



# TRIPLE 15 SUNDAY SCHOOL

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## **Quarter 4: Kingdom Administration**

In this quarter we will understand it is Gods plan for his people to be fruitful and to multiply in the kingdom. We will explore kingdom advancement in business through applying principles of vision, accountability, and professionalism.

**October:** Godly Vision and Earthly Manifestation

**November:** Production through Accountability and Order

**December:** Professionalism in the Kingdom

**Unit 10 Lesson 1**  
**Alignment with God's Vision Habakkuk 2:1-3**

**Personal Application Points:**

UNDERSTAND our responsibility to align our lives and heart with Gods will.

ACCEPT God delights speaking to those who will cherish and obey his word.

EMBRACE the opportunity to identify and execute tangible steps of obedience.

**Habakkuk 2:1-3 NIV**

*"I will stand at my watch and station myself on the ramparts; I will look to see what he will say to me, and what answer I am to give to this complaint. Then the Lord replied:*

*"Write down the revelation and make it plain on tablets so that a herald may run with it. For the revelation awaits an appointed time; it speaks of the end and will not prove false. Though it linger, wait for it; it will certainly come and will not delay."*

**Background & Current Times:**

Who is the best basketball player ever? For most the answer is Michael Jordan. Jordan's career is highly impressive as he won all 6 championships he played in over the course of his career. When interviewed, Jordan does not take all the credit for this accomplishment. Instead, he highlights it was the strategy of his head coach Phil Jackson that ultimately led to Jordan's success. Jordan preferred to have the ball in his hand. However, Jackson reasoned that by Jordan sharing the ball more, his team would be able to be more successful. Jordan coming into agreement with Jackson's vision is what lead to the teams success. In Habakkuk Chapter 2 we find Habakkuk in conversation with God concerning the state of Judah. Judah had abandoned God to continue in evil practices. Habakkuk chooses to posture himself to hear from God concerning his plan so that Judah may have direction. We too are to follow the practice of Habakkuk in our businesses and lives by posturing ourselves to receive Gods vision.

### **Digging Deeper:**

In the beginning of Chapter 2, Habakkuk starts off by initiating with God. Habakkuk's initiation is not only in what he says, but also in his posture. Habakkuk postures himself as someone who is not only wanting to hear from the Lord but also as someone who is ready to obey in action what the Lord says. It is not Gods responsibility to adjust to our attitudes and values, rather it is our responsibility to ensure we are aligned with God through obedience. Habakkuk does not demand that the Lord answer him at his desired timeline. He does state he will wait while maintaining a posture of expectancy. Through following Habakkuk's example, we place ourselves in position to receive divine vision and direction for Gods purpose in our lives as well as in our businesses.

## Unit 10 Lesson 2

### Provision Within God's Vision Proverbs 29:18

#### **Personal Application Points:**

BELIEVE revelation is a necessary part of every believer's life.

UNDERSTAND God blesses his people through wisdom.

RECEIVE peace concerning living a life of restraint.

#### **Proverbs 29:18 NIV**

*"Where there is no revelation, people cast off restraint; but blessed is the one who heeds wisdom's instruction."*

#### **Background & Current Times:**

To be a great boxer, it takes more than a quick jab and fast reflexes. You must exercise restraint and discipline. One of the greatest skills a boxer can have is the ability to give and take blows to their body, while not allowing their pain to cause them to fight from a place of emotion and rage, causing their technique to fail. Boxers can maintain this discipline by understanding restraint and discipline is crucial for victory. The book of Proverbs is known for being full of wisdom and direction for the life of the believer. The directions and insights pinned in this book have been included in daily devotions around the world. Today we will explore one of those insights to master application into our everyday life and living.

#### **Digging Deeper:**

According to Webster's 1828 Dictionary revelation is the disclosure or communication of truth to men by God himself. Through revelation we can gain new understandings about God and his purposes. It is man's responsibility to utilize revelation not as a means of self-validation and instead to obey the will of the Lord. This obedience requires humility and restraint. It is also this same restraint and commitment to God's will that is needed to exercise Godly wisdom. Wisdom is often confused for thoughtful suggestions. However, wisdom is very directional. Wisdom comes attached with an opportunity to obey. When we make it a priority to obey the wisdom of God, we invite his blessings into our lives, as well as our businesses.

