Nehemiah Series 2
God’s Gracious Hand Is Upon You
July 18, 2014

I. WELCOME, 15 mins.
Prepare a couple simple, fun and delightful icebreakers to help your group warm up. Help your cell group members to put aside their busy and tiresome life to prepare their hearts to come before God.

II. WORSHIP, 20 mins.
Prayerfully choose a few songs to lead the cell group members to worship God. The worship leader would encourage members to come before the throne of God to seek God’s face, and lead them into God’s presence. During this time, the cell group leader will also lead the group to pray aloud for the following prayer items:

A. MISSION ORGANIZATION: _____________, and their needs are: _____________
(Please contact the church if you don’t know the needs of the mission organization.)

B. CHURCH MINISTRY:
- 6/15-7/25 Pray America
- 7/19 Women’s Brunch @ 11am in Fellowship Hall.
- 7/31-8/3 Glocal Impact Conference.
- 8/10-9/28 Legacy Journey Class by Dave Ramsey
- 8/24 Family Fun Day

C. New comer: _________________ Confirm new comers’ name before the meeting.
For sick members, friends or relatives: _________________ Please discuss how you may show your care to them.

III. WORD, 45 mins. By sharing God’s word, the group may discuss how to apply it to their daily life.

A. Sharing message from last Sunday’s sermon: (It would be helpful if you could listen on-line once again)

   1. What is the key message from last Sunday sermon? How did God speak to you through the message?
   2. How would you respond to the message? What action will you take after listening to the message?

B. Topic of the week: God’s Gracious Hand Is Upon You
Verses: Nehemiah 2: 1-9
Memorizing Verses: And because the gracious hand of my God was upon me, the king granted my requests. (Nehemiah 2: 8b)
When Nehemiah heard that Jerusalem lay in ruins, he had the strong desire to keep praying for the city. In chapter 2 Nehemiah documented how God’s grace helped Nehemiah accomplish his dream – to rebuild the broken walls of Jerusalem. We see how God led Nehemiah in every step to fulfill the dream through his position and influence.

1. Nehemiah waits patiently upon God’s timing (Nehemiah 2: 1-3)
   There were four months between the month of Kislev to Nisan, Nehemiah consistently prayed day and night while still doing his duty as a cupbearer to the king. He was administering to the king so the king saw everything.

   A. Faithful to his job while waiting (Nehemiah 2: 1)
      “Nehemiah had not been sad in the king’s presence before”. It’s not easy to be a good cupbearer; when to bring the wine, and the timing to perform the right step. Even though waiting was a painful process, Nehemiah did his job and never showed sadness. He loved his job, so he didn’t complain nor worry. Nehemiah set a good example of having the right working attitude.

   B. The king saw his sadness of heart (Nehemiah 2: 2)
      When the timing of God arrived, the king saw the sadness in Nehemiah. Through fasting, crying out and praying, Nehemiah suppressed his sufferings and pains, but still could not hide his sorrow and distress. When both the king and queen were in the palace, the king asked him “Why does your face look so sad when you are not ill?” He was so afraid because his sad look may cause the end of his life.

   C. He seized the opportunity to share his burden with the king (Nehemiah 2: 3)
      Even though Nehemiah was afraid, he boldly shared his burden toward Jerusalem, and the pain of seeing the land where his ancestors were buried lay in ruins. After a long time of waiting and praying, Nehemiah knew it was the
best timing from God so he seized the opportunity to share his burden with the king.

2. Nehemiah had the favor from the king (Nehemiah 2: 4-6)
   The king didn’t blame his sadness, but instead asked him “What is it you want?” That was such a grace. Nehemiah’s favor not only came from his hard working, but also from God’s grace so he gained favor in front of the king.
   A. Nehemiah prayed and depended upon God (Nehemiah 2: 4)
      Nehemiah prayed consistently for four months. When the king asked him question, he prayed silently to ask God for wisdom, ability and audacity to tell the burden of his heart and wall rebuild plan. Through prayer God gave him eloquence to boldly present the plan in front of the king.
   B. He has a brave plan (Nehemiah 2: 5)
      God gave Nehemiah the spirit of counsel through consistent prayers, which allowed him to present a sound and adventurous plan. Because Nehemiah was going to leave his post as a cupbearer and set forth to Judah, and bring with him great power and logistics. Didn’t the king have any concern about him being rebellious? It was a very brave plan.
   C. The king favored his plan and granted his request (Nehemiah 2: 6)
      Because of his prayer, God made the king like his plan and only asked the length of his journey, and the date of his return. Nehemiah didn’t even finish his reply and presented the entire plan, the king was pleased. That was the favor from God and it was done.

3. Nehemiah has a sound plan (Nehemiah 2: 7-9):
   A. Asked for letters to the governors of Trans-Euphrates. One cannot complete a task without power, so Nehemiah asked the governors to protect his safety until he arrived at Judah.
   B. Asked for a letter to the keeper of the king’s forest. So Nehemiah will get the timbers for the wall, beams for the gate, and the residences.
   C. Most important of all, God gracious hand was upon Nehemiah in every step. (Nehemiah 2: 8b-9)
      In addition to the letters that Nehemiah requested, the king also sent army officers and a cavalry with him until he arrived at Trans-Euphrates. Like Proverbs 21:1 says “the king’s heart is in the hand of the Lord; he directs it like a watercourse wherever he pleases.” Nehemiah attributed his achievement to God because “my God’s gracious hand was upon me.”

Discussion (please choose the topic according to the needs):
1. How do you feel when people bring negative thoughts into your conversation?
2. Nehemiah was patiently waiting upon God’s timing. What do you think the most difficult part?
3. Why can Nehemiah gain favor in front of the king?
4. What can we learn from the interaction between Nehemiah and the king?
5. How do you want God’s gracious hand to help you realize your dream? How do you cooperate with God’s work?

Prayer:
Dear Heavenly Father, we thank you and praise you. Thank you for Nehemiah’s story to teach us how to realize the dreams and vision that you put in our hearts through prayers, waiting patiently and your grace. May God keep us not to rely on our smart and ability, but God’s grace and mighty power to accomplish the dreams in our hearts, and let God’s will be done. We pray in Jesus’ precious name. Amen!

IV. WORK (Pray for each other), 10 mins.
   Please break into group of 2 or 3 to pray for each other’s needs.