

Scout Strategy

Nehemiah 2

Discover

Scout means to explore a new area and gather information. A strategy is a plan of action to achieve a set of goals.

Following Jesus begins with a broken heart. Our Father's heart is broken over his lost sheep. He is constantly at work in the lives of those who do not love him. Disciples reflect his passion for redemption. Before we explore mission fields and discuss strategic plans, we need to fall on our faces before the King of Glory in prayer. (Psalms 34:14-22)

Moses sent scouts into the Promised Land to explore and gather information on the inhabitants. They returned with news about the beauty and fruitfulness of the land as well as a spirit of fear about the fortified strongholds. Joshua and Caleb tried to inspire the people to have courage and enter into the land by faith; however, Israel rejected God's commands and rebelled against his will. (Numbers 13:17-33)

Jeremiah prophesied about Israel's deliverance out of captivity to the Babylonian kingdom and return to God's kingdom. Sometimes God delays restoration to humble us. Waiting on God reveals our idols so we will turn to Jesus, praise his name, and receive healing. (Jeremiah 29:10-14)

Jeremiah also prophesied about Israel's glorious restoration: our wounds will be healed, our land will have peace, our rebellion will be forgiven, and all nations will behold our God's beauty and majesty! (Jeremiah 33:6-11)

This lesson teaches us to participate in God's mission to rescue the nations for his glory. Every disciple has the Holy Spirit within us for guidance each day. Identify those around you who will join us in Jesus' mission. (Hebrews 12:1-3)



SCOUT STRATEGY



NEHEMIAH 2

Draw

Broken Heart: kneeling person - Nehemiah's heart was broken for his home city, which lay demolished in ruins. Sometimes the pain in our hearts is so intense that others can see the suffering inside reflected upon our faces. (2:1-3)

Restoration Vision: shining city - Our Father is on a mission to restore everything he has created. The Holy Spirit helps us to see visions of healing and restoration wherever we find brokenness. His visions inspire us to take action. (2:4-6)

Anticipate Needs: tree & axe - Nehemiah knew this restoration mission would be dangerous and require many resources. Our Father is a Wonderful Counselor who teaches us how to prepare for projects and missions. He is our Faithful Provider who supplies all that we need. (2:7-8)

Field Scouting: walking shepherd - Nehemiah went out alone during the night watch into his mission field to pray, listen to the Holy Spirit, and survey the environment where God had appointed him to rebuild the city. (2:11-15)

Team Mobilization: companions - Our Father designed us to flourish within a family and community. We need teammates to help us fulfill our calling. Nehemiah recruited resolute leaders and teams to help rebuild Jerusalem city. (2:16-18)

Persecution Preparation: cross & flame - We serve Jesus in the dangerous environment of an ongoing spiritual war. Wherever the gospel goes, we anticipate spiritual attacks, including persecution and suffering. The Holy Spirit helps us maintain faith, hope, and joy through many trials. (2:9-10