

**"Get Your Gills On"**  
Nehemiah 1:4-11

**Ice Breaker:**

What's your reflexive response when struggles come?

- Curl up in a ball?
- Get angry and start yelling?
- Cool indifference, "Nothing bothers me?"
- Stand up and say, "Bring it on!"

**Read: Nehemiah 1:4-11**

1. What insight, principle or observation did you find to be most fresh, eye-opening or troubling? Explain.
2. Why might we try to hide or stuff our emotions when difficult times come? What are the potential consequences for refusing to express them?
3. What can we learn about God from observing Nehemiah in this passage?
4. What can we learn about people from this passage?
5. What are several of the key elements of Nehemiah's prayer? What parts do you generally include in your prayers? What parts are not?
6. We don't spend much time on confession in our prayers. Why not? Is it valid to confess the sins of others . . . our church . . . our nation?
7. How might our lives be different if we were to pray as a first response when challenges swept in on us?
8. Reflection questions:
  - a. Do I really care about people, needs, difficult situations around me? What's the evidence that you do?
  - b. What if God asks me to do something that would challenge me financially? Asks me to do something I don't want to do? Go somewhere that is not comfortable for me?

**Pray with each other:**

January 14, 2018

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There are certain things we do instinctively, without even having to think about it. Some responses are positive and good, others not so much. What's your first response when the heat of life gets turned up? What do we need to know in order to grow and, through prayer, lean into God when life hits hard?

1. Recognize God's greatness. (verses 4, 5)
2. Humbly confess. (verses 6, 7)
3. Verbalize God's promises. (verses 8-10)
4. Invite others to pray with you. (verse 11)

**Next Step:**

Using the model given to us by Nehemiah, write a prayer in response to an area of challenge you are facing right now.