

grace in disgrace

[Nehemiah 2.11-20]

inspection and inspiration

three days

inspection

identification

solution

opposition

some observations

helping the hurting without hurting them

corporate change

personal change

grace for disgrace

[big questions]

Do I recognize disgrace and suffering when I see it?

Am I motivated to bring grace into situations of disgrace?

Who am I trusting to bring restorative change?

Memorize this-

14 The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

16 From the fullness of his grace we have all received one blessing after another:

-John 1.14, 16 (NIV)

[repair and restore.03]

[repair and restore.03]

grace in disgrace : Nehemiah 2.11-20
[going deeper]

What thought, idea or observation from this teaching did you find to be the most useful, encouraging, eye-opening or even troubling? Explain.

Has there been a time when you sincerely tried to help someone and it backfired? What happened?

What are some of the mistakes that we make when we are trying to help others in need?

Read Nehemiah 2.11-20

The first thing Nehemiah does is to wait for three days before he does anything. Why do you think he did this and why would it be a good idea?

The next thing he did was to inspect the walls after dark. Why do you think he did it this way and why would that be a good idea?

What do you notice about how Nehemiah presented things in vs. 17-18? Why would those things be particularly wise?

In their book, "When Helping Hurts," Steve Corbett and Brian Fikkert describe the differences between two models of helping people. The first, more common model is the blueprint model:

The helpers come in, they have identified both the problem and the solution, which they implement, leaving the tools behind to help those helped to continue the plan.

What could be some potential problems with this model?

Describe some ways we might apply this model to our relationships? How well does that work?

The second model is the "learning process" in which, the role of the outsider is not to do something to or for the individual (s) in need but to seek solutions together with them.

How is this like what Nehemiah did? What would be some benefits of this model? Describe how you might apply this model to your relationships.

Nehemiah identifies himself not only with the solution, but also with the people and their problem. Why do you think this is so powerful? How likely are you to do this when you are trying to help others? Why?

Nehemiah helps the people recognize that their situation isn't the way it should be—that they are actually living in a state of disgrace and that there is an opportunity to see their situation transformed by God's grace. Why we tend to need someone to help us identify our conditions of disgrace? Why would this be important in the process of helping them experience God's grace?

So how do you respond when you see something that isn't how it should be? Do you rush in with a solution, do you essentially ignore it, or do you do something in between? What do you think you could learn from Nehemiah in those situations?

Take some time to think about people or situations in your life where things aren't how they should be. Prayerfully consider how God wants to bring His grace into the situation and how He may want to use you to enter into the situation.

[repair and restore.03]