

Good evening. Hope y'all are doing well tonight. We're looking together in the book of Nehemiah and tonight we're in Nehemiah chapter 3. It's another list of people Plus, many names of gates in the city of Jerusalem. You may have noticed along with our prayer sheet, there is a map, a map of Jerusalem in the time of Nehemiah, along with the names and locations of some of the gates. And so I don't know if it's the Lord's sense of humor that these lists come my way when we were in Ezra. It came my way and anyway, we'll ask for the Lord's help and have a great time as we look at what God has for us from Nehemiah chapter three. So let's look at the Lord's word from Nehemiah chapter three. Then Elishab, the high priest, rose up with his brothers, the priests, and they built the Sheep Gate. They consecrated it and set its doors. They consecrated it as far as the Tower of the Hundred, as far as the Tower of Haniel. And next to them, the men of Jericho built. And next to them, Zakir, the son of Emri built. The sons of Hassanah built the fish gate. They laid its beams and set its doors, its bolts and its bars. And next to them, Meramoth, the son of Uriah, the son of Hakaz repaired. And next to them, Meshulam, the son of Berekiah, the son of Meshazabel, repaired. And next to them, Zadok, the son of Benana, repaired. And next to them, the Tekoyites repaired. And their nobles would not stoop to serve their Lord. Jehoiada, the son of Posseth, and Meshulam, the son of Besodeiah, repaired the gate Yeshannah. They laid its beams and set its doors, its bolts and its bars. And next to them repaired Melatiah, the Gibeonite, and Jaddan, the Meshulamite. Maranothite, the men of Gibeon, men of Mishpah, the seat of the governor of the province beyond the river. Next to them, Uziel, the son of Harhahiah, goldsmiths repaired. Next to him, Hananiah, one of the perfumers repaired. And they restored Jerusalem as far as the broad wall. Next to them, Raphael, the son of Hur, ruled half of the district of Jerusalem, repaired. Next to them, Jedidiah, the son of Harumaf, repaired opposite his house. And next to him, Hattush, the son of Hashabaniah, repaired. And Malchijah, the son of Harem, and Hashub, the son of Pothomab, repaired another section in the tower of the ovens. Next to him, Shalom, the son of Ha-lo-hesh, the ruler of half of the district of Jerusalem, repaired, he and his daughters. Hanun and the inhabitants of Zanoth repaired the valley gate. They rebuilt it and set its doors, its bolts, and its bars, and repaired a thousand cubits of the wall as far as the Dung Gate. Malchutja, the son of Rakhab, ruler of the district of Beth-Hakkarim, repaired the Dungate. He built it and set its doors, its bolts, and its bars. And Shalom, the son of Kol Hosei Zeth, ruler of the district of Mizpah, repaired

the fountain gate. He rebuilt it and covered it and set its doors, its bolts, and its bars. And he built the wall of the pool of Shelah, of the king's garden, as far as the stairs that go down from the city of David. After him, Nehemiah, the son of Asbuk, ruler of the half district of Bethshir, repaired to a point opposite the tombs of David, as far as the artificial pool, as far as the house of the mighty men. After him, the Levites repaired, Rahum, the son of Benai. Next to him, Hashabiah, the ruler of the half the district of Kilila, repaired for his district. After him, their brothers repaired. Bavai, the son of Hinnadad, ruler of the half district of Kilila. Next to him, Azer, the son of Jeshua, ruler of Mishpeth, repaired another section opposite the ascent to the armory at the buttress. After him, Baruch, the son of Jabai, repaired another section from the buttress to the door of the house of Elishabib, the high priest. After him, Merimoth, the son of Uriah, son of Hakaz, repaired another section from the door of the house of Elishabib to the end of the house of Elishabib. After him, the priests, the men of the surrounding area repaired. After them, Benjamin, Hashub, repaired opposite their house. After them, Azariah, the son of Maaseiah, the son of Ananiah, repaired beside his own house. And after him, Benu, the son of Hinnadad, repaired another section from the house of Azariah to the buttress and to the corner. Paul, Paul, all the son of Uziah repaired opposite the buttress and the tower projecting from the upper house of the king at the court of the guard. And after him, Petahiah, the son of Parosh, and the temple servants living at Ophel repaired to a point opposite the water gate on the east and the projecting tower. After him, the Tekoites repaired another section opposite the great projecting tower as far as the wall of Ophel. Above the house gate, the priests repaired, each one opposite his own house. After them, Zadok, the son of Emir, repaired opposite his own house. After him, Shemaiah, the son of Shechaniah, the keeper of the east gate, repaired. After him, Hananiah, the son of Shelemiah and Hanun, the sixth son of Zalaph, repaired another section. After him, Meshulam, the son of Berechiah, repaired opposite his chamber. After him, Malchijah, One of the goldsmiths repaired as far as the house of the temple servants and of the merchants opposite the muster gate and to the upper chamber of the corner and between the upper chamber of the corner and the sheep gate, the goldsmiths and the merchants repaired. Quite a list, quite entertaining, I know, as I read this portion and tried to pronounce the names for us here. But this chapter, chapter three of Nehemiah is very significant. The book of Nehemiah would be incomplete, really, without this chapter. For in these verses, we have the insight of Nehemiah and kind of the secret of his success and the ability that the Lord gave him to manage this entire project. And there are three points that

