

Next to Them

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[0:00] When we finished chapter 2 last week, we looked at Nehemiah's arrival in Jerusalem.

! For three days, Nehemiah kept the local people wondering while he took time to study the situation! and formalize his plan. The local people were some of the same people who'd failed at rebuilding the wall 13 years earlier. When Nehemiah finally told the people about his plan, he built support by including himself with the people. Listen to Nehemiah 2.17. We hit it a couple of times last week, but all of the personal pronouns in this direct quote from Nehemiah are plural.

2.17 is where Nehemiah said, You see the distress that we are in, how Jerusalem lies waste, and its gates are burned with fire. Come and let us build the wall of Jerusalem, that we may no longer be a reproach.

Nehemiah then told the people about how God has blessed his efforts and about how King Artaxerxes had approved the rebuilding. Nehemiah's address had the desired effect. Look at 2.18. Nehemiah wrote, And I told them of the hand of my God which had been good upon me, and also of the king's words that he had spoken to me. So they said, Let us rise up and build. Then they set their hands to this good work. The last part of verse 18 is what sets the scene for chapter 3. So they said, Let us rise up and build. Then they set their hands to this good work. Chapter 3 tells us who the people were and how these people did the good work. As we look through the verses, keep an eye out for how often you see the phrases, Next to him, next to them, after him, or after them. Each person or group of people accomplished a certain task. Some accomplished more than one task. But the people did those things working side by side with the person next to them. At first glance, teachers, and this teacher included, can be tempted to skip chapter 3. Initially, the chapter simply appears to be a long list of unpronounceable names, followed soon after by another long list of unpronounceable names.

And between those lists of names, we have a seemingly dry narrative about what each person or group rebuilt. And that pattern continues for 32 verses. You know, though, that we are a church committed to sound doctrine, and our doctrinal statement on Scripture says we teach that the Bible is inspired in every word. We cite 2 Timothy 3.16 to support that. 2 Timothy 3.16 says, All Scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness. Then Romans 15.4 says, For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope. If we really believe what we teach about Scripture, skipping an entire chapter seems to be wrong. We need to study chapter 3 so that we might have hope. And if you get nothing else out of this study tonight, you can still have hope, even if that hope is just them. We'll get to chapter 4 next week. But for the pastors and teachers who've taught chapter 3, some have said that the chapter focuses solely on organizational theory. Those people believe that the chapter has no theological significance, and others take the completely opposite view and attempt to spiritualize the whole chapter. One pastor that I heard part of his sermon before I shut it down said that every gate symbolized an aspect in Jesus's life, death, or resurrection. And his conclusions were often unsupported by Scripture. And that's because the people in chapter 3 were real people who built a real wall and who faced real challenges.

[4:11] The best approach to chapter 3 seems to be to realize that the chapter does have good organizational theory, but it also has some spiritual application. Some of your faces actually tend to show that you're losing some of the hope that we talked about in Romans 15.4. So let's get on with the lesson before you start doubting 2 Timothy 3.16. Because this chapter is different than the typical passage, we'll cover it a little differently than normal. We're going to loop through the passage three times.

Each time we'll look at a different aspect. First though, let's look at the text by reading the chapter in its entirety. So starting with verse 1, it says, Then Eliashib the high priest rose up with his brethren the priest and built the sheep gate.

They consecrated it and hung its doors. They built as far as the tower of the hundred and consecrated it. Then as far as the tower of Hananel. Next to Eliashib the men of Jericho built, and next to them Zachar the son of Emri built. Also the sons of Hassanal built the fish gate. They laid its beams and hung its doors with its bolts and bars. And next to them Merimoth the son of Uriah the son of Chaz made repairs.

Next to them Meshulab the son of Barakiah the son of Meshezbel made repairs. Next to them Zadok the son of Bona made repairs.

Next to them the Tekoites made repairs. But their nobles did not put their shoulders to the work of their lord. Moreover, Jehoiada the son of Passiah and Meshulam the son of Basadiah repaired the old gate.

[5 : 56] They laid its beams and hung its doors with its bolts and bars. And next to them Melatiah the Gibeonite, Jaden the Maranathite, the men of Gibeon, and Mizpah repaired the residence of the governor of the region beyond the river. Next to him Uzziel the son of Hariah one of the goldsmiths made repairs.

