

# ***The 52 Day Nehemiah Experiment***

***A 52 Day Plan for Revival in Our Church***

***Days 43-52***

***Sunday, March 19 – Tuesday, March 28***

***For the Members of Church at the Mall  
Lakeland & Auburndale, Florida***

***By Pastor Jay Dennis***

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## **Day 43**

**Sunday, March 19**

### **READING**

***Nehemiah 13:22***

And I commanded the Levites that they should purify themselves and come as gatekeepers to sanctify the sabbath day. *For* this also remember me, O my God, and have compassion on me according to the greatness of Your lovingkindness.

### **TEACHING**

Nehemiah told the Levites to purify themselves in preparation for the Sabbath Day. In other words, their hearts were to be right with God, and their motives were to glorify God. It is vitally important to prepare for the day of worship—God wants us to. How can you do that? Think about worship and get our hearts in a state of anticipation to experience God. Here are some practical ways you can prepare to come to church on Sunday:

1. Make a commitment that you will be in God's House on Sunday. Not going should be the exception, not the rule.
2. On Saturday evening, spend some time asking the Holy Spirit, "Is there anything in my life that is displeasing to You?" Let the Holy Spirit point out those areas that are not consistent with God's Holy character, and confess them

and seek His cleansing and forgiveness. Pray that you will experience God in a powerful way in worship on Sunday.

3. Pray, “Lord, please let me see Your glory as I worship You in church.”
4. Pray for the Pastor, the Worship Leader(s), and those teaching God’s Word in Connect Groups that the Holy Spirit’s anointing will be upon them.
5. Pray that there will be a spirit of expectancy among the people who come to worship that God will speak to them and that they will be aware of the presence of God.
6. Pray for the unity of the church.
7. Pray for the salvation of souls.
8. Pray that there will be baptisms—people expressing their unashamed commitment to following Jesus Christ.
9. Pray that God will add to the membership of our church with people joining
10. Pray that the Church will be passionately committed to soul winning, missions, and discipleship

Avoid just getting up on Sunday morning and showing up for worship. Prepare your heart, purify your heart, and anticipate seeing God work.

## ***PRAYING***

Pray that the members of our church will take seriously the preparation each week for Sunday, the Lord's Day.

Specifically pray each day that God's presence would be experienced by everyone who comes to FBC at the Mall.

Pray for Vision 2020 Goal #1: Raise \$1 Million Each Year for Missional Related Causes which Necessitates our Eliminating the Debt no Later than the End of 2020.

### ***FASTING***

I will fast:

\_\_\_ One meal today

\_\_\_ One meal this week

\_\_\_ One meal each day

\_\_\_ One meal in the 52 days

\_\_\_ One day in the 52 days

\_\_\_ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Day 44**

**Monday, March 20**

### **READING**

#### ***Nehemiah 13:23-24***

In those days I also saw that the Jews had married women from Ashdod, Ammon *and* Moab. <sup>24</sup> As for their children, half spoke in the language of Ashdod, and none of them was able to speak the language of Judah, but the language of his own people.

### **TEACHING**

God's people had intermarried with those who had no relationship with God, something Nehemiah had warned them about. Now the children of these relationships had no concept of the God of Israel and didn't know the language of a relationship with God.

There are several things we can learn from this. First, Christians should not date or marry non-Christians (II Corinthians 6:14). Multiple times in Scripture God told His people not to marry those without faith in God. Parents, teach your children from a young age the importance of dating and marrying only those who are actively living for Jesus Christ.

