
TALK IT OVER

The First Steps To A Restart

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Open your group in prayer, and remember that this is only a guide. Feel free to discuss each of the provided questions in the message notes, or simply dive deeper into just one. Before you close with prayer, take a few minutes to look over the Three Essential Questions towards the end of the document.

Message Notes

The First Steps To A Restart

1. Mourn - Express your hurt to God
2. Fast - Focus your heart on God
3. Pray - Ask for help from God
 - Recognize who God is
 - Confess who you are
 - Call on God's promises
 - Ask for specific help

Talk It Over

Consider starting your group by reading Nehemiah 1:3-11 together.

"They said to me,... 'The wall of Jerusalem has been torn down, and the gates have been destroyed by fire.' When I heard this, I sat down and wept. In fact, for days I mourned, fasted, and prayed to the God of heaven." Nehemiah 1:3-4 (NLT)

Question 1 Nehemiah gives us the pattern of what to do when we need a restart. According to Nehemiah 1:3-4, what three things did he do when he heard about his people's distress?

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"Then I said: 'O Lord, God of heaven, the great and awesome God, who keeps his covenant of love with those who love him and obey his commands, let your ear be attentive and your eyes open to hear the prayer your servant is praying before you day and night for your servants, the people of Israel. I confess the sins we Israelites, including myself and my father's house, have committed against you.'" Nehemiah 1:5-6 (NIV)

Question 2 Restarting is a process that begins with being honest about our pain. Is it possible to mourn and still have faith in God? Why?

Question 3 Is there a past or current grief you haven't taken time to mourn? Why is it important not to deny our pain or loss?

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"Turn to Me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning." Joel 2:12b (NKJV)

"So I gave my attention to the Lord God to seek Him by prayer and supplications, with fasting..."
Daniel 9:3 (NASB)

Question 4 According to Joel 2:12b and Daniel 9:3, what is the purpose of fasting? How else can we focus our heart on God other than fasting food? Why would focusing on God help us in our current circumstances?

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"I confess the sins we Israelites, including myself and my father's house, have committed against you. We have acted very wickedly toward you. We have not obeyed the commands, decrees and laws you gave your servant Moses." Nehemiah 1:6b-7 (NIV)

Question 5: Recognize who God is. In prayer, Nehemiah asked God for his help, and he started by recognizing who God is. What attributes of God did Nehemiah proclaim? See Nehemiah 1:5-6 at the top.

Question 6: Confess who you are. What did Nehemiah do in verses 1:6b-7? Why is it important to agree with God (confess) when we are praying?

Question 7: Call on God's promises. When we pray, it's important to claim a specific promise from God's word. Share methods on how to find a promise that speaks to your situation.

Question 8: Ask for specific help. What specific things can you pray for as you open your heart to God's direction?

Action Step Close your time together as a group by putting Nehemiah's prayer into practice. Pray by recognizing who God is, confessing who you are, calling on God's promises, and asking for specific help. As you pray this week, choose to follow this pattern.

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Three Essential Questions

The following questions are intended to be open-ended and encourage members to consider how they felt and what they, or the group, can do as a result of hearing the message!

1. **What did you hear?** *What point in this message was most impactful for you?*
2. **What do you think?** *How did this message challenge, change, or affirm your thinking?*
3. **What will you do?** *How will you or your group put into practice what you've learned today?*

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