## Unit 10 Lesson 3

### Submitting in God's Vision Proverbs 29:5-11

#### **Personal Application Points:**

REALIZE the life of the believer is a life of submission.

ACCEPT we have a responsibility to submit daily while following God's will.

EMBRACE the opportunities we have daily to live a life of submission to God.

#### **Proverbs 29:5-11 NIV**

*"Those who flatter their neighbors are spreading nets for their feet. Evildoers are snared by their own sin, but the righteous shout for joy and are glad. The righteous care about justice for the poor, but the wicked have no such concern. Mockers stir up a city, but the wise turn away anger. If a wise person goes to court with a fool, the fool rages and scoffs, and there is no peace. The bloodthirsty hate a person of integrity and seek to kill the upright. Fools give full vent to their rage, but the wise bring calm in the end."*

#### **Background & Current Times:**

In 2022 Serena made a decision that caused quite a stir in the tennis world. After decades of professional tennis, she made the decision to retire. Many of her supporters many had the opportunity to watch her grow up in the public eye, from a teenager to an adult mother. There was never any doubt about what Serena wanted. Her goal: be the best tennis player ever. There are many aspiring tennis players across the world that also desire to become the greatest tennis player ever, however, it was Williams' willingness to obey within the vision by following diet plans, perfecting her craft and exercising that turned her thoughts into a reality. Like Williams, we too must commit to submit in the journey. In this passage of proverbs, we see a familiar theme. The writer is reasoning with the reader by highlighting choices and consequences of one's actions. The book of proverbs equips us with the reasoning we need to establish a healthy spiritual diet for purpose.

### **Digging Deeper:**

When God speaks to us about his will for us it is a faith booster. It doesn't matter if it's through another person or directly from his word we feel closer to God when we can clearly discern what his goals and purposes are for our lives. We must also understand that with this understanding also comes a responsibility to give priority in our lives to what God has said. Daily submission is always a part of the mission. It's through our obedience to God as we go through the mission that we mature in the faith. Submitting to God allows us to take back authority over our emotions and demonstrate our love towards God by doing what he has commanded, the way he has commanded. This type of daily submission should be the hallmark of every believer.

**Unit 10 Lesson 4**  
**God's spirit-led Business Plan 1 Corinthians 2:9-14**

**Personal Application Points:**

ACKNOWLEDGE ambition alone does not please God.

ACCEPT God's ways and thoughts are above man's.

INTERNALIZE apart from Christ's leading we are destined for disaster.

**1 Corinthians 2:9-14 NIV**

*"However, as it is written: "What no eye has seen, what no ear has heard, and what no human mind has conceived"— the things God has prepared for those who love him— these are the things God has revealed to us by his Spirit. The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God. For who knows a person's thoughts except their own spirit within them? In the same way no one knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. What we have received is not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, so that we may understand what God has freely given us. This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, explaining spiritual realities with Spirit-taught words. The person without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God but considers them foolishness, and cannot understand them because they are discerned only through the Spirit."*

**Background & Current Times:**

Part of the journey of being a parent is sharing in milestone moments in your child's life. Those moments often include a child taking their first steps, being able to say mom and dad, and their first day at school among many others. One that is usually less anticipated is the "Terrible Two's" phase. Around the age of two children become more aware of their emotions, begin to have opinions, and begin talking. However, they tend not to have the communication skills to express themselves which results in them becoming frustrated and throwing a tantrum. Just because children are developing the ability to make decisions at this age, does not mean they are qualified to do so. They need a guide who can see and understand beyond their abilities just as Christ does for believers. The Corinthians were known for being a gifted people. Their gifting also could have been a catalyst for their downfall as it caused them to think more highly of

themselves. In today's passage Paul is writing to the Corinthians to highlight the importance of being Spirit led.

**Digging Deeper:**

It is our responsibility as believers to master ensuring ambition is centered in the right place. That place is in alignment with Gods will. It is common for many maturing believers to receive a part of Gods plan for their lives and begin bringing it to pass in a way that fits their preferred approach. We must always be aware that our plans are to come from God. It is our responsibility to allow God to be the master leader and orchestrater in our lives.