Also, teach your children the language of our faith, Christianity. Make them familiar with these words:

1. Salvation—A personal relationship with Jesus Christ that begins when a person turns to Jesus Christ as the only way of forgiveness for sin; admits he has sinned; repents (seeks God’s forgiveness); and receives Jesus by faith as their Savior and Lord; depending only upon what He did at the cross for your eternal life.
2. Baptism—A physical act of going under the water and coming out of the water, that is a spiritual picture of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. It is the first command Jesus gives to a Christian, and it identifies one as a Christian. This takes place after salvation, not before.
3. Bible—God’s perfect Word given to all generations, which gives us God’s plan for our lives, reveals God’s will, and records His promises. It is the authority for belief and behavior.
4. Prayer—Communicating with God through praise, intercession, thankfulness, and requests and according to God’s will, which is found in God’s Word.
5. Discipleship—The process of becoming more like Jesus Christ and growing in your faith.
6. Church—God’s house where you go to worship, study God’s Word; use your spiritual gifts; communicate the gospel message across the seas, across the states, and across the street; and do ministry
7. Gospel—The message of the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ that transforms a lost sinner into a child of God.

8. Heaven—The place of eternal life for all those who have been saved, once they die.
9. Hell—The place of eternal death for all those who have rejected Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, once they die.
10. Second Coming—The literal return of Jesus Christ to Earth in fulfillment of the promise He made, that signals the end of the world as we know it, and the beginning of eternity.

As a believer know these words and share them with your children.

### ***PRAYING***

Pray for the children of FBC at the Mall. Pray that parents will take seriously their responsibility to instill within their children the Word of God. Pray that parents will make it their mission to help their children know how to defend their faith.

Pray for Vision 2020 Goal #2: Maximize Our Outreach Opportunities and Efforts

### ***FASTING***

I will fast:

\_\_\_ One meal today

\_\_\_ One meal this week

\_\_\_ One meal each day

\_\_\_ One meal in the 52 days

\_\_\_ One day in the 52 days

\_\_\_ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Day 45**

**Tuesday, March 21**

### **READING**

#### ***Nehemiah 13:26***

Did not Solomon king of Israel sin regarding these things? Yet among the many nations there was no king like him, and he was loved by his God, and God made him king over all Israel; nevertheless the foreign women caused even him to sin.

### **TEACHING**

Nehemiah held up Solomon as an example of someone who not only loved God, but God held him in high esteem as a leader. God used Solomon mightily, and He gave him what he requested above anything else, which was wisdom. Wisdom is the ability to know what to do with what you know as you seek to glorify God. But as so often happens with even the godliest of people, there is a “Nevertheless,” there is a besetting sin, an Achilles heel spiritually or morally.

We have to guard against the “Nevertheless” areas of life—those areas where Satan is most likely to tempt us. The writer of Hebrews calls it a “besetting sin,” or “the sin that so easily besets us” (Hebrews 12:1).

In each of our lives, we have areas in which we are more likely to be tempted. We have to be very guarded. Proverbs 4:23, “Watch over your heart with all diligence, for from it *flow* the springs of

life.” When a sinful thought hits your mind, immediately confess it, place it under the control of Jesus Christ, and replace it with Scripture.

Today be aware of those areas in your life where Satan is most likely to tempt you. Rehearse the consequences of giving into sin, and determine, with God’s power, to not go there.

Also, as a church we need to be aware of the ways Satan will attack us. Since we are a Bible-centered, soul winning church, the enemy will always be attacking. We must pray God’s hedge of protection daily around our church that our mission will not be thwarted by Satan’s attacks.

### ***PRAYING***

Pray today for God’s hedge of protection around our church from the attacks of Satan and his army. Pray that our members will daily take seriously guarding their minds and hearts against temptation.

Pray for Vision 2020 Goal #3: Advance and Expand our Media Ministry

### ***FASTING***

I will fast:

\_\_\_ One meal today

\_\_\_ One meal this week

\_\_\_ One meal each day

\_\_\_ One meal in the 52 days

\_\_\_ One day in the 52 days

\_\_\_ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

## ***Day 46***

***Wednesday, March 22***

### ***READING***

***Nehemiah 13:27-29***

Do we then hear about you that you have committed all this great evil by acting unfaithfully against our God by marrying foreign women?"<sup>28</sup> Even one of the sons of Joiada, the son of Eliashib the high priest, was a son-in-law of Sanballat the Horonite, so I drove him away from me.<sup>29</sup> Remember them, O my God, because they have defiled the priesthood and the covenant of the priesthood and the Levites.

