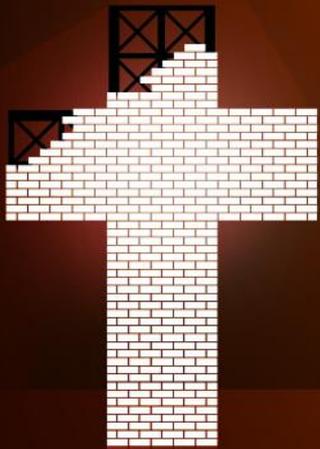


PRINCIPLES
FOR GROWTH
FROM
NEHEMIAH (3)

Nehemiah 4:6

Previously

- We have devoted 2 lessons to examining the steps Nehemiah took to motivate the Israelites to repair the walls of Jerusalem - walls that had remained broken for about 150 years

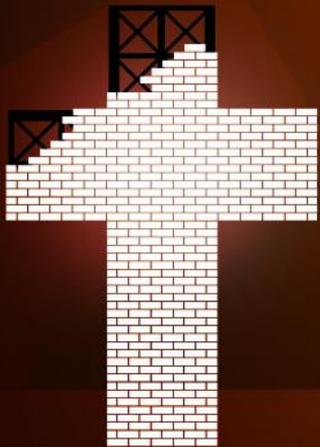


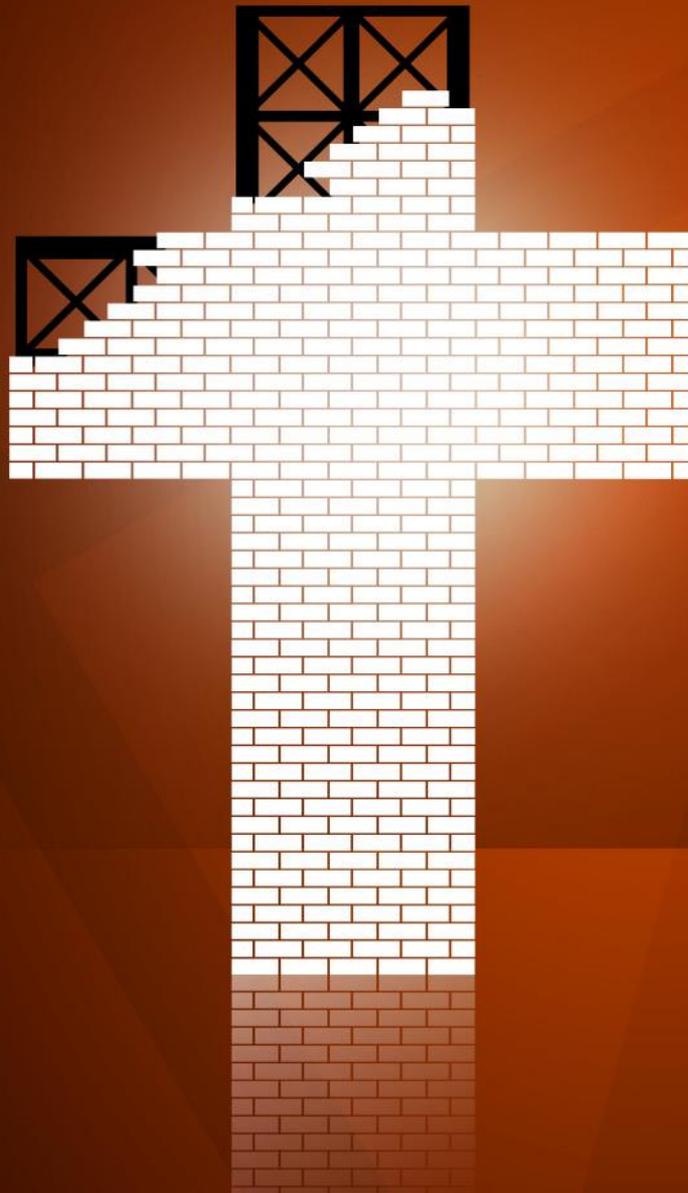
Our goal is to make application to efforts to promote growth

Previously

- We noted 4 principles from **Nehemiah** :
 - 1) We have to care (**1:1-4**)
 - 2) We need to be praying (**1:4-11**)
 - 3) We have to make plans (**2:1ff**)
 - 4) We need to get to work (**2:18**)
 - 5) We ignore the critics (**2:18-20**)
 - 6) We need every worker (**3**)
 - 7) I need to work, even if others won't (**3:5**)
 - 8) Do not go looking for trouble (**4**)

In today's lesson:





4 MORE
PRINCIPLES
FOR GROWTH
FROM
NEHEMIAH

Nehemiah 4:6

Be willing to work hard

- **Nehemiah 4:21ff**

As we concluded our last point, efforts were made to protect themselves from outside enemies. They did not let them stop the work.