And next to him Hananiah one of the perfumers made repairs. And they fortified Jerusalem as far as the broad wall. And next to them Rephiah the son of Hur, leader of half the district of Jerusalem, made repairs. Next to them Jediah the son of Harumph made repairs in front of his house. And next to him Hattish the son of Hashbaniah made repairs. Malkijah the son of Hiram and Hashib the son of Bothoth Moab repaired another section as well as the tower of the ovens. And next to him was Shalom the son of Haloresh, leader of half the district of Jerusalem. He and his daughters made repairs.

Hanan and the inhabitants of Zaniah repaired the valley gate. They built it, hung its doors with its bolts and bars, and repaired a thousand cubits of the wall as far as the refuge gate.

Malkijah the son of Rechab, leader of the district of Beth Hacharim, Hacharim repaired the refuge gate. He built it and hung its doors with its bolts and bars. Shalom the son of Kolhazah, leader of the district of Mizpah, repaired the fountain gate.

[7 : 25] He built it, covered it, hung its doors with its bolts and bars, and repaired the wall of the pool of Shelah by the king's garden as far as the stairs that go down from the city of David. After him Nehemiah the son of Asbuk, leader of half the district of Beth Zer made repairs as far as the place in front of the tombs of David, to the man-made pool and as far as the house of the mighty.

By the way, you probably realize it, but the Nehemiah mentioned here in verse 16 is a different Nehemiah than the governor who's the title character of this book. I'm sure you realized it, but I actually needed a pause from the names there, so that seemed like as good a place to pause as any.

Let's pick up with verse 17 and read the rest of the chapter. It says, Zabiah carefully repaired the other section from the buttress to the door of the house of Elishab, the high priest. After him Merimoth, the son of Uridah, the son of Chaz, repaired another section from the door of the house of Elishab to the end of the house of Elishab. And after him, the priests, the men of the plain made repairs. After him, Benjamin and Hashem made repairs opposite their house. After them, Azariah, the son of Ananiah, the son of Ananiah, made repairs by his house. After him, Benuiah, the son of Hinnadad, repaired another section from the house of Azariah to the buttress, even as far as the corner. Palal, the son of Uziah, made repairs opposite the buttress and on the tower which projects from the king's upper house that was by the court of the prison. After him, Petadiah, the son of Parosh, made repairs. Moreover, the Nethanim, which means water carriers, who dwelt in Ophel, made repairs as far as the place in front of the water gate toward the east and on the projecting tower. After them, the Tekoites repaired another section next to the great projecting tower and as far as the wall of Ophel.

Beyond the horse gate, the priest made repairs, each in front of his own house. After them, Zadok, the son of Emmer, made repairs in front of his own house. After him, Shemiah, the son of Shekaniah, the keeper of the east gate, made repairs.

[10 : 12] After him, Hananiah, the son of Shalamiah, and Hanan, the sixth son of Zaleph, repaired another section. After him, Meshulam, the son of Berechiah, made repairs in front of his dwelling.

After him, Malkijah, one of the goldsmiths, made repairs as far as the house of the Nethanim and of the merchants in front of the Mekpad gate and as far as the upper room at the corner.

And between the upper room at the corner, as far as the sheep gate, the goldsmiths and the merchants made repairs. Don't worry, that's the last time we will read the entire chapter tonight. But I wanted to set the context before we got into the detail. And we're going to break the chapter into three topics tonight. But like I said, we'll see each of these three topics throughout the chapter. We'll just look at each topic one at a time. And the first thing we'll study from chapter three is the process. The process. Often in our Nehemiah study so far, we've said that Nehemiah shows us the value of doing three things.

[11:20] Pray, plan, and persevere. The process used to rebuild the wall shows the careful planning that went into the effort. If you look at the map, the chapter is constructed around seven gates of the city, moving in a counterclockwise direction.

It begins at the sheep gate on the north side of the city, next to the temple enclosure, and it eventually returns to that same sheep gate. A paragraph or a group of several paragraphs is devoted to the repair of each of these sections.

And you can see that counterclockwise pattern if you follow those gates on the handout. The rebuilding process itself highlights five very important things. And we'll look at these aspects one at a time, starting with the segmentation.