### ***TEACHING***

God's people had been unfaithful in their actions. They had neglected to do those things that were clearly commanded by God, and they ran the risk of repeating what God's people had done time and again, a vicious cycle of disobeying God, repenting and then disobeying God again.

Are you faithful to God? Your faithfulness is an expression of the seriousness of your faith and your intention to live in obedience to God. As we cry out to God for revival, and as God sends revival, our continual obedience to Him is essential for revival to continue. Repentance and crying out to God brings revival, but obedience and faithfulness allows the spirit of revival to continue. This is true

personally and corporately (church). What does faithfulness look like?

1. A daily commitment to reading God's Word.
2. Communicating with God at specific times and as the Holy Spirit prompts.
3. Instant obedience to the will of God.
4. A sensitivity to the voice of the Holy Spirit being aware of not quenching or grieving Him.
5. Immediately confessing sin the very moment you are aware of it.
6. Making absolutely certain there is no un-forgiveness and bitterness in your heart toward another.
7. Worship must be a priority (church on Sunday and praising God as a way of life).

Proverbs 20:6 says, "Many a man proclaims his own steadfast love, but a faithful man who can find? (ESV). Be able to raise your hand when that question is asked and respond with, "I am!"

### ***PRAYING***

Pray that you will always be faithful to God and His Word. Pray for our members, that they would be serious about their faithfulness to daily reading God's Word, praying, becoming more like Jesus Christ, worshipping on Sunday in church, and being financially faithful by giving tithes and offerings.

Pray for Vision 2020 Goal #4: Needs Assessment for Staff, Space, Finances, and Times

***FASTING***

I will fast:

\_\_\_ One meal today

\_\_\_ One meal this week

\_\_\_ One meal each day

\_\_\_ One meal in the 52 days

\_\_\_ One day in the 52 days

\_\_\_ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Day 47**

**Thursday, March 23**

### **READING**

***Nehemiah 13:30-31***

Thus I purified them from everything foreign and appointed duties for the priests and the Levites, each in his task, <sup>31</sup> and *I arranged* for the supply of wood at appointed times and for the first fruits. Remember me, O my God, for good.

### **TEACHING**

Nehemiah gave the priests and Levites specific duties in order to serve the Lord. They each had a task for which they were responsible, and they were to fulfil it as their way of expressing the commitment they had to Him.

As a believer, one who has received Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, you have been given at least one spiritual gift. A spiritual gift is a Spirit-given ability to be used to glorify God and to build up the Body of Christ through serving God in specific ways. What is your task at church? Are you volunteering? Have you made yourself available to God to be used in some ministry in our church?

There are multiple ways you can serve God at FBC at the Mall. Do you know your spiritual gift? What do you like to do? What do you

feel like you are good at doing? Think about the various ministries in our church. Go online at Churchatthemall.com, and check out the different ways we minister to people and to our community. The important thing is that you be willing and you let the leadership of the church know that you want to serve somewhere. We can help you and point you in a direction of need.

As you volunteer, you are going to feel a sense of joy and purpose. You are making your life about others and helping them and that pleases God. In a church our size, it is easy to sit on the sidelines or be in the bleachers rather than getting involved. Your involvement will allow you to not only please God and minister to others, it will also bring you a sense of joy.

Today, commit that you will find a task at church and you will begin serving God by doing that task. You will have the added benefit of meeting new people whom God will use to bless your life.

### ***PRAYING***

Today ask the Lord, “Where do You want me to serve?” “What area in the life of our church do You want me to invest my time?” Before you even ask God where He wants you to serve, tell Him you are willing and the answer is “Yes.”