really led to his success that I just want to put out there from the outset. Nehemiah, first of all, made that which is somewhat complex. the rebuilding of this wall around the city of Jerusalem and places that need to be completely built and other places it was just a repair. He made what was complex fairly simple. Secondly, each builder, each labor enthusiastically and harmoniously served and worked with their fellow workers. And then thirdly, we learn about Nehemiah, that through the erection of these walls that went up, God's power, God's glory, God's promise to be with and protect his people. was made known and pressed his people into continual service despite the opposition, the hostility, the discouragements that they faced. And all of this really relates to us. I mean, we have been given several tasks, especially the task of spreading the gospel and building one another up in the faith, making the Lord Jesus known to our world. We have some significant work before us and there are spiritual lessons for us to learn even here in Nehemiah chapter three. There are a couple of interesting things, some general comments I'd like to make. If you look at the map that you may have picked up, there is a very organized description in this chapter, beginning with the sheep gate that we read in both verse one, as well as in the final verse of chapter three, chapter three, verse 32. And the description of the rebuilding of the wall is done in a counter-clockwise effort. You may have noticed that as the names, as I attempted to read the names and the locations of the wall. And we find at the end of what we looked at last week, that there was a kind of a dedication, a little mini dedication as they began their service. for the Lord, kind of a laying the first stone type of ceremony. I was recently driving in our city and some of our city leaders and some construction people were gathered at a location that was gonna be a dedication of a site. They had their shovels out, the camera crew was there. It probably wasn't quite that grand or glorious in Nehemiah's day. but they committed their work to the Lord. I wanna just say four things briefly in just the next few minutes that we have together about what is it that characterize the rebuilding of the wall here in Nehemiah chapter three. The first word is that of coordination. 20 times In this chapter, there is the word next to him, beside them, beyond them. And it's an expression how that there was an incredible coordination of the effort of building and rebuilding this wall. Each person had their own assignment They knew what they were to do. There was not confusion. They had a definite place to work and they knew where they belonged in their service and what they were expected to do. Some of the places, as I mentioned, only needed repairs, but others needed more of a complete overhaul because of damage that had occurred previously

to the wall. Another expression that is here used many times in Nehemiah chapter three is the expression of in front of are each in front of their house or opposite his house, they were working adjacent to their own living quarters. This was very strategic on the part of Nehemiah. There would not be a wasting of people's time and commuting and carrying tools and resources around the city. It also provided a location where people could be cared for and well fed, perhaps, while they worked on the wall. And if there was an attack upon the city during this time of construction, they would be right there near their families. And it's interesting how Nehemiah sets up some supervisors, some wall supervisors of the work that dealt with some of the day-to-day issues or problems that could arise. And if you looked at the map and studied it very carefully, you'll see that he placed these at various locations around the map, at the wall at various places. So the first is that of coordination. Think about the church for just a moment. It's very important that the Lord's people be coordinated in our efforts and not just serving haphazardly or randomly or without any kind of plan or coordination. It can be a waste of energy and time. Frustration can set in that you're not accomplishing what you feel called by the Lord to do. Coordination is very, very important. The second word that characterizes what we find here in Nehemiah 3 is not only coordination, but cooperation between the people, between people of different places in life, different walks of life. We find the priest, the rulers, who are like the leaders, those that were specialists, goldsmiths, merchants, temple servants, makers of perfume. Everyone had a place and there was cooperation one with another. Everyone and every group got their hands dirty. And that is how it is to be in the body of the Lord Jesus. Think about what the Apostle Paul teaches us in 1 Corinthians chapter 12. In 1 Corinthians 12, I'm gonna read just a few verses starting at verse four. Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same spirit. And there are varieties of service, but the same Lord. And there are varieties of activities, but it's the same God who empowers them all in everyone. Then down in verse 11, all these are empowered by one in the same spirit who apportions to each one individually as he wills. And then towards the end of the chapter, this well-known section, the eye cannot say to the hand, I have no need of you, nor again the head to the feet. I have no need of you. On the contrary, The parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, and on those parts of the body that we think less honorable, we bestow the greater honor, and our unpresentable parts are treated with greater modesty. Here is just a reminder how that in the body of Christ, that there is diversity. Each of us who know the Lord Jesus have been born again by the spirit of God. Christ has ascended