So the segmentation is the first thing we want to see about the process. Nehemiah divided the work into manageable sections. That's critical.

If the rebuilding of the walls had been tackled as a whole task, and if one person or even a group of people had been assigned to that whole task, the work would have seemed impossible, and rightly so.

[12:33] Who could rebuild an entire one-and-a-half or two-and-a-half-mile wall? Well, nobody could do that by himself or even with a small group of people.

But when the project was divided into 40 or 41 separate segments, as the chapter shows it was, then those two-and-a-half miles become a lot more manageable. The second thing to notice about Nehemiah's process is the prioritization.

That prioritization is less obvious from the text because the people worked on every section of the wall simultaneously. The trick, though, is that the simultaneous work itself demonstrated the prioritization.

So how could that be? Well, in this case, rebuilding the wall itself was the priority. The whole thing needed to be redone as soon as possible before the enemies of the Jews attacked them or in some other way hindered its completion.

As we go on to other chapters in Nehemiah, we'll see that Nehemiah had other goals, too. He worked on these secondary goals at the appropriate time, but the wall had to come first, so the wall was his priority.

[13:48] The city had to be secure before any of those other goals could be accomplished, and that's why Nehemiah put the wall first. The third thing we see about the process is Nehemiah's delegation.

Whenever possible, Nehemiah seems to have assigned people to sections in which they would have a vested interest. Many people were assigned to portions of the wall in front of or directly adjacent to their houses.

We saw the priest rebuilding the area near the temple. The temple servants were working on the area near their dwelling on the temple mount. Jediah rebuilt the portion of the wall opposite his house.

Benjamin and Hashib also rebuilt the portion of the wall in front of their house, and so on. Even the water carriers rebuilt the portion of the wall near the water gate.

That would be convenient for everybody. No time would be lost in commuting back and forth or going home for lunch. And it also would ensure good work. The people would be much more certain to build strong walls where their own houses needed to be protected.

[15:02] So the fourth thing then we see about the rebuilding process was its coordination. Its coordination. Nehemiah did more than dividing the task into manageable units and then assigning the right people to each part.

He also fit the whole thing together so that there were no gaps. Each person or group picked up where the others left off. And we saw that when we saw them working next to him, next to them, or after them.

Then there's one more thing we see about the rebuilding process, and that was its consecration. Its consecration is the last thing we see. Twice in verse 1 we see the word consecrated.

According to verse 1, the priest built the sheep gate and then consecrated it. This indicated that their design in the construction of the walls was to honor God.

And there's no purpose that's better than honoring God. It's the best thing that we can do. In the introduction, we reviewed Nehemiah 2.17, where Nehemiah talked about Jerusalem being a reproach.

[16 : 15] This reproach reflected on the honor of God. And when his people and his city are under a reproach, God himself is reproached. Listen to Psalm 87, verses 2 and 3.

In these verses, Zion is a synonym for Jerusalem. Psalm 87, 2 and 3 say, The Lord loves the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob.

Glorious things are spoken of you, O city of God. With the gates burned and the walls in ruins, the pagans around them could use this condition of Jerusalem to mock God.

After all, if this is the condition of the city that God loves the most, what kind of God does he look like? So when the rebuilding of the walls commenced, one of the first things they did was consecrate them.

As we go on through Nehemiah and eventually get to chapter 12, we'll see that another dedication service was held when all the walls were completed.

[17 : 20] But the consecrating by the priest here in chapter 3 of only a small portion of the wall is simply a forerunner of the dedication of the entire wall. The consecration said plainly that the grand design of rebuilding the walls was to give honor to God.

We can apply Nehemiah's process to any church or secular work, and we can easily see how segmentation, prioritization, delegation, and coordination can apply to non-church work.

Consecration also applies too, even when we're working on secular things. Listen to Colossians 3.23. It says, And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men.

For another example, here are Ephesians 6, 5-8. Paul wrote, Bondservants, Be obedient to those who are your masters, according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in sincerity of heart, as to Christ.

Not with eye service, as men pleasers, but as bondservants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart, with good will doing service, as to the Lord and not to men, knowing that whatever good anyone does, he will receive the same from the Lord, whether he is a slave or free.