**Unit 10 Lesson 5**  
**Counsel Matters Proverbs 15:22**

**Personal Application Points:**

UNDERSTAND counsel is a part of Gods will.

IDENTIFY the sources of counsel God has attached to my life.

OBEY counsel as an act of humility for success.

**Proverbs 15:22 NIV**

*"Plans fail for lack of counsel, but with many advisers they succeed."*

**Background & Current Times:**

In 2003 Mega Pop/R&B star Beyoncé released the third single from her debut solo album entitled "Me, Myself, and I. While the song was popular the message of the song conflicts with Gods will for us as believers. God places resources for your purpose in people. There is no plan for your life given by God that can be fulfilled without the counsel from God. We may experience difficulties in communicating with others especially about the intimate details of our life. This should not be viewed as a deal breaker but an opportunity to confront those difficulties by choosing Gods plan over our will. This is a choice that the believer must make daily. The book of proverbs is without a doubt the road map to our purpose. Through the book of proverbs God expresses his love for us by instructing us in his ways. In today's passage we will explore Gods will for counsel in our lives.

**Digging Deeper:**

Counsel does not reflect personal inability and worthlessness. It does reflect God's plan and desire to see his children experience success. Consider, who are the advisors God has assigned to your mission? These advisors have an eye and skill for examining what needs to be done and will communicate with you based on truth. They are progress oriented and have your best interest in mind which is Gods will. Take the opportunity to identify the counsel God has given you, start with your local pastor and leadership team. Be willing to open dialogue about your God given mission, receive godly counsel, and obey.

## Unit 11 Lesson 1

### Honor that Yields Abundant Production

#### **Personal Application Points:**

By the end of the lesson, we will:

UNDERSTAND what it means to honor God with our wealth

IDENTIFY ways you have attempted to produce in dishonor

CHOOSE to honor God and produce abundantly

#### **Proverbs 3:9-10 NIV**

*<sup>9</sup>Honor the Lord with your wealth,  
with the firstfruits of all your crops;  
<sup>10</sup>then your barns will be filled to overflowing,  
and your vats will brim over with new wine.*

#### **Background and Current Times:**

The book of Proverbs, written in about 700BC, is full of God's wisdom. It was written mostly by King Solomon and contains sayings that give instructions on how to live well and prosper. Proverbs provides practical instructions as well as principles that are centered around fearing God. Although this book was written long ago, the wisdom provided is timeless. The wisdom presented offers wisdom about how to produce according to God's mandate.

Tax withholding is a concept that was introduced in 1862 under President Abraham Lincoln to help fund the Civil War. Today, taxes are withheld to help fund public goods and services to include education and infrastructure. When working for any company, there is a percentage of an employee's paycheck that he or she will never see as it is taken off the top as it "owed" to the government. This automatic deduction is to ensure the company pays the taxes they owe on a pay as you go basis to avoid owing extremely large amounts to the government at the end of the year. Although the employee has earned wages, he or she has no control over the taxes that are automatically deducted from the paycheck. Unlike tax withholding, God doesn't just take what we owe off the top. He gives us the opportunity to honor Him with our wealth by giving to Him first.

#### **Digging Deeper:**

Any entrepreneur or leader desires their business to succeed, produce abundantly and accumulate wealth. It is God's desire that His children achieve the same. However, there

is a certain manner in which we obtain this success, which is through honoring God. Scripture demands we honor God with our wealth through giving Him the first fruit of all our crops—things we work for and produce. Giving to God first not only displays a heart of gratitude, but reverence and an understanding that honoring God results in abundant production beyond our imagination. We cannot truly produce the way God intends us to without His blessing. Only when we honor God, do we experience abundance in the things we produce. Abundance that results from honor is marked by overflow.

