
   "When Sanballat, Tobiah, and Geshem heard this they mocked and ridiculed us. 'What do you think you are doing?' they asked. 'Are you rebelling against the king?' I simply replied, 'The God of heaven will give us success! We're his servants and we will rebuild this city but you have no claim or right to it.'" Nehemiah 2:19-20

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GETTING PEOPLE TO WORK TOGETHER

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Nehemiah 3:1-32

Key words in this chapter (different translations)

Built – 30 times **rebuilt – 29 times**

Repaired – 31 times **worked – 24 times**

1. DIVIDE THE DREAM _____

Key Phrase: *"Section" is used 26 times (CEV)—"a smaller part of the whole"*

"The next section was built by . . ." Neb. 3:2, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 11, etc.

2. LET OTHERS _____ OF THE DREAM

Key Phrase: *"By his own house" used 6 times*

"Jedaiah repaired the wall beside his own house." Nehemiah 3:10

"Hashabiah built the wall in his own district." Nehemiah 3:17

"Each priest made repairs near his own house." Nehemiah 3:28

"Benjamin and Azariah repaired the wall by their own homes." Nehemiah 3:23

3. ORGANIZE AROUND _____

Nehemiah: *"I posted them by families."* Nehemiah 4:13

"Eliashib and his fellow priests rebuilt the Sheep Gate." Nehemiah 3:1

"The men of Jericho built the next section." Nehemiah 3:2

"The sons of Hassenaah built the Fish Gate." Nehemiah 3:3

"Shallum and his daughters built the next section." Nehemiah 3:12

"The goldsmiths and the merchants built another section." Nehemiah 3:32

4. DEVELOP _____

Key Phrase: *"Next to them" is used 21 times in* Neh. 3

18 different teams are mentioned

"We are partners working together for God." 1 Corinthians 3:9 (GNT)

58 *"one anothers"* in the New Testament!

Two can accomplish more than twice as much as one . . ."
Ecclesiastes 4:9 (TLB)

"Because they get more done by working together. If one falls down, the other can help him up." Ecclesiastes 4:9-10 (NCV)

"Though one person may be overpowered by another, two people can resist one opponent." Ecclesiastes 4:12 (GW)

"A rope made of three cords is hard to break." Ecclesiastes 4:12 (GNT)

"Above all else, you must live in a way that brings honor to the good news about Christ. . . . I will know that you are working together and are struggling side by side to get others to believe the good news." Philippians 1:27 (CEV)

5. LOVE EVERYONE, BUT _____

Nehemiah wasn't discouraged by those who would not help.

"The next section was to be repaired by the men of Tekoa, but their town leaders refused to do the hard work they were assigned." Nehemiah 3:5 (CEV)

- **WASTE NO TIME** _____

  "So why do you judge your brothers or sisters in Christ? And why do you think you are better than they are?." Romans 14:10 (NCV)

  "Remember, each of us will stand personally before the Judgment Seat of God."
  Romans 14:10 (TLB)

  "Each of us will give a personal account to God." Romans 14:12 (NLT)

  "Stop judging each other." Romans 14:13 (NCV)

- **REMEMBER GOD WILL** _____

  "The faithless will be fully repaid for their ways, and the good rewarded for theirs." Proverbs 14:14 (NIV)

  "The generous will themselves be blessed." Proverbs 22:9 (NIV)

6. NEVER STOP _____

Paul: *"I never stop being grateful for you, as I mention you in my prayers."*
Ephesians 1:16 (CEV)

WHAT TO APPRECIATE

- **Recognize** _____

  71 individuals are named in Neh. 3

- **RECOGNIZE** _____
  “They laid beams and put the doors, and bolts and bars in place.” Nehemiah 3:6

- **RECOGNIZE** _____
  "Baruch . . . zealously repaired another section." Nehemiah 3:20 (NIV)

- **RECOGNIZE** _____
  "Meremoth . . . repaired the next section of wall." Nehemiah 3:4 (NLT)

  "Meremoth . . . made repairs on a section from the door of Eliashib's house to the end of Eliashib's house." Nehemiah 3:21 (GW)

  "Brothers and sisters . . . Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your work in the Lord is never wasted."
  1 Corinthians 15:58 (NCV)

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HOW TO HANDLE INSULTS AND RIDICULE

Building a Better Future
Rick Warren

Nehemiah 4:1-23

5 Ways the Opposition Tried to Stop Nehemiah's Work

- **They used RAGE. Neh. 4:1, 7**
- **They used RIDICULE. Neh. 4:1-5**
- **They used RACISM AND RESENTMENT. Neh. 4:1-2, 12**
- **They used RESISTANCE. Neh. 4:7-8, 10**
- **They used RUMORS. Neh. 4:12**

HOW PEOPLE WILL TRY TO STOP YOU WITH RIDICULE

1. **PEOPLE WILL** _____

"When Sanballat heard we were rebuilding the wall, he became very angry. He flew into a rage and ridiculed the Jews. To his allies and the military of Samaria he said, 'What does this pathetic bunch of feeble Jews think they're doing?'"
Nehemiah 4:1-2