[18 : 43] So we can see from these passages that regardless of what we do, we're to work as if we're working directly for Christ himself. That sets a good example, and it also brings God glory.

So now that we've covered the process, let's consider the second thing. The next thing we'll consider is the people. So better said, the people are the next things that we will discuss.

Looking through the chapter, we can see at least two people-related things. First is the cooperation. We see the cooperation from various groups and various nationalities and various locations as we go through here.

People from different places and different walks of life work together on the wall. These included priests and Levites, rulers and common people, gatekeepers and guards, farmers, goldsmiths, perfumers are mentioned, and perfumers back then was another term for pharmacists.

We had merchants and we had temple servants as well. Nehemiah even noted that one of the officials, a man named Shalom, was being assisted by his daughters.

[20 : 02] This fact is both interesting and important. Women were rarely mentioned in the Near East, and when their activities are recorded in the Bible, it indicates something very significant.

These young women showed that they were not afraid to do work normally assigned to men. You also may have noticed that a number of communities besides Jerusalem were represented in constructing the walls of Jerusalem.

In verse 2, we see some from Jericho. It mentions some from Tekoa. In verse 5, verse 7 talks about people from Gibeon. Verse 13 talks about people from Zenoa.

People from Beth Hackerim were mentioned in verse 14. Mizpah people were mentioned in verses 15 and 19. Beth Zer people were mentioned in verse 16.

Kelia people were mentioned in verses 17 and 18. All of these people from the different cities came to help with the construction, and this exhibited both selfless and spiritual conduct.

[21:09] Why do you think people from other cities were willing to help rebuild the walls? It's really because they felt like it was spiritual conduct for them.

They saw some connection to honoring the Lord with this. So men of other cities were selfless to give of their time and efforts to help promote the well-being of another city.

These people from other communities had to travel some miles to get to Jerusalem. No doubt they had to leave their work, their families, and other things to come and to do the work.

But like we said, this is spiritual conduct for them because Jerusalem, with the temple, represented worship of God. So these laborers from other communities would honor God by improving the city that they considered to be the holy city of Israel.

Coming to help rebuild Jerusalem's walls showed that they would go to great extent and great trouble to promote the honor of God. Earnest spirituality is concerned about God's honor and true spirituality will be interested in doing whatever it can to promote God's honor.

[22:23] And these people demonstrated that. When you think about it, though, several of the Jerusalem citizens and the citizens from other towns could easily have claimed valid reasons for avoiding the work.

Just think about what some of the excuses could have been. The priests might have excused themselves from heavy work, pleading that it wasn't their calling. The men of other cities might have argued that the reconstruction of Jerusalem was of little value to them.

The goldsmiths and the pharmacists were skilled craftsmen who might have complained that the construction industry wasn't their field, or maybe even that the rough work would have damaged their delicate hands.

The city officials, referred to as rulers of districts or half-districts, could have claimed exemptions because of their positions, but these city officials weren't above pitching in to work inside the other poor people of Jerusalem or the middle-class people as well.

We saw in verse 12 that women were not expected to do construction work, but some of them did. In verse 23, the people mentioned are actually bachelors, and those bachelors could have claimed that they have neither wives nor children to protect.

[23:41] Their names were Benjamin and Hashem, and they lived together in one house. Who knows, maybe they wanted to assist because they were afraid of being outdone by the women, or maybe they wanted to impress the women that were there, but they didn't shy away from the work either.

And other groups could have made similar excuses, but instead, they were working with and cooperating with the others. So that's why I said you can see the cooperation there.

The second thing we see about the people is commendation, and that's commendation from Nehemiah himself. From looking at the chapter, it looks like Nehemiah recognized the accomplishments of each worker.

The chapter suggests this because it lists many people and what they did. Without a doubt, though, this is probably only a sample of how Nehemiah recognized the people.

We can be sure that as he made the rounds of the builders, he called each by name and praised him or her for what that person was achieving. Nehemiah would have written it down based on other activities we see from him.

[24:49] Chapter 7 has a list of people who returned from the exile, and chapters 10 and 12 have other important lists. So does chapter 11. So somewhere, Nehemiah most certainly made a record of everybody who worked on the construction.

Nehemiah shows us the need to take a personal interest in workers, and this is evidenced by his knowledge of the names of those who worked on the wall and his awareness of where they worked and what they did.