## Unit 11 Lesson 2

### Remembering Enables Production

#### **Personal Application Points:**

By the end of the lesson, we will:

EVALUATE areas where you have forgotten the Lord

ACCEPT the truth of your limitations

DECIDE to remember the Lord as the enabler of producing

#### **Deuteronomy 8:18 NIV**

*<sup>18</sup>But remember the Lord your God, for it is he who gives you the ability to produce wealth, and so confirms his covenant, which he swore to your ancestors, as it is today.*

#### **Background and Current Times:**

In today's text, Moses is speaking to the Israelites before they cross the Jordan. He is reminding the Israelites of God's commands for them as it would be pertinent to their survival. Moses is also reminding the people of Israel of the blessings and miracles God allowed them to experience. In verse 18, Moses is calling the Israelites to remember that their ability to produce, blessing and wealth is because of the Lord.

Mass production is the production of large quantities of standardized products. These products are produced in a constant flow, sometimes on assembly lines. Mass production was made popular by Henry Ford's Motor company when electric motors were introduced in the 1910s and 1920s. The Henry Ford Motor Company introduced electric motors to chain and sequential production. Mass production allows larger quantities to be produced and reduces the probability of human error. Just as mass production enabled companies to produce greater wealth, God enables us to do so as well.

#### **Digging Deeper:**

Many would like to think that what they've acquired is the result of merely hard work. People pride themselves on their ability to make things happen. When this type of mindset prevails, it becomes easy to ignore the truth—only God gives ability to produce wealth. The key to this ability is remembering the Lord your God. Remembrance of this sort takes humility. One must humble themselves and soberly accept the truth of mortal limitations and the inability to produce true wealth without God. Acceptance of this degree of humility and truth will position the believing entrepreneur to produce unimaginable wealth.

## Unit 11 Lesson 3 Accountability In Production

### **Personal Application Points:**

By the end of the lesson, we will:

IDENTIFY the assets God has blessed you with

EVALUATE what you have done with the assets you have

LIST ways you can take accountability and multiply your assets

### **Matthew 25:20 NIV**

*<sup>20</sup>The man who had received five bags of gold brought the other five. 'Master,' he said, 'you entrusted me with five bags of gold. See, I have gained five more.'*

### **Background and Current Times:**

Matthew 25 chronicles Jesus speaking to His disciples about the end times. In today's text, Jesus is speaking in a parable about a master issuing three servants different amounts of gold. Each of the servants did as they saw fit with their bag of gold. In the parable, two of the servants gained more bags while the other went and hid it in the ground. In the parable, the master spoke well and blessings on the two servants who multiplied their gifts and negatively of the servant who did not produce. This parable displays how God expects us to take accountability for what we have and produce more.

Investing is the act of dedicating money or an asset in order to obtain an increase in value over time. Those who invest expect to generate a return. Many people seek to learn more about investing as it is a non-laborious act that often promises to yield generous returns. Those who invest generally expect greater returns from greater risks. In order for investing to be beneficial, the investor must take a risk and dedicate the assets. Holding on to the asset will not produce anything greater than the asset itself.

**Digging Deeper:**

God has given every entrepreneur an asset to invest with the expectation that he or she will. It is not honoring to God to hold on to the assets He has blessed us with in efforts to protect them. God is expecting us to produce even more with what He has given us. Doing so will require us to yield to the risks associated with producing. These risks include, but are not limited to, time sacrifice, skills building and collaboration with those He's placed around us. We are accountable to God for the assets He's given us. God can bless us with more assets to produce even greater when we are good stewards of what we have. When we don't produce more than what we've been given, we cannot be trusted with little or much.

## Unit 11 Lesson 4 Dangers of Producing Bad Fruit

### **Personal Application Points:**

By the end of the lesson, we will:

UNDERSTAND the dangers of producing bad fruit

ALLOW God to show you where your business needs pruning

RID your business of bad fruit

### **Matthew 7:19 NIV**

*<sup>19</sup>Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.*

### **Background and Current Times:**

Matthew 7 is part of Jesus' sermon on the mount. He is speaking in a parable about true and false prophets. In this parable, Jesus makes a statement about what is done to a tree that does not produce good fruit. The scripture states that a tree that does not produce good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. These are seemingly harsh consequences for producing bad fruit, but it displays how important it is to produce, as what is produced determines authenticity.