Pray for Vision 2020 Goal #6: Develop a Center for Discipleship and Christian Education

### ***FASTING***

I will fast:

\_\_\_ One meal today

\_\_\_ One meal this week

\_\_\_ One meal each day

\_\_\_ One meal in the 52 days

\_\_\_ One day in the 52 days

\_\_\_ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Day 48**

**Friday, March 24**

### **READING**

***Nehemiah 13:22***

And I commanded the Levites that they should purify themselves and come as gatekeepers to sanctify the sabbath day. *For* this also remember me, O my God, and have compassion on me according to the greatness of Your lovingkindness.

### **TEACHING**

Nehemiah was praying for God's blessings upon his life. He was aware of his shortcomings; however, he also was aware that he served a God Who desires to bless him and place His favor upon him. He asks that God's compassion, God's gracious understanding rest upon his life. He recognized he was serving a great God, a God Who desires to express His love.

Your concept of God is vitally important. He is called our "Heavenly Father." Now, to some who have not had a great relationship with their father, the thoughts of God being a Father can cause some to struggle. Maybe your father was not there for you or you had a strained relationship with him. However, this Father, you can be sure, will never let you down, never leave you, never betray you, never walk away from you, never not answer you, and is always available to you. He wants to bless your life and He wants to bless our church.

Do you trust the Heavenly Father to always do what is best for you? Do you trust Him that He will always do what is in your best interest? You can!

Today, approach our Heavenly Father, and thank Him for being a faithful God Who always does what He says He will do—always. Thank Him that when you disobey Him He loves you enough to discipline you. Ask Him to bless you and do something so big in your life that it is obviously coming from Him. Ask Him to bless our church and to do something so big in our midst that it is obviously from Him. Pray for His favor, His smile upon us as we seek to be a church that glorifies God in all we do and making disciples that overflow His presence everywhere we go.

### ***PRAYING***

Today in your prayer time, ask God to bless you in obvious ways. Make sure your heart is right with God, confess any known sin, and then pray for God’s favor upon your marriage, children, finances, health and the place where you work.

Pray for Vision 2020 Goal #5: Multi-Site Campuses

### ***FASTING***

I will fast:

One meal today

One meal this week

One meal each day

One meal in the 52 days

One day in the 52 days

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

## ***Day 49***

***Saturday, March 25***

### ***READING:***

***Nehemiah 1:4***

When I heard these words, I sat down and wept and mourned for days; and I was fasting and praying before the God of heaven.

### ***TEACHING***

For the last 49 days, we have been on a journey together of crying out to God for revival. The Book of Nehemiah has given us a great blueprint for rebuilding those areas in the life of our church that have been neglected or have not been everything they could have been.

Part of this journey has been practicing the spiritual discipline of fasting. I hope you have been able to fast at least one meal during this Nehemiah Experiment. If not, you still have four more days (including today) to do that.

Fasting is going without food so that you may more intensely seek God. Jesus assumed we would fast. He said “When” you fast not “If” you fast (Matthew 6:16-17). If you cannot medically go without food, then fast something else, such as television or some entertainment.

Throughout history, God has used the discipline of fasting as a way to create the conditions needed for revival to take place. Let me share with you some of the benefits of fasting:

1. You place yourself in a position where you can more easily hear the voice of God.
2. You demonstrate to God your seriousness of crying out for revival and for passionate commitment to Him.
3. You become more sensitive to the voice of the Holy Spirit.
4. You join the multitudes of saints who have practiced this spiritual discipline—a community of fasters.
5. You show the flesh (that part of you that does not want to obey God) that God, not the flesh, is more important to you.
6. You create a sense of expectation that you will hear from God.
7. You can expect answers from God in the days to come.

If you make fasting a regular part of your spiritual disciplines, you will undoubtedly be able to look back and see how God has used it to help you become more like Jesus.

