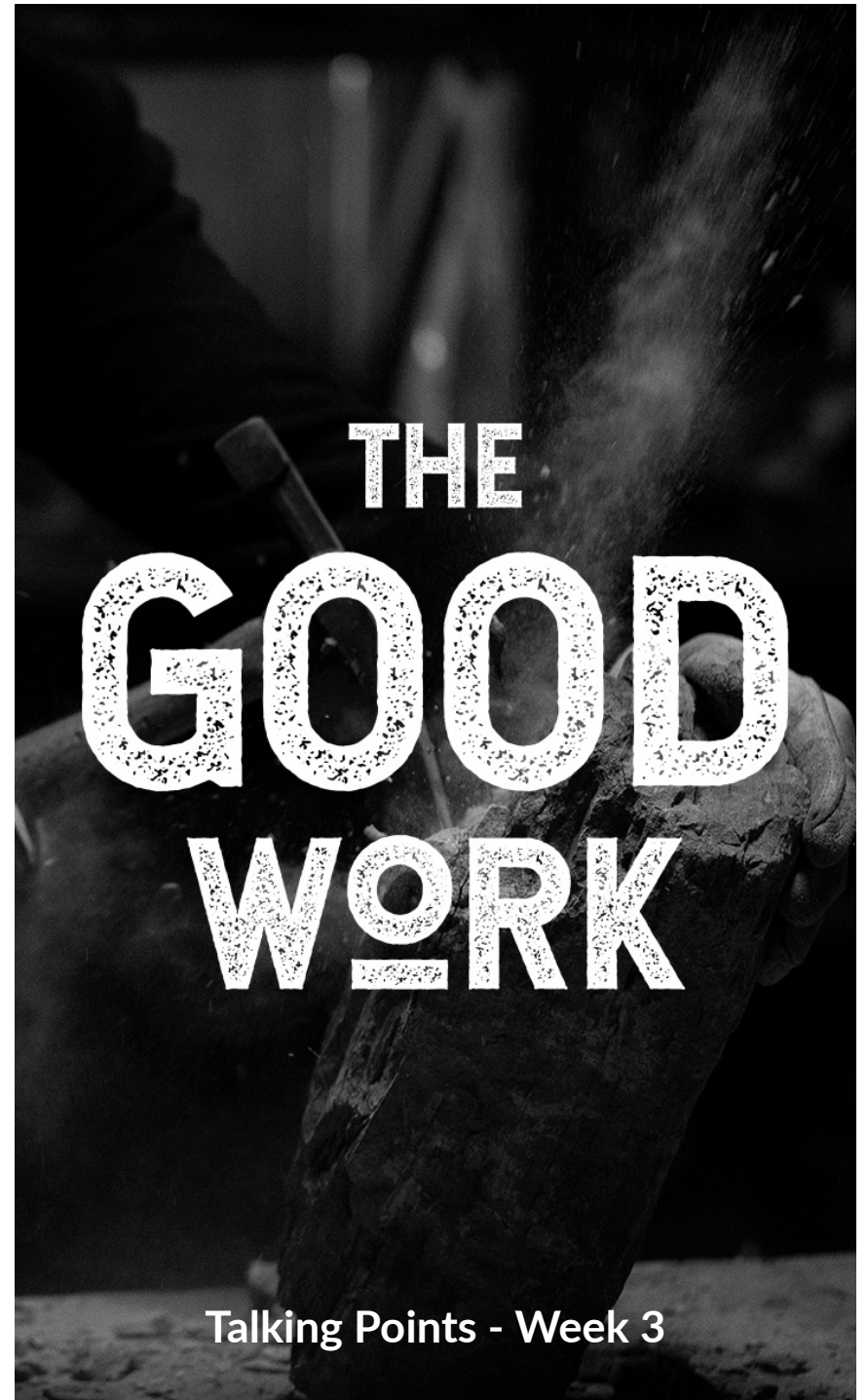


NOTES & QUOTES



CONNECT (BUILD RELATIONSHIPS)

1. What sort of obstacles did you face this week? How do you usually respond when you face opposition?
2. Have you ever experienced “hitting the wall”, while exercising, studying or doing a building project, etc.? Describe, what that experience was like and how you got through it?

THRIVE (EXPLORE BIBLICAL TRUTH)

3. Skim through Nehemiah 3. This entire chapter is dedicated to acknowledging the names of the workers on wall and where they served. Why is this important to the story? What does this reveal to us about God? About ourselves?
4. In this week’s message we heard, “If you’re going to become a spiritually mature person, then you are going to have to think about yourself in a different way.” What are the implications of the truth that we are made in the image of God (Genesis 1:26) and are being conformed to the character of Christ (Romans 8:29)? How do these truths reshape our spiritual identity?
5. Read Nehemiah 4:1-9. Sanballat and Tobiah criticized and mocked the Israelites. What emotions or feelings would be natural in the midst of such opposition? What do they hope to accomplish with their criticism?
6. Nehemiah responds to their criticism in 4:4-5 with a prayer to God that is honest, unfiltered, raw and harsh. How is this a model for our own prayers?

7. Read Nehemiah 4:10-14. Nehemiah gives three commands to the people in 4:14. What are they? Why do you think he gives these three specific commands?

COMMIT (BE ON MISSION)

8. Nehemiah employs workers from all walks of life – some who would have been suited for heavy labor and others who would not have been. Have you ever been tempted to avoid a necessary but unpleasant ministry task with the excuse, “That’s not really my area of gifting.”? Is such an excuse valid?
9. What kind of a work environment does Nehemiah describe in 4:21-23? How is the Christian life similar to what Nehemiah describes? In what ways do we build the kingdom with a shovel in one hand and a sword in the other?
10. Read Romans 8:14-17 aloud. How does our adoption as sons and daughters of God change both our doubts about His attitude toward us and our ability to face opposition?

PAUSE, PONDER & PRAY

Heavenly Father, you are our strong fortress, our tower and our refuge. Your presence soothes our fears as we learn to trust you more fully. Thank you for involving us in the work of your kingdom. May we be quick to respond to the call to build. May we build humbly and willingly at our appointed place, knowing that you see and value our service. May our voices not contribute to the opposition. Help us to overcome criticism, fear and exhaustion so that we can with Nehemiah declare, “My God will fight for me... Let us rise up and build.”
Amen