



# In the Middle

## Part 2 – Expecting the Best

### Discussion Guide

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In the middle of a terrible situation, Nehemiah persevered and made progress. Despite danger, exhaustion, fear, and ridicule, Nehemiah had the ability to do the right thing at the right time. He was consistently praying and planning. He had a God-given plan and he utilized the gifts and talents of the people around him. This week we will look at focusing on the task at hand and doing what we can do in the middle.

#### **Jump Start**

1. When you are faced with an overwhelming problem, what are you compelled to do about it?
2. **Read [Nehemiah 1:1-4, 2:11-12, 17-18, 4:1](#)** When Nehemiah heard the problem facing his people, what was his first reaction? Compare his reaction with the reactions discussed in question 1. How did Sanballat respond to Nehemiah rebuilding the wall?
3. **Read [Nehemiah 1:11, 2:2-5, 9, Ephesians 2:10](#)** Remember where Nehemiah was positioned, as a cupbearer to the king. Where has God placed you to make a difference and fulfill your God-given purpose and vision? Can you imagine favor and victory in your God-ordained task?
4. **Read [Nehemiah 4:9-13](#)** Sometimes we attempt to motivate others by complaining and other times by inspiring them. What do you observe about Nehemiah's call to action and the people's response?
5. **Read [Nehemiah 4:7-15](#)**. Beyond discouragement, what kinds of physical attacks and threats do people use to try and stop us? Look at how Nehemiah responded. Discuss how we should respond to different attacks. Who do you have in your life who is watching your back, keeping you accountable for your growth and peace?
6. **Read [Luke 9:51](#)** Discuss the obstacle Jesus faced and the way He faced it. What was accomplished because "He set His face" towards Jerusalem? How does putting our faith in Him allow us to face opposition ourselves?

## Deeper

We will learn how to complete a **SOAP Bible Study** by looking at one passage of Scripture and breaking it down. **SOAP** stands for **S**cripture **O**bservation **A**pplication **P**rayer. Let's get ready to sit down with the Bible and see to what God wants to show us. Completing this study during your quiet time, then sharing with your Life Group, can allow for deeper understanding and revelation of new perspectives. **Things you will need:** Bible, Notebook, Pen.

This week we learned this importance of focus and prayer. We will SOAP the scriptures to align us with our God-given purpose. During your study, allow time to mediate on these verses. Pray for God to reveal His will and not yours; then be obedient to what He asks you to do.

7. **Scripture.** Read [Psalm 1:1-6, Proverbs 16:3, 2 Timothy 1:7, 1 Peter 5:8](#). What stood out to you the most about these verses?

*Take time to read the passage and allow God to speak to you. Jot down anything that made you stop and pause or anything that you questioned. When you are done, look for a verse that particularly spoke to you and write it out fully in your journal.*

8. **Observe.** What is God saying to you in this text? What did the specific verse that you were drawn to teach you?

*What do you think God is saying to you, personally and specifically, in this Scripture? (You can even have a short prayer at this point, asking the Holy Spirit to teach you and reveal Jesus to you. Remember that He promised to give us wisdom and reveal truth to us when we ask.)*

9. **Application.** How will you apply this as you focus on God's Will for your life?

*Personalize what you have read by asking yourself how it applies to your life right now. Perhaps it is instruction, encouragement, a new promise, or corrections in a area of your life. Write down how this Scripture applies to you today.*

10. **Pray.** Pray about what you have read in [Psalm 1:1-6, Proverbs 16:3, 2 Timothy 1:7, 1 Peter 5:8](#). Pray your special verse back to God, asking Him to help you understand and apply it.

*This prayer can be as simple as asking God to help you use this Scripture, or even a prayer for a greater insight on what He may be revealing to you. Remember, prayer is a two-way conversation, so take time here! Be sure to listen to what God has to say! Now, write it out. Journaling your quiet time helps you to see what God is teaching you over time.*