

# BUILDING 4 GENERATIONS TO COME

## How Does God Build?

Nehemiah 3

INTRODUCTION: The Book of Nehemiah is all about rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem.

BUILDING 4 GENERATIONS TO COME is all about rebuilding the life and ministries of St. Andrew Baptist to reach more Millennials and Generation Z so that our church can continue until the Lord returns as a 4 Generation Church.

Chapter 3 of Nehemiah describes how God through His people built the wall.

This morning, open your Bibles with me to Nehemiah chapter 3.

- You can use your personal book Bible.
- You can use your Bible app on your phone or tablet.
- You can use a Bible in the pew rack in front of you.

But you need a Bible because I am not going to just read a couple of verses we can pop on the screen. I am going to walk you through chapter 3 of Nehemiah so you can see something with your own eyes.

Now, do you see what a humongous task this was? And do you clearly see the truth of the first characteristic we noted in this chapter about the way God builds. Can you state it without my prompting you?

### I. GOD BUILDS BY CALLING MANY TO JOIN THE WORK.

Now I want to take you past chapter 3 for a moment.

Go to Nehemiah 4:6

*Neh. 4:6 So we built the wall, and the entire wall was joined together up to half its height, for the people had a mind to work.*

At this point, every section of the wall had now been rebuilt and repaired to the point that the wall was continuous, but it was only half of its full height.

Now go to Neh. 6:15-16

*Neh. 6:15-16 15 So the wall was finished on the twenty-fifth day of Elul, in fifty-two days. 16 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.*

**Now the wall is 100% complete.**

- **There are no gaps.**
- **It is at full height.**

It was completed in 52 days! **The walls had lain in ruins for decades. Now they were fully repaired in 52 days!**

Everybody knew, even the enemies of the Jews. **Everybody knew “this work was done by our God.”**

And this I hope you will remember is the second of the principles God is teaching us through this book about how God builds His kingdom.

## **II. GOD USES OUR WORK TO ACCOMPLISH HIS PURPOSE.**

This conclusion of the building of the wall all reiterates the third principle about how God builds.

## **III. EVERY PART OF THE WORK IS IMPORTANT TO GOD.**

**For the wall to be rebuilt, every section had to be repaired.**

**Every gate had to be hung.**

**For one group to fail meant a failed wall.**

**There were no major sections and minor sections.**

**Every part of the wall was important.**

**Every person working on the wall was an important part of God’s plan.**

Now I want to take you to another Kingdom building project that God is doing through His people. It is the one He is doing through us here at St. Andrew Baptist Church.

I want you to follow this graphic about our church.

Even before we began BUILDING 4 GENERATIONS TO COME, God was already at work in our church. Three phrases describe what God has been doing among us and through us for many years: **EXALTING CHRIST, MEETING NEEDS, REACHING THE WORLD.**

Specifically, we exalt Christ every time we worship. That involves all of us in the congregation led and assisted by our choir, praise teams, band, orchestra, and the tech team that works behind the scene.

But that is not the only way we exalt Christ.

Our Lifechange Groups exalt Christ by rightly teaching the Word of God, teaching it with boldness, plainly and without compromise. As class members pray for each other, love each other, and care for one another, the Lord is further exalted by the obedience of His children. These small groups are so important to God’s Kingdom work in and through our church, we have them for everybody: Senior Adults, Median Adults, Young Adults, Special Needs Adults, Deaf Adults, College Students, High School and Middle School students, for preteens and children, and for special needs children, and for preschoolers also, because it is critical that we exalt Christ by proclaiming and heeding the Word of God.

But even that is not all.

We have a very sizeable and diverse Discipleship ministry to deepen our application of biblical truths in our lives so that we can be better disciples and so we can grow to be more like the Lord Jesus Christ, which is God's plan and desire for every one of us. We have multiple classes for adults every Sunday night. We have classes on Wednesday night for adults and youth. We have Bible studies going on at different times during the week. Our youth have an intensive Disciple Now weekend every year. Our preteens have one also. Youth, college, and young adults periodically go on retreat in order to grow as better disciples of the Lord Jesus. Vacation Bible School is a huge disciple event for a whole week for every age group, but we get to evangelize and disciple hundreds of children. In Bible Drill children and youth memorize large quantities of Scripture in such a way that much of what they learn will stay with them for a lifetime. In children's choir we start training our kids to praise the Lord our God.