- **4:21ff** - they worked from daybreak till the stars appeared. Some worked while others supported them. Stayed at night in the city.

4:6 - the people had a mind to work



Be willing to work hard

- **Nehemiah 4:21ff**

If we are to grow, we need to be willing to put in the work necessary.

- It will not be easy.

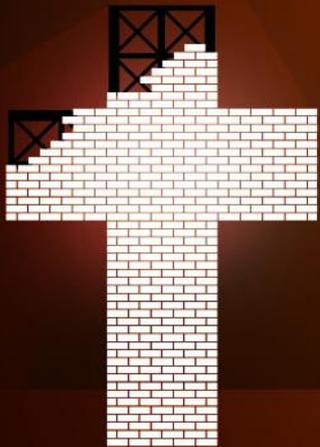
Luke 14:27-33 - Jesus never promised “easy”

Titus 2:14 - zealous. **3:1** - ready for every good work

Colossians 1:10 - fruitful in every good work

Hebrews 10:24 - stir up good works

Ecclesiastes 9:10 - do it with all your might



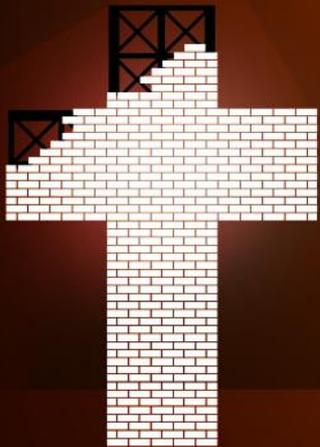
Be willing to work hard

- Far too many are content to stand back and just support the efforts (and take credit).

Ephesians 4:16 - every part must do it share!

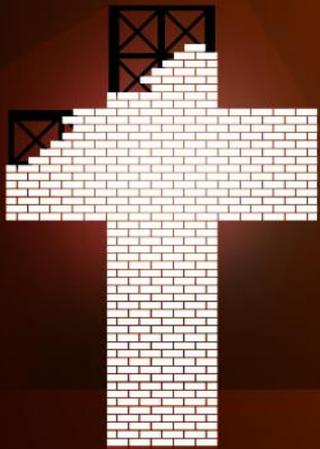
Examine yourself: “What if everyone was like me?”

“What would happen to this congregation?”



Deal with internal problems

- Previously, we addressed external problems - critics, threats
Sadly, we must also deal with internal problems
 - sometimes these are more challenging, and always more heartbreaking.
 - they are supposed to be your brethren

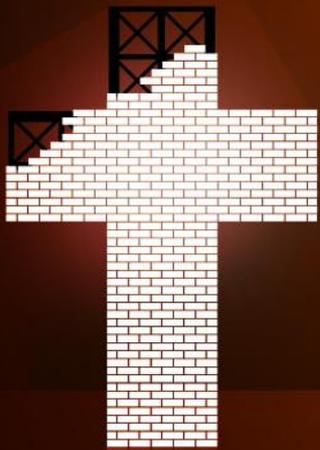


Deal with internal problems

- **Nehemiah 5:1-13** describes people in distress, because they were being exploited by their own brethren (famine).

This was a direct violation of the LOM
(**Exodus 22:22-27,**
cf. Matthew 23:14)

Nehemiah deals with them directly and sternly. Rebukes and warns. Puts them under oath



Deal with internal problems

- As we work to grow, there will very likely be internal problems

It is natural, as challenges arise

Galatians 5:14-15 if you bite and devour

Ephesians 4:1-3 - endeavor for unity

2 Thessalonians 3:11-13 - busybodies

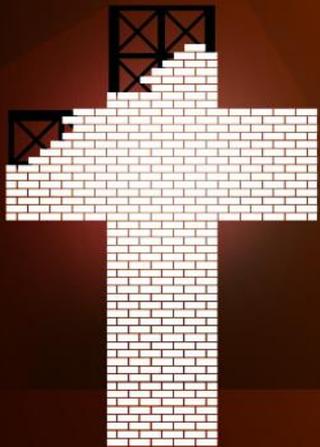


Deal with internal problems

- We HAVE TO deal with these problems!