Tree pruning has many benefits, including encouraging tree growth and support. Without being properly pruned, a tree can pose a threat to others due to broken limbs and branches. Neglecting to prune a tree can also make a tree more susceptible to damage from insects and fungus. The removal of dead and rotted limbs helps the fruit to grow more plentifully. Believers too must evaluate themselves and allow pruning to take place so they can grow without posing danger.

### **Digging Deeper:**

Being pruned is uncomfortable; however, it is dangerous to risk not producing or bearing bad fruit. God has designed us to be productive and bear good fruit as we are from Him. In order to produce according to your mantle, pruning must take place. When we are pruned, God has room to bless our businesses to produce greater than we've experienced. If we do not produce the fruit God created us to produce in our businesses, we run the risk of being "cut down and thrown into the fire". It is our responsibility to yield to the pruning of God so that we can be successful in our journeys of entrepreneurship.

**Unit 12 Lesson 1**  
**Mission Focus: Securing the Mission through Prayer**

**Personal Application Points:**

By the end of the lesson, we will:

ACCEPT workplaces are not always peaceful environments.

DENY thoughts of victimization when faced with ridicule.

RESPOND in humility through prayer when internally challenged.

**Nehemiah 4:1-6 NIV**

**1** When Sanballat heard that we were rebuilding the wall, he became angry and was greatly incensed. He ridiculed the Jews, **2** and in the presence of his associates and the army of Samaria, he said, "What are those feeble Jews doing? Will they restore their wall? Will they offer sacrifices? Will they finish in a day? Can they bring the stones back to life from those heaps of rubble—burned as they are?"

**3** Tobiah the Ammonite, who was at his side, said, "What they are building—even a fox climbing up on it would break down their wall of stones!"

**4** Hear us, our God, for we are despised. Turn their insults back on their own heads. Give them over as plunder in a land of captivity. **5** Do not cover up their guilt or blot out their sins from your sight, for they have thrown insults in the face of[b] the builders.

**6** So we rebuilt the wall till all of it reached half its height, for the people worked with all their heart

**Background and Current Times:**

Chik-Fil-A is known nationally for their consistent food quality and amazing customer service. In the article "A lesson in customer service from Chick-fil-A President Dan Cathy", Dan Cathy shares, "Every life has a story, and often our customers and our employees, need a little grace and a little space when you deal with them because they are either experiencing a problem, just finished having a problem, or are about to have one". He later goes on to share, "The word 'restaurant' means place of restoration, and we think of Chick-fil-A as an oasis where people can be restored. We strive to treat people better than the place down the street. One way we do that is by remembering that we're all people with a lot of emotional things going on that don't necessarily show on the surface, so we try to offer amenities and kindness that minister to the heart," he said.

Cathy's philosophy is a clear focus on the need to facilitate business in accordance with the mission of God. Nehemiah's commitment to building the wall too demonstrates how a focus on the mission guides how one may perceive and respond to conflict in the workplace.

**Digging Deeper:**

Nehemiah came to Jerusalem with a clear goal and focus on purpose and mission. In business, many begin with a clear idea of how the journey should be absent of reality. Upon starting the work to rebuild the wall, Nehemiah was faced with strong ridicule from Sanballat and Tobiah. Their ridicule was coupled with a targeted goal to diminish their efforts, faith, and ultimately ruin the mission. Nehemiah demonstrates a level of maturity through his response despite the level of public ridicule he was under.

Nehemiah, in all humility and earnestness, turned his focus to God alone and uttered a prayer that reveals further his commitment to the mission.

Nehemiah's response is a call and model to believers in business to always serve with the mission in mind. This enables and equips believers to perceive and respond to conflict in such a way that God is honored. Also, the mission is not compromised by dedicating time and limited energies in people, places and things that do not sow into mission fulfillment.

Mission fulfillment allows one to facilitate business at a level of professionalism that cannot be denied or disputed. Take time to ensure you know your purpose and focus on ensuring your business principles are in alignment with those demonstrated through scripture.

## Unit 12 Lesson 2

### Positive Responsiveness

#### Personal Application Points:

By the end of the lesson, we will:

IDENTIFY threats to ongoing professionalism as an entrepreneur.