All of that is a part of EXALTING CHRIST.

THE SECOND PHRASE THAT DESCRIBES WHAT GOD IS DOING THROUGH ST. ANDREW BAPTIST IS MEETING NEEDS.

Of course we immediately and rightly think of what God is doing through the Center of Hope. So far this year, our Benevolence Center has helped 12,000 families, giving food to right at 40,000 people and clothes to over 33,000, just this year! And the gospel is shared with every new client that comes through the doors. Already this year 133 people have prayed to receive Christ. Our medical clinic was just named the Bay County Health Champion of the year for the free medical care and prescriptions given to the poor by loving volunteers. So far this year, they have seen over 4700 patients and dispensed 8500 prescriptions, all free of charge, accompanied by an opportunity to be prayed for and to hear the gospel. Folks, do you know that in our Medical Clinic's 13 years of existence, it has provided over \$62 million of free health care to Bay County residents. Glory to God!

Our Sheltering Tree pregnancy care center has ministered to over 500 young women this year and we know has saved two unborn babies lives from abortion. 9 of those young ladies came to faith in Christ.

And again, that is not all. Folks, I am not bragging, except to be bragging on God. I most certainly can lay no claim to being responsible for all of this. If the folks doing this ministry didn't come to church here, I could die and they wouldn't even know it because I am so seldom a part of the doing of those ministries. So I'm not boasting. But it is important for us to see the big picture of what God is doing among us and through us. And in a little while, you will understand even better why seeing this big picture of God's work through St. Andrew Baptist Church is important for us to understand.

In addition to the Center of Hope, there are many other ways our church is meeting needs: Operation Christmas Child is going on right now. Angel Tree ministry will follow it. Jail Ministry, Our youth do periodic community food distribution taking the Benevolence Center out of the building and onto the street, sharing food and the gospel with people of our community. We have a ladies' Lifechange Group that on certain winter days give blankets to the homeless. We partner with two schools to supply supplies, counseling, and mentoring.

Jesus said He came not to be served but to serve. We serve by meeting needs, both physical and spiritual.

The third phrase that defines us is REACHING THE WORLD.

Jesus' words in Acts 1:8 defines us.

**Acts 1:8 But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."**

We are first to be witness of Christ by sharing the gospel in our Jerusalem. Folks, all of those ministries I just talked about as ministries that meet needs, also are gospel sharing ministries right here in Bay County, our Jerusalem.

In addition, we have other gospel sharing Jerusalem mission ministries.

Like FAITH Riders. Now you won't be able to pick them out in the crowd, but you can find them because they usually sit right down front, and they often have new guests sitting with them. These folks regularly lead other people to Christ.

Other Jerusalem gospel proclaiming ministries are our Panama City Passion Play, and we have men that minister at the Rescue Mission. They lead men to Christ, sometimes baptize them in the Bay, and disciple them to overcome life's problems and walk with the Lord. Our preteens lead a VBS at the Baptist Mission Center, so we have preteens, teaching God's Word to children and fellow preteens and leading some of them to trust in Christ. How great is that?

We have a helping hands ministry especially for folks in our own church family. And a new ministry for us is teaching Brazilian Jiu Jitsu which is a popular martial arts sport that some of our Brazilian members and others are using to evangelize and disciple neighborhood children.

And that is just our witness for Christ in our Jerusalem.

In our Judea, which is Florida and the Gulf Coast, we minister and share the gospel through Disaster Relief, like we have recently done in Deweyville, Texas. We do prison ministry. Some of our couples have begun to do foster care, adoption, and orphan care, not just because they want to have more children in

their home, but because loving and caring for these children is one of the best ways for these kids to come to know the Lord and to become disciples of the Savior.

Samaria for us is the United States and Canada. We send teams to Baltimore, Maryland and to Portland, Oregon, where we partner with two churches in each of these cities in areas of our country that are drastically under-evangelized. We not only help them share the gospel with their community, but train their people as well so that they can later do the same thing without us.