2. **PEOPLE WILL** _____

"They said, 'What are you doing? Are you rebelling against the king?'"
Nehemiah 2:19 (NCV)

"Are they going to restore it for themselves?." Nehemiah 4:2 (NASB)

3. **PEOPLE WILL** _____

"When Sanballat the Horonite, and Tobiah the Ammonite, and Geshem the Arab heard of our plan, they made fun of us and laughed at us."
Nehemiah 2:19 (NCV)

"When Sanballat, Tobiah, the Arabs, the Ammonites, and the Ashdodites heard the repairs had started, they were very angry and plotted together . . . to stir up trouble against us." Nehemiah 4:7-8

4. **PEOPLE WILL** _____

"Those who want to hurt me plan trouble for me; All day long they think up lies . . . They repay me with evil for the good I've done, and they lie about me because I try to do good." Psalm 38:12, 20 (NCV)

"Do they think they'll finish the wall in a day and then offer sacrifices to their god?"
Nehemiah 4:2

5. **PEOPLE WILL** _____

"Do they think they can bring burned up stones back to life from those heaps of rubble and rubbish?" Nehemiah 4:2d

"Then Tobiah, who was standing close by, joined in: 'Right! What they're building is so weak, it will collapse if just a fox tries to walk on that wall!'" Nehemiah 4:3

HOW SHOULD I HANDLE RIDICULE AND INSULTS?

1. _____

"So I prayed: 'God, you can hear how they are making fun of us. Let their insults just fall back on their own heads and may they themselves become captives in a foreign land! Don't ignore their guilt, because they have thrown insults in the face of the builders." Nehemiah 4:4-5

2. **CONFIDENTLY STATE** _____

"I answered them, 'The God of heaven will give us success. We are his servants and we will start rebuilding!'" Nehemiah 2:20 (NIV)

"Arrogant people mock me cruelly, but I do not turn away from your teachings!"
Psalm 119:51 (GW)

3. **BE BETTER** _____

"Dear friends, never avenge yourselves. Leave that to God. For it is written, 'I'll take vengeance and I'll repay those who deserve it,' says the Lord. Instead, do what the Scriptures say: 'If your enemies are hungry, feed them. If they're thirsty, give them something to drink, and they'll be ashamed of what they've done to you.' Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good." Romans 12:19-21 (NLT/NIV)

"Don't do something wrong to repay a wrong, and don't insult back to repay an insult. Instead repay it with a blessing. You're called to do this so that you'll get a blessing!" 1 Peter 3:9 (NCV)

4. **MAKE GOD MY DEFENDER** _____
Give the first 10% of my income back to God and claim his promise!

God: *"Bring the best of the firstfruit of your harvest to the House of the Lord . . . If you do what I say, I'll be an enemy to your enemies and I'll oppose those who oppose you!"* Exodus 23:19, 22 (NIV)

5. REMEMBER _____

"Blessed are you when people insult you, or persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. Be glad because your reward will be great in heaven!" Matthew 5:11-12 (NIV)

"So, my dear brothers and sisters, be strong and steady, always enthusiastic about the Lord's work, for you know that nothing you do in service for the Lord is ever worthless!" 1 Corinthians 15:58

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WHEN YOU FEEL LIKE GIVING UP

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"The people quickly rebuilt the first half of the wall around Jerusalem until it reached half its height, because they worked hard with all their heart. But then (our enemies) heard how Jerusalem's walls were being repaired and all the gaps were being closed. They became very angry and plotted to attack Jerusalem together and create some confusion to stop the progress. So we prayed to God for protection and posted 24 hour guards to protect the workers. But then people began to complain. They said, 'We're tired and worn out! Besides that there's so much rubble and trash to be removed. We now realize that we cannot finish this wall.' Also our enemies are now threatening us. They're saying, 'Before you know it or even see us, we'll be among you to kill you and end your work!' Then, those who lived closest to our enemies kept reporting—over ten times—that our enemies kept saying, 'We're going to attack you from every direction!'"
Nehemiah 4:6-12

4 CAUSES OF DISCOURAGEMENT

1. _____

"Then the people of Judah began to complain that the workers were becoming tired." Nehemiah 4:10 (NLT)

"Never forget how the Amalekites . . . attacked you when you were exhausted and weary, and they struck down those who began to lag behind."
Deuteronomy 25:17-18 (NLT)

2. _____

"Besides that, there was so much rubble and trash to be removed."
Nehemiah 4:10

3. _____

"We now realize that we cannot finish this wall!" Nehemiah 4:10 (NAB)

"We'll never be able to finish it!" Nehemiah 4:10

4. _____

"Also our enemies are now threatening us. They're saying, 'Before you know it or even see us, we'll be among you to kill you and end your work!'" Nehemiah 4:11

"Then, those who lived closest to our enemies kept reporting—over ten times—that our enemies kept saying, 'We're going to attack you from every direction!'"
Nehemiah 4:12

HOW CAN I DEFEAT DISCOURAGEMENT?