### ***PRAYING***

Today, would you pray and commit to God that you would begin practicing the discipline of fasting? Ask God to speak to your heart as you fast.

Pray for Vision 2020 Goal #7: Develop an Overall Methodical Process of Education, Discipleship, Life Skills, Worship and Apologetics from the Cradle to College

***FASTING***

I will fast:

\_\_\_ One meal today

\_\_\_ One meal this week

\_\_\_ One meal each day

\_\_\_ One meal in the 52 days

\_\_\_ One day in the 52 days

\_\_\_ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

## ***Day 50***

***Sunday, March 26***

### ***READING***

***Nehemiah 2:20***

So I answered them and said to them, “The God of heaven will give us success; therefore we His servants will arise and build, but you have no portion, right or memorial in Jerusalem.” Teaching

### ***TEACHING***

Today (Day 50) and tomorrow (Day 51) of the 52 Day Nehemiah Experiment, we are going to focus on our Seven Missional Goals. The Book of Nehemiah is about building, going forward with, God’s plan and fulfilling the vision of rebuilding the Wall of Jerusalem for God’s glory. In 52 days the vision was fulfilled. For 140 years the wall had been neglected. Now, in 52 days, it was completed and dedicated. Nehemiah had God’s vision, and all of his energy, praying, and planning went into fulfilling that vision.

#### ***Goal #1:***

***Raise \$1 Million Each Year for Missional Related Causes, Which Necessitates Our Eliminating the Debt No Later Than the End of 2020***

We believe it is God’s will that we be a generous church—one that gives at least \$1 million each year to missional related causes.

What is a missional related cause? It is any cause (program or event) that shares the gospel of Jesus Christ across the seas, across the states and across the street. The money we will save from our eliminating our debt will go a long way toward that \$1 million. Our priority must be sharing the gospel first, and then eliminating our indebtedness. Goal number one is vital in us fulfilling our six other missional goals.

**Goal #2:**

***Maximize Our Outreach Opportunities and Efforts***

Our church is an outreaching, soul winning church. We must always be looking for ways that we can share the gospel with the world. We are only one generation away from paganism, which means we must be serious about communicating the gospel. Every meeting, program, ministry, and event we sponsor MUST have as its underlying purpose to share the gospel. The Great Commission gives us the who, what, when, why and where; however, the one question it doesn't answer is HOW. Jesus leaves the how, the methods, up to each generation. The methods must change; the message never changes.

**Goal #3**

***Advance and Expand Our Media Ministry***

Media Ministry is any way we can use through technology to share the gospel and help disciple believers. This includes our recordings of the messages from Sunday's sermons, using our website and through social media (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, etc). Technology can be a great tool in the hands of our church to communicate with our generation the Word of God. We must always be looking for ways that we can expand our presence into a lost and dying world.

## ***PRAYING***

Pray that FBC at the Mall will take seriously the vision God has given to us. May we not allow anything to stand in the way of fulfilling what we know to be God's plan for our church.

Pray for our Easter Services.

## ***FASTING***

I will fast:

One meal today

One meal this week

One meal each day

One meal in the 52 days

One day in the 52 days

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Day 51**

**Monday, March 27**

### **READING**

***Nehemiah 2:20***

So I answered them and said to them, “The God of heaven will give us success; therefore we His servants will arise and build, but you have no portion, right or memorial in Jerusalem.” Teaching

### **TEACHING**

Today we are going to focus on goals four through seven of our Seven Missional Goals. Like Nehemiah, we have a vision of what we believe God wants us to do, and we are committed, with God’s power, to fulfil those goals. Goals are God-given dreams that are practical in nature.

#### **Goal #4**

***Needs Assessment for Staff, Space, Finances, and Times***

Our church needs to always be looking for ways we can best utilize our staff team, the space God has given to us (this old Mall, Church at the Mall Auburndale, and Church at the Mall South) for God’s glory. Further, we must insure that we are financially faithful and that our budget reflects both a realistic figure, yet include an element of faith. Then we need to always be evaluating our schedule to prioritize reaching these Seven Missional Goals.