and by his spirit he has given each one of you at least a spiritual gift. And don't think that when he was doling out those gifts that he passed you by. Everyone has at least a gift. one spiritual gift and various abilities. And it's really important and it's key that we serve and use those gifts for the honor and glory of the Lord and for the building up of one another and the spread of advance of his kingdom and his gospel is really key and important for us. And so we're instructed that Paul talks about how that we're not to covet, to long for someone else's gift, but to use the gifts the Lord has given us and not despise our own gifts that he has entrusted to us. And in this passage, here back in Nehemiah chapter three, in verse 12, we read of a man who rebuilt the wall, I thought it was in verse 12, who repaired his section of the wall, he and his daughters here, the whole community is serving, and in this instance, appropriately, his daughters were coming to the aid of repairing the wall. In the body of Christ, we need, the Lord Jesus has given gifts to each of us. And men, women, even children, young people, are to use the gifts, the abilities that the Lord has given them for his glory. So we have coordination and cooperation. The next word, and all these actually begin with a letter C, is not an admirable thing. It's the word conceit. For we read in verse five that some of the men from Tekoa, You know, many people worked enthusiastically with their own heart. They gave themselves to this. But we read in verse five about the men of Tekoa, the Tekoites, but their nobles would not stoop to serve their Lord. It looks like some of the Toccoites were repairing their section of a wall, but their leaders were not willing to serve. And the actual word literally means that they would not put their necks into serving or their shoulders into serving the Lord. This idea in the Bible, and it's really interesting this word neck is used here because the word neck is often used to describe someone who is resolute in going their own way. They're stiff-necked. They're resisting the Lord. They're wanting to do their own thing. They're out for their own name, their own reputation, and not for the honor of the Lord. That's the description of a few here. Derek Kidner in his commentary comments that petty pride ruled rather than a full hearted devotion to the Lord. And so often pride gets in the way. It trips us up. It can trip a church up. Whether it's those that are the nobles among this group of a church or others, it's something we want to be aware of and know that pride destroys, hinders the work of the advance of the gospel and the building of one another up in our faith. Well, the next C is that word

of commendation. For we find throughout this chapter that Nehemiah is encouraging. He's listing those that were serving. And it says something about Nehemiah, that he was a bit of a shepherd leader in the sense that shepherds know their sheep. He knew and called the people by their names. He had an interest in the workers. He highly values them. And he especially highlights those who serve not only their section, but they also helped in another area. There are several references to those who repaired another section, six times in this chapter. He gives praise to the Lord, but acknowledgement and appreciation for the people and what the hard work that they were doing in rebuilding the wall. In Christian service and ministry, discouragement can be a real thing. So often, in Christ's church, people who are involved, people who serve, are often taken for granted. Their service is assumed, they're fulfilling their duties, they don't fuss, they don't complain, but oftentimes there's very little acknowledgement or appreciation for what they are doing in the name and the cause of Christ. Certainly we're not to race one another to the spotlight to be praised, but it's important that we serve and that service is acknowledged and recognized, perhaps not formally, officially, here it's in his book, but some appropriate expression of genuine appreciation and the value and the importance for what one another we are doing for the sake of the Lord Jesus. In this list of accomplishments and acknowledgment of service, Nehemiah is silent about himself. He's not drawing attention to himself. He's not focusing on himself as the one who coordinated this entire endeavor. Nehemiah knew the truth of Psalm 27 too. Let another praise you and not your own mouth. Someone else and not your own lips. We find here that through coordination, cooperation, though there was some conceit and through commending, commendation, the people of God were faithful in serving and in building, accomplishing a very difficult task. We'll read a little later in the book that they completed this enormous task in a short 52 days. God has given us a task, and the task is an enormous task. We're dependent utterly upon him. We're needy. We're unable to serve without the presence and power and love of our Savior himself. Like the Apostle Paul, as we think about what God is calling us to, we may cry, who is sufficient for these things? And then a verse or so later, Paul says, thanks be to God for Christ, who is our sufficiency. As we serve the Lord Jesus here at First Press, let us learn some of these lessons from those who have gone before here in the book of Nehemiah. Let us be those who enthusiastically and gladly serve. Let us be a church that grows in the area of more coordinated service for Christ. We need much help from the Lord

Jesus here, and he's able to help us. And let us be those who seek to commend one another, to express genuine heartfelt appreciation and gratitude for one another and the gifts that we are using and serving our God and our Savior. It is an incredible privilege that the Lord has entrusted to us his word and his gospel and how much we need his great help. So as we begin our prayer time,

let's begin thanking him and praising him for who he is, his character, and what he has done, what he has accomplished, as our Creator, our Redeemer, as the Lord who is present with us. Let's just spend a few moments focusing before we bring the needs of our body, our family to the Lord. Let's go to our Heavenly Father with genuine heartfelt joy and praise on our lips. Let's do this together. You can gather with another table for prayer, but I think we'll begin with just praying together as one body. You can pray and if someone else prays, you can join them quietly as you perhaps pray aloud and there's no No pressure for any one person to pray aloud, but let's go to our God with thankful praise and joy. Let's pray.