PRAY consistently to God for wisdom to eliminate threats.

FACILITATE God's provided instruction within your business.

#### Nehemiah 4:7-9 NIV

*<sup>7</sup>But when Sanballat, Tobiah, the Arabs, the Ammonites and the people of Ashdod heard that the repairs to Jerusalem's walls had gone ahead and that the gaps were being closed, they were very angry. <sup>8</sup>They all plotted together to come and fight against Jerusalem and stir up trouble against it. <sup>9</sup>But we prayed to our God and posted a guard day and night to meet this threat.*

#### Background and Current Times:

Oreo is a universal brand with a longstanding reputation that extends decades. Oreo, approximately 2 years ago, also wildly responded to a perceived threat that forever marked the company's perspective on their product value.

"When the official NASA Asteroid Watch Twitter account sent out a message about Earth's potential collision with Asteroid 2018VP1 — a "very small" asteroid that "poses no threat to Earth" — most people just ignored it, but not Oreo.

The snack company took the (non)threat very, very seriously — so much so that it decided to erect an asteroid-proof vault in Norway to protect its precious recipe as well as a stockpile of milk's favorite cookies. The company announced the precautionary measures." Via Twitter.

[Does Oreo have a secret recipe? Yes. Here's where they'll hide it - Deseret News](https://www.deseret.com/u-s-world/2020/11/3/21546931/oreo-recipe-vault-asteroid)

<https://www.deseret.com/u-s-world/2020/11/3/21546931/oreo-recipe-vault-asteroid>

To some this was a wildly irresponsible display of pomp while to others this act simply demonstrated the value of the Oreo and its perceived impact on society. This article also parallels a principle Nehemiah practiced regarding threat awareness and response.

Through scripture, we see a display of Nehemiah's positive responsiveness to threats.

We also learn how we can glean from his example as we operate business to the utmost level of professionalism within the workplace.

**Digging Deeper:**

As if the pursuit of establishing a business does not come with its own inherent challenges, one can be assured there will be external forces working against the work given by God to accomplish here on earth. Nehemiah, even after his prayer, was still confronted with the swelling anger of Sanballat and Tobiah. This event mirrors a level of expectation that is reasonable for any individual with a mission-focused pursuit. Despite this reality, Nehemiah persisted and excelled through prayer and practical application of a solution. His response opens the door to highlight our need to be aware of threats. It also cautions us not to build blindly. Moreover, Nehemiah models a picture of professionalism through integral responses to threats through prayer and protection of the mission.

Take time to consider the threats to your business? How is God asking you to respond?

## Unit 12 Lesson 3

### Guarding the Gaps

#### Personal Application Points:

UNDERSTAND what it means to guard the gap.

BELIEVE that Christ is the solution for any problem that arises in our lives.

EMBRACE the responsibility of guarding the gaps in our personal lives as well as in our business.

#### Nehemiah 4:10-15 NIV

*<sup>10</sup>“Meanwhile, the people in Judah said, “The strength of the laborers is giving out, and there is so much rubble that we cannot rebuild the wall.” <sup>11</sup>Also our enemies said, “Before they know it or see us, we will be right there among them and will kill them and put an end to the work.” <sup>12</sup>Then the Jews who lived near them came and told us ten times over, “Wherever you turn, they will attack us.” <sup>13</sup>Therefore I stationed some of the people behind the lowest points of the wall at the exposed places, posting them by families, with their swords, spears and bows. <sup>14</sup>After I looked things over, I stood up and said to the nobles, the officials and the rest of the people, “Don’t be afraid of them. Remember the Lord, who is great and awesome, and fight for your families, your sons and your daughters, your wives and your homes.” <sup>15</sup>When our enemies heard that we were aware of their plot and that God had frustrated it, we all returned to the wall, each to our own work.”*

#### Background & Current Times:

In the 1979-80 basketball season, the Los Angeles Lakers experienced what many thought would be a tragic setback. After fighting their way through the entire regular season and the playoffs games, their all-star center, Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, injured himself in one of the championship games. Jabbar was unable to play, leaving a gap in the team at the most crucial time. However, it was the rookie sensation Magic Johnson who demonstrated courage by filling in the gap and playing his position, thus leading the team to an NBA championship. In today's text, Nehemiah also finds himself in an unfavorable predicament. In the midst of an already daunting task, Nehemiah and his crew now will face more opposition from their enemies. Nehemiah's plight serves as evidence that just because you seek to do what is God's will, it does not mean it will be easy. However, we are still more than able to find success with the help of the Lord. As Nehemiah and the Jews continue to rebuild, we will take time to see how they overcome opposition.