## **Goal #5**

### ***Multi-Site Campuses***

One of the most effective evangelistic tools in our generation is multi-site churches—same church, different locations. God has given us the property in Auburndale for Church at the Mall Auburndale, and He has given to us the property at Bartow Highway and 540 A. These properties (and others as God gives) are avenues through which we can take the culture of our church and our priority of sharing the gospel to other places in our area of influence.

## **Goal #6**

### ***Develop a Center for Discipleship and Christian Education.***

This goal involves using specific programs and ministries to help believers become more like Jesus Christ. The center is not a specific building or location; it is a mindset of growing disciples. We use our New Member's Connection, Connect Groups, events, conferences, seminars, and ministries designed to assist people in their spiritual growth. We must look for ways we can educate people in the Word of God.

## **Goal #7**

### ***Develop an Overall Methodical Process of Education, Discipleship, Life Skills, Worship, and Apologetics from the Cradle to College***

This goal takes seriously the need to educate our young in the Word of God, so much so that when they go to college, they are able to defend their faith. Our job is to help our young ones (cradle to college) by taking God's Word, and helping them know what they believe and why they believe it. In order for this to

happen, there must be intentionality. At every age and every stage of life, we must be committed to equipping our young people with the teachings of God’s infallible Word.

***PRAYING***

Today pray that we would always be an intentional church—intentionally using every opportunity to share the gospel and help people become more like Jesus Christ. “God help our church to be an intentional church, focused on making what’s important to You, important to us.”

Pray for the Unity of our Church.

***FASTING***

I will fast:

\_\_\_ One meal today

\_\_\_ One meal this week

\_\_\_ One meal each day

\_\_\_ One meal in the 52 days

\_\_\_ One day in the 52 days

\_\_\_ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

## ***Day 52***

***Tuesday, March 28***

### ***READING***

***Nehemiah 7:1***

After the wall had been rebuilt... (NIV)

### ***TEACHING***

Today we come to the end of our exciting 52 Day Nehemiah Experiment. What an incredible journey it has been as we together have cried out to God, fasted, studied the Book of Nehemiah and looked at ways we can implement God's vision for our great church. There is so much God wants to do in this place. His anointing is resting upon our church and we must protect that at all costs by continuing to cry out to Him, instantly obey everything He tells us to do, and protect the unity of the church.

Once the Wall of Jerusalem was rebuilt, the work of God was not yet complete. We are never finished with God's work until we get home to Heaven and until the Church of Jesus Christ is removed from earth and in glory. Tonight we will gather together to cry out to God corporately, just as God's people did in the Book of Nehemiah. Revival came at the conclusion of the Wall.

As we finish this Nehemiah Experiment this is what must continue at FBC at the Mall in the days and years to come:

1. A passionate commitment to God’s Word—preaching it, teaching it, studying it, meditating on it, trusting it, and obeying it as a church.
2. Living in a condition of prayer and always placing crying out to God as a priority.
3. Utter dependence upon the Holy Spirit, daily surrendering to Him, and saying “Yes” to Him even before we know what He is asking.
4. A commitment to doing the will of God, no matter what the cost.
5. Making sharing the Gospel as our number-one priority across the seas, across the states, and across the street.

May God use FBC at the Mall to touch and change the world!

### ***PRAYING***

Pray that our Solemn Assembly (All-Church Prayer Meeting) this evening will be a transforming moment in the life of our church and that real revival will be the result.

### ***FASTING***

I will fast:

\_\_\_ One meal today

\_\_\_ One meal this week

\_\_\_ One meal each day

\_\_\_ One meal in the 52 days

\_\_\_ One day in the 52 days

\_\_\_ Other: \_\_\_\_\_