He treated them as people, not as things, and they had worth and they were not there to be exploited by him. The same thing kind of holds true today, doesn't it?

Each of us needs to feel that he counts for something, and if we recognize this need in dealing with others and show our appreciation and our attitude, we'll have a much better rapport with those others.

Commending people for their honest efforts is one of the most valuable keys to relating to other people. Nehemiah used commendation to enrich the quality of the lives of his workers.

[25 : 53] He was closely identified with them and he was available to encourage them when the work was going rough. He knew that the work men do is an essential part of their lives and that's because a man's job gives him stature in the community and binds him to society.

Nehemiah's awareness of others' efforts is noteworthy. It's found in the recurring expression Repaired Another section that we see throughout the chapter. He was quick to notice and appreciate the zeal and the effort of those who worked with him.

A particular significance was the effort from the men of Tekoa. We saw that in verse 5 and verse 27. Their leaders opposed what Nehemiah was doing.

The people of Tekoa, however, were inspired by his example. They worked diligently on repairing the wall. When their first assignment was finished, they repaired another section.

They were more than statistics to Nehemiah. They were individuals, each with a life of his own, and they were important to him for who they were and not for what they did.

[27 : 02] The recognition gives a sense of belonging. Workers feel more secure, and this feeling is absolutely essential when difficulties arise or economic pressures make their presence felt.

And we'll see that as we get into chapters 4 through 6 in the coming weeks. Before we leave the people topic, though, let's notice a couple of other things. In fairness, and perhaps as an encouragement to ourselves, we should notice that Nehemiah failed to achieve total success with the people.

The cooperation was remarkable, but according to verse 5, the nobles of Tekoa, unlike the other nobles, did not put the shoulders to the work.

We need to recognize that even the best leader will be unable to motivate everybody. Some people leave or decline to participate when the going gets tough.

Nehemiah refused to let some people's lack of participation, though, affect his plan. He did what any good leader should do when faced with people who refused to get involved. He fairly documented their lack of participation.

[28 : 10] Then he continued to recognize the people who were actually doing the work. another thing to notice is that one person's accomplishments is missing from the honor roll of chapter 3.

So have you noticed whom Nehemiah omitted? He omitted himself. That's correct. Nehemiah is what goes into your blank there. Nehemiah's own name was not listed.

Remember the Nehemiah that we saw in the chapter was a different Nehemiah than the leader. We can be sure that Nehemiah was as active as anyone, of course, and probably more so.

But Nehemiah gave the credit to others listing what each person had been assigned and what each had built. Then when it was all over, he gave the ultimate glory to God as he'd done from the beginning.

For proof that Nehemiah gave the ultimate glory to God and for a preview of what we'll see in a few weeks, listen to what Nehemiah wrote in Nehemiah 6.16. He said, And it happened when all our enemies heard of it and all the nations around us saw these things, that they were very disheartened in their own eyes, for they perceived that this work was done by our God.

[29 : 24] So Nehemiah recognized that the people were just the vehicle that God used to accomplish his work. The last thing we'll cover in chapter 3 will be the principles.

Once again, we'll look at the principles. And these spiritual principles apply to the work that Highland Park or any true church needs to accomplish. And the foremost principle is a strong church-wide faith in God and his promises.

So it's a strong church-wide faith in God and his promises. The point of chapter 3 is to show that the people as a whole, with very few exceptions, responded to Nehemiah's challenge and believed that God would give them success.

The description of the work demonstrates the concerted effort of all of those people. Similar to how the people rebuilt the walls, our church and any church needs every member to be involved.

And here's an interesting quote. It says, Unfortunately, many churches have it completely turned around. Churches today resemble more than anything else a football game played in a large stadium.

[30 : 34] 80,000 spectators in the stands badly need some exercise, and 22 men on the field badly need a rest. A second principle that we can apply to church is that every person has a different yet

important job to do.

Take a minute to turn to 1 Corinthians 12. We'll be spending a few minutes in 1 Corinthians 12, starting with verse 4. Remember that 1 Corinthians 12 is one of the passages covering spiritual gifts.

The passage illustrates our second principle that every person in a church has a different yet important job to do. So here are 1 Corinthians 12, 4 through 7.