#### Digging Deeper:

No matter who you are or what the state of your business may be, one thing will always be true. You will always have a weakness. Our weaknesses themselves do not disqualify

us from reaching our goals; however, our refusal to acknowledge and address them will always leave us vulnerable to our enemies. When Nehemiah received word of his enemies incoming attack, his response was to account for his weakness. As believers, as well as aspiring entrepreneurs, it's important that we always be willing to "guard the gaps". To put attention to the areas of our lives or business that are not together and to utilize the necessary resources to strengthen those areas. This may look like asking for counsel, educating ourselves in a particular area of weakness, or even confronting habitual behavior that is not rooted in Christ. We can rest assured knowing it is Christ who will give us the grace to still progress as we exercise courage to tend to the Gaps in our lives.

## Unit 12 Lesson 4

### Stretched by Purpose

#### Personal Application Points:

DECIDE that the mission that Christ has called you to is more valuable than your comfort.

CHOOSE to relinquish all limitations you have placed on yourself or your business.

EMBRACE the opportunity to be used in unorthodox ways to accomplish God's will.

#### Nehemiah 4:16-23 NIV

*<sup>16</sup>"From that day on, half of my men did the work, while the other half were equipped with spears, shields, bows and armor. The officers posted themselves behind all the people of Judah <sup>17</sup>who were building the wall. Those who carried materials did their work with one hand and held a weapon in the other, <sup>18</sup>and each of the builders wore his sword at his side as he worked. But the man who sounded the trumpet stayed with me. <sup>19</sup>Then I said to the nobles, the officials and the rest of the people, "The work is extensive and spread out, and we are widely separated from each other along the wall. <sup>20</sup>Wherever you hear the sound of the trumpet, join us there. Our God will fight for us!" <sup>21</sup>So we continued the work with half the men holding spears, from the first light of dawn till the stars came out. <sup>22</sup>At that time I also said to the people, "Have every man and his helper stay inside Jerusalem at night, so they can serve us as guards by night and as workers by day." <sup>23</sup>Neither I nor my brothers nor my men nor the guards with me took off our clothes; each had his weapon, even when he went for water."*

#### Background & Current Times:

In 1966, Mary Van Brittan Brown invented the first home security system. Brown was a nurse who lived in New York City. Often her husband would be away, and she spent many nights alone at home. As an African American woman, she found the police to be unreliable and slow to respond. So based on her need for safety, she built a system that used a camera to look through four peep holes all connected to a monitor in her bedroom. Brown was willing to step out of the medical field to tend to another need, just like the people of Judah. Nehemiah calls for the people of Judah to expand their capabilities according to the need that is before them. Some of the people are even occupying two roles simultaneously. Today, we will learn that God gives us grace to be successful when we are willing to inconvenience ourselves for His purposes.

**Digging Deeper:**

As believers, it is imperative that we understand that the life we are called to live is not dictated by comfort. In a time where many have looked to the church to be a refuge from responsibility of self-inflicted circumstances, we must remember that the symbol of our faith is the cross. Nehemiah and his men illustrate for us what it looks like to inconvenience yourself for the sake of Christ. Through their conviction to restore the wall, they simultaneously relinquished limitations and familiarities that do not serve this purpose. Though the men are carrying swords, Nehemiah makes clear that it is the Lord who will fight for them, just as He will fight for us when we embrace the opportunity to be used by Him in unfamiliar and unorthodox ways. More than our know how, God first desires our willingness. It is this willingness to be used and stretched that serves as a catalyst to God's plan. As we close this year, let's take the opportunities before us to step outside of what we have been accustomed to and maximize by faith.