And we go to the end of the earth. If you had been with us on a few of our trips, you would have thought you were there. We regularly take mission teams of people in our church to Ghana, Mexico, India, Brazil, and China. We have missionary couples with ties to our church in Guinea-Bissau, West Africa and in the city of Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. It appears that the Lord is opening the doors for us to take a first trip next year to Guatemala where we could have the opportunity of beginning to share the gospel with three unreached people groups. The Lord has also opened the doors to a new country in west Africa named The Gambia, where we will likely send a team in 2018.

That is how the Lord is working through us to enable us to be witnesses of Jesus in our Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and to the end of the earth.

You know, in all the years I've been here, I don't think I have ever tried in one setting to completely describe the ministries of St. Andrew Baptist Church and what God by His grace and power is doing in us and among us. And I'm nearly out of breath trying!

And as sure as I am standing here, a whole bunch of you sitting out there are thinking of things that I forgot. And I know you're right. Because I just did this listing off the top of my head, and you can see I don't have much to work with up there! So if I forgot your favorite thing, just please, please forgive me.

Now, why did I do this? Here it is.

In the same way that the work of God in rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem was a huge, huge task,

So also, the work God is doing through St. Andrew Baptist Church is a humongous work. And seeing that, do you see that what the Scripture is teaching us are important truths we need to understand and apply.

#### **I. GOD BUILDS BY CALLING MANY TO JOIN THE WORK.**

Folks you can see, we need many to do the work God has given us to do. Although we do have some people from other churches who choose to work with us and for whom we are grateful, if you listed every single job for all the things I have described for you, the vast, vast, majority are done by the people of St. Andrew Baptist Church.

And for those of you that are not yet serving in some capacity, you can see, we need you. God is calling people to join Him in this work!

And can you not also see clearly how

**II. GOD USES OUR WORK TO ACCOMPLISH HIS PURPOSE.**

People, you know don't you, as I do, that we cannot do the things I have described we are doing in our own strength and power. It is impossible. Do you know that in our work in West Africa and Brazil, just those two areas, our church helps to plant 10 to 15 churches every year? And as far as I know, not a single church we have helped to plant in the last 11 years has folded. Every one of them is still functioning. That's not us! That's God! Jesus said if we would abide in Him and in the Word, we would bear much fruit, and that is exactly what God is doing with us church.

And do you see

**III. EVERY PART OF THE WORK IS IMPORTANT TO GOD.**

What of all of those things where we have joined God in His work is unimportant? None of it!

It's all important to God. And if we start slacking in EXALTING CHRIST, or in MEETING NEEDS, or in REACHING THE WORLD, we will find other parts starting to fall off as well. As every section of the wall, every gate into the city, was important in the work of God in rebuilding Jerusalem, so are each of these ministries and missions.

**THESE ARE OUR WALLS CHURCH!**

That is why God convicted me so that we must repair the financial walls of our church. Every one of them is important. And we made some progress last week. We gave enough to bring the offering up to a budget level plus catching up \$11,000. So instead of being behind by 320 stones, we now need 309. We still have 10 weeks to work on this. We can do it!

But now, let me put this all together. Watch this. I'm going to give you the big picture!

God has called us to BUILD 4 GENERATIONS TO COME. That does not mean we stop all of this God has been and is doing. What it means is that God wants us to bring more and more of the two younger generations in on what He is doing, in the work He is doing in and through St. Andrew Baptist Church

So God is leading us to make the changes necessary to bring more Millennials and Generation Z into our church so that

They can be discipled and become a part of all that God is doing! So that in every ministry, in every mission, in every part of our church life, we have 4 GENERATIONS, working together with the Lord, by His power, joining His work.

One last thing I want to be sure you remember. I'm confident you see it; let's just put it in words.

#### **IV. GOD WANTS THE WHOLE WORK TO BE COMPLETED.**

**God did not want part of the wall rebuilt, or some of the wall, or even most of the wall. He wanted the whole wall rebuilt because when the whole wall was built He received the glory, even from His enemies.**

**As long as something was incomplete, the enemies of God only mocked. But when it was all complete, they were forced to acknowledge that the work was done by God.**

CONCLUSION: The task before us in BUILDING 4 GENERATIONS TO COME is of mammoth proportions. I confess to you that I am not sufficient for the task, but God is. My job, my calling, my great privilege and high honor is to join Him in the work to see it through to completion. To God be the glory!