There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. There are differences of ministries, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of activities, but it is the same God who works all in all.

But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all. Pay particular attention to verses 6 and 7. Those said, And there are diversities of activities, but it is the same God who works all in all, but the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all.

[31 : 59] The manifestation of the Holy Spirit is given to each of us individually for the profit of everybody else. So do you get the idea of why everyone's role in the church is important?

When we perform our role, other people benefit regardless of what that role really is. We could use many people from Nehemiah chapter 3 to illustrate the point.

We're going to highlight one person in particular though before we look at another section of 1 Corinthians 12. So keep your finger in 1 Corinthians 12, but let's refer back to Nehemiah 3.14.

Nehemiah 3.14 told us, Na'Kaidah, the son of Rechab, leader of the district of Beth Hacharim, repaired the refuse gate. He built it and hung its doors with its bolts and bars.

Depending on how you interpret the punctuation, Ma'Kaidah was either the son of a district leader or Ma'Kaidah himself was the district leader. Regardless, he was a member of an important family.

[33 : 05] And the New King James says that he repaired the refuse gate. Many other translations render the refuse gate as the dung gate. That makes its purpose really clear when you see it that way.

But what if Ma'Kaidah had said that he was too important to work at the dung gate? Or what if others refused to work at that gate because it smelled so much?

Well, if everyone had refused to work at the smell of gate, all of the other work would have been for naught. A gate would have been left unrepaired and the city would still have been exposed to invaders.

So you could say that Jerusalem would have been dung for. The point, though, is that Ma'Kaidah may have worked around the waste, but his effort was anything but wasted, and that's why Nehemiah commended him for it.

The third principle we can glean from Nehemiah chapter 3 is closely related to the previous principle. We just discussed how every job was important. The third principle is that every job also was necessary.

[34 : 18] Every job was necessary. And of course, we just saw that when we looked at Nehemiah 3.14. But the same thing applies to roles in the church.

Assuming you still have your finger in 1 Corinthians 12, look at a few more verses. 1 Corinthians 12, 13 through 19 say, For by one spirit we were all baptized into one body.

whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and have all been made to drink into one spirit.

For in fact the body is not one member, but many.

If the foot should say, Because I am not a hand, I am not of the body, is it therefore not of the body?

And if the ear should say, Because I am not an eye, I am not of the body, is it therefore not of the body?

If the whole body were an eye, where would be the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where would be the smelling? But now God has set the members, each one of them, in the body just as he pleased, and if they were all one member, where would the body be?

[35 : 25] Humans, even in churches, tend to place more value on the jobs that gets noticed. But Paul writing here in 1 Corinthians shoots down that view. Listen to verse 22, he says, No, much rather, those members of the body which seem to be weaker are necessary.

And then skipping to the end of verse 24, Paul wrote these words in 1 Corinthians 12, 24b through 27. He said, But God composed the body, having given greater honor to that part which lacks it, that there should be no schism in the body, but that members should have the same care for one another.

And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it, or if one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it. Now you are the body of Christ and members individually. We have one more principle from Nehemiah chapter 3 that we can also apply to the church. That principle is that everything we do should be done for the glory of God. Everything we do should be done for the glory of God. We already have looked at a few verses to illustrate this point. We'll look at just one more verse, this time from Jesus himself. [36 : 45] This verse comes from the Sermon on the Mount. In Matthew 5, 16, Jesus said, Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven. John Butler wrote, great works do not just happen, they are a result of much planning and organizing. Do not look for divine miracles when you refuse to organize your life, your time, your money, and other facets of your life. Nehemiah chapter 3 is more than a list of names who rebuilt the wall. It's a blueprint for how to succeed at work and at church. As a church, we succeed when members exercise their spiritual gifts, and then each one of us exercises our own gifts next to them. The people who skip Nehemiah chapter 3 miss out on some important lessons. As 2 Timothy 3, 16 said, all scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness. righteousness. Let's go ahead and close in prayer. Dear Lord, we thank you for the lessons from your scripture that may not always seem obvious at first glance. [38 : 09] Just help us to be willing to dig down and try to get at what you're trying to have us learn. And more importantly, help us to see how these principles we talked about tonight can apply to us individually and to us as a church. continue to be with us as we move forward. In Jesus name we pray. Amen.