1. _____

"You made my body Lord—now give me sense to heed your laws."
Psalm 119:73 (TLB)

"It is useless for you to work so hard from early morning until late at night, anxiously working for food to eat; for God gives rest to his loved ones."
Psalm 127:2 (NLT)

2. _____

"So I stationed armed guards at the most vulnerable points of the wall and at the most exposed places I assigned people by families to protect each other with their swords, spears, and bows." Nehemiah 4:13 (MSG)

"Some people have gotten out of the habit of meeting together with other believers, but we must not do that! Instead, we should keep on encouraging each other."
Hebrews 10:25 (CEV)

3. _____

"Aware of their anxiety, I stood up and said to the nobles, officials, and the rest of the people, 'Do not be afraid of the enemy! Remember the LORD who is great and awe-inspiring!'" Nehemiah 4:14 (NJB)

"I'm completely discouraged, so revive me with your Word." Psalm 119:25 (NLT)

4. _____

(I also told them) ". . . you must fight for your brothers, and your sons, and your daughters, and your wives and homes!" Nehemiah 4:14

"When I am ready to give up, he knows what I should do." Psalm 142:3 (GNT)

"God gives power to those who are tired and worn out, and he offers strength to the weak . . . Those who wait on the LORD will find new strength."
Isaiah 40:29, 31 (NLT)

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HOW TO EARN THE RESPECT OF OTHERS

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Nehemiah 5:1-13

"You'll earn the trust and respect of others if you work for good."
Proverbs 14:22 (GNT)

"About this time, some of the people, both men and their wives, began to complain loudly against their Jewish brothers." Nehemiah 5:1

CAUSES OF CONFLICT (Neh. 5:1-5)

1. WHEN _____
"Some said, 'We all have large families, and we need more grain to eat to stay alive.'" Nehemiah 5:2 (GNT)

2. WHEN WE FEEL _____
"Others said, 'We've had to sell our fields, and vineyard, and houses just to keep from starving during this famine.'" Nehemiah 5:3 (GNT)

3. WHEN LEADERS _____
"Others said, 'We've had to borrow money to pay the king's taxes.'"
Nehemiah 5:4 (GNT)

4. WHEN WE FEEL _____

_____

"Although we're the same flesh and blood as our wealthier countrymen and though our children are as good as theirs, we're having to sell our children into slavery! Some of our daughters have already been enslaved, but we're powerless to do anything about it because our fields and vineyards belong to others!"
Nehemiah 5:5 (NIV)

WAYS TO EARN THE RESPECT OF OTHERS (Neh. 5:6-13)

1. _____ OF OTHERS
Nehemiah: *"When I heard their complaints and their charges, I was very angry."*
Nehemiah 5:6 (NIV)

"Be angry, and yet do not sin." Ephesians 4:26 (NASB)

"Jesus was angry as he looked at the people, for he was deeply disturbed by their indifference to human need . . ." Mark 3:5 (NCV/lb)

2. _____ BEFORE I SPEAK UP
Nehemiah: *"Then after I thought it over."* Nehemiah 5:7 (GW)

"I pondered the charges in my mind." Nehemiah 5:7 (NIV)

"After some deliberation." Nehemiah 5:7 (NJB)

"The godly think before speaking, but wicked people quickly spout evil words without ever thinking." Proverbs 15:28 (NLT)

"Remember this: You must always be quick to listen, but slow to speak and slow to become angry, because human anger cannot accomplish the righteousness of God." James 1:19-20 (GNT)

3. TRY TO RESOLVE CONFLICTS _____
Nehemiah: *"After thinking about the problem, I confronted the leaders and officials, challenging their actions. I said, 'You are oppressing your own countrymen with interest!' then I called a public assembly to deal with the problem."* Nehemiah 5:7 (GNT)

Jesus: *"If your brother sins against you, go to him privately to point out his fault . . . If he doesn't listen to you, then go back with one or two witnesses . . . If he still refuses to listen, go public with the whole church."* Matthew 18:15-17 (GNT)

4. APPEAL TO _____
Nehemiah's Challenge: Neh. 5:8-13

"What you're doing is wrong! We must honor God by the way we live so that Gentiles can't find fault with us." Nehemiah 5:9 (CEV)

"If your goals are good, you'll be respected." Proverbs 11:27 (GNT)

5. DO EVERYTHING WITH _____
Nehemiah: *"For the 12 years I was governor, neither I, nor my team, ate the food entitled to the governor. The previous governors before me had placed heavy burdens of taxation on the people to pay for this. Even their assistants took advantage of people but I never did that. Out of reverence for God I did not act like they did. Instead, I devoted myself to working on the wall and so did all my men. None of us acquired any land. Also, I paid the cost of 150 people who daily ate at my table along with many foreign guests . . . In spite of all this, I never demanded what was due to me as governor, because the people were having a difficult time. So, remember me with favor, O my God, for all I've done for these people."* Nehemiah 5:14-19

"If you're humble, you will be respected." Proverbs 29:23 (GNT)

"Whoever gives generously to the needy and shows kindness will be powerful and respected." Psalm 112:9 (GNT)

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