

Rebuilding

the Corporate Student Mission Movement

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The book of Nehemiah is a powerful blueprint for grasping the importance of rebuilding that which has been broken down. We find a people being unified around a common purpose and cooperating to see that purpose realized – the walls of Jerusalem being rebuilt! Similarly, the time

The time is ripe for effective rebuilding across the emerging generation.

is ripe around the world for rebuilding the corporate student mission movement on individual campuses and across national churches. There is an international cry for workers to arise from many organizations and denominations around this common purpose – calling and equipping the emerging generation with the single-minded vision of personal renewal and reaching all remaining people groups in our lifetime through long-term global ministry.

The book of Nehemiah communicates four primary concepts¹ that have a direct relationship to today's corporate student mission movement:

- 1) It highlights the rebuilding of the walls around Jerusalem.
- 2) It introduces a new kind of leader.
- 3) It emphasizes the critical nature of prayer to the rebuilding process.
- 4) It teaches the biblical order of dependence upon God before activity for Him.

1. Rebuilding the Walls

The walls of Jerusalem represented the Israelites' security as a people. When Nehemiah heard of the shambles of the city walls, his heart broke as he rec-

ognized the people's vulnerability to attacking armies. Aided with fasting and prayer, Nehemiah then embarked on one of the most remarkable testimonies in the entire Scripture to the power of unity and cooperation. He returned to Jerusalem from Babylon, motivated his fellow countrymen for the task, and

arose to see the walls rebuilt in a matter of 52 days! A miracle!

Currently we see in the student mission world some old walls that have been broken down, including the erosion of student mission movements of the past that produced great influence in cultivating revival among the emerging generation and for calling longer-term workers for global harvest. The number of longer-term global laborers coming out

of the student world is on the decline. Unity surrounding a common longer-term mission vision in the student arena is low, hindering widespread effectiveness. In addition, some are sceptical about the ability of the emerging generation to be activated following graduation toward global involvement for the Kingdom. The result? Broken-down walls.

Research shows, however, that the time is ripe for the effective rebuilding of the widespread student mission movement across the emerging generation.² The potential is strong for the movement to go to a new level of effectiveness. The student mission movements of the past were predominantly Western-based. Today,

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the non-Western Church is leading the way and building towards an international student mission movement that may be used of God to complete the Great Commission in our lifetime.

2. A New Kind of Leader

In Nehemiah we find God using a lay leader to mobilize the people of God to a critical task. Nehemiah used his spiritual authority, not the positional authority of a priest, to influence his countrymen.

We have much to learn from this. God is calling emerging leaders and leadership teams to arise who will help rebuild the student mission movement by taking initiative to influence their campuses and churches through restoring the relevant priority of fulfilling the Great Commission in our lifetime through long-term ministry.

The precursor of this influence, however, is a vital and intimate relationship with Jesus Christ, our foundation. Spiritual vitality and depth of life in Christ has been the critical centerpiece of every student mission movement of the past. It is only through vibrant and abandoned devotion to Jesus that we are opened up to the revelation of His urgent call to advance His kingdom among all peoples. This spiritual vitality and life is then contagious, as we influence those around us for global harvest. Peer-on-peer influence is vital today; others will listen and be motivated as passionate ones tell and live their stories before them.

3. The Centrality of Prayer

A third element we find in Nehemiah is that prayer was absolutely critical to the endeavor of rebuilding. Nehemiah found himself in many desperate situations where he and others had to implore God to intervene lest all be lost. The work of rebuilding the walls was sustained as a result of focused and fervent prayer.

Today, there are likewise many enemies to the rebuilding of the corporate student mission

movement. The kingdom of darkness wants nothing more than to keep an elevated focus of long-term global ministry from entering the hearts of the emerging generation. To accomplish this, the hordes of hell have unleashed an onslaught: low spirituality, self-centeredness, Christianity without the cross, sexual abuse, other abuses, materialism, compromise, lack of understanding of the role of the Holy Spirit, independence from God, immorality, self-consciousness leading to timidity, greed, forgiveness without repentance, complacency, and pride. These

enemies can and must be defeated in the emerging generation. The primary way to overcome is through ongoing, focused, and committed prayer in and for the student arena (Ephesians 6:12).

4. Dependence vs. Activity

Lastly, we find in Nehemiah the sequence of (1) of depending wholeheartedly upon God to move in power for the rebuilding and (2) the responsibility to step out and practically work with God. Apart from the Lord's building, unction, and initiative, we will accomplish nothing of lasting spiritual value. Simultaneously, however,

God has called us to partner with Him to bring to fruition His eternal purposes on the earth. He will move in power, but He uses broken and contrite vessels to do this. If we believe it is His will to rebuild the student mission movement, we will seek His face, listen and respond to Him, depend wholeheartedly on His making a way, and commence with intentional activity in our circles of influence that advances us toward this end. 🌐

End Notes

¹ Adapted from Clinton, Robert J., *Clinton's Nehemiah Leadership Commentary* (Pasadena, CA: Barnabas Publishers, 2002).

² "This Generation for the Forgotten" compilation of research findings by Ryan Shaw — available at www.SVM2.net.

