

flourish

GROWING IN GOD'S GARDEN OF GRACE

DATE: May 14, 2023

RECAP: May is Mental Health Awareness Month. While mental health is a priority at TC all year long, during this month we take an intentional time to better understand our mental wellbeing as we seek to love God completely, ourselves correctly, and other compassionately. Jim Cress, a Licensed Professional Counselor, shared what it looks like to flourish in resiliency by walking us through the life of Nehemiah. The story begins with an unvarnished assessment of a people and place in ruins leading to a bold request, a call to action, constant watchfulness and adaptation. It concludes with a remarkable summary of the relative speed of the task and the providence of God over everything. Resilience isn't self-reliance or self-determination. It is God's strength in us, what the Apostle Paul calls the hope of glory (Colossians 1:27-29) for which we work even as Christ powerfully works in us.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- Take a moment to list a few things in your life that have fallen into disrepair. How do these things make you feel about yourself?
- Read Nehemiah 1:4-7. What did Nehemiah do in response to hearing about the ruin of Jerusalem? When have you responded similarly?
- Sometimes we find ourselves in a position to walk with others who are hurting. Jim helped us to see four questions in Nehemiah 2 that allow us to connect deeper in empathy and compassion with others. How can you utilize these questions in your relationship?
 - "What's going on for you?" (Nehemiah 2:2)
 - "What do you really want?" (Nehemiah 2:4)
 - "How long will this take?" (Nehemiah 2:6)
 - "What help do you need to deal with this issue?" (Nehemiah 2:7-8)
- Most of us find ourselves caring for others and needing others to care for us. The church is an interdependent community strengthened by Christ. What step do you need to take this week to go from superficial relationships to meaningful relationships?