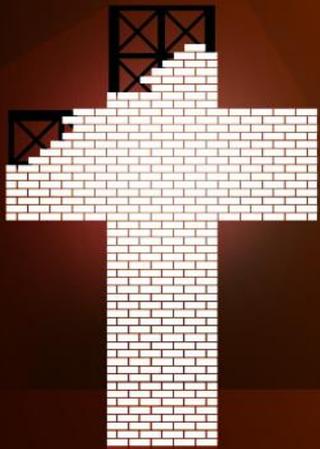
Ephesians 5:25-27 – we have to keep the church pure

1 Corinthians 5:6-7 – a little leaven



Deal with internal problems

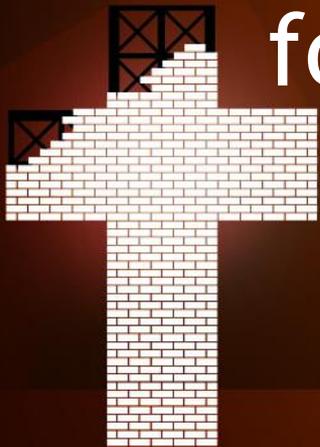
- This is a leadership issue:
2 Thessalonians 3:6 – NOTE:
dealing with the busybodies
1 Corinthians 5:4-5 - dealing
with the adulterer
Romans 16:17
cf. Acts 15 - dealt with
troubling teachers



Deal with internal problems

- Problems are going to arise, because Satan wants to stop the work.

When they do, we may pause (or maybe not) to deal with the problems, but then we move forward.



Stay focused

- **Nehemiah 6:1-14**, as the wall nears completion, enemies again seek to stop the work. They pretend they want to talk and discuss a compromise (4x)

Nehemiah 6:3, “I am doing a great work...”

False accusation to distract
Nehemiah prays (**6:14**)



Stay focused

- As we work, we cannot let the problems distract us. STAY focused! Keep your eye on the goal

1 Corinthians 9:24 – run to win

Hebrews 12:1-2 - look to Jesus

Philippians 3:12-16 - press on

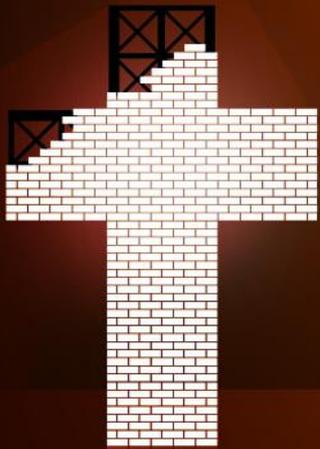
Luke 10:41-42 - Mary and

Martha



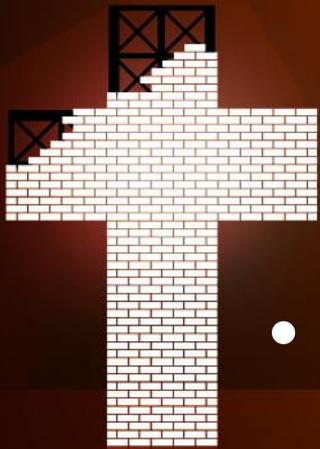
Stay focused

- After this we read that the walls were finished - **Nehemiah 6:15-16** in 52 days
BUT, that leads to 1 final point!



Maintain the work

- While the walls were completed, there was still work to do. **Nehemiah 7-13** record activities after the walls were complete
 - inhabiting the city
 - restoring true worship
 - getting back to the law
 - dealing with enemies and compromise
 - unlawful marriages
- Maintaining a work is ongoing!



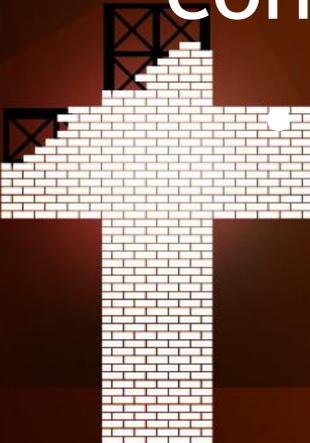
Maintain the work

- As Christians (and the Lord's church), we are NEVER done in this life. Even if we reach our goals, we must maintain
 - the new convert still needs to be taught
 - struggling members need encouraging
 - all need to be further grounded and exhorted toward maturity (addressing the mature implies some are not mature yet).
 - Good, sound teaching needed



Maintain the work

- We must occasionally and continually keep examining ourselves - are we where we need to be? What can we do about it.
 - Revelation 2 & 3 records 7 churches - of which 5 had serious spiritual concerns, some imminent danger



• We must always be aware of the potential for apostasy or drifting away

Maintain the work

- Whether we are speaking of personal growth, or the church, or accomplishing some collective goal - we are NEVER done as long as we are standing!

- The book of Nehemiah concludes with the city intact - but it did not last!

- We may be intact now, but what will we do to keep that so?

Hebrews 10:39



Are we ready to rise up
and build?

Will you do your part?

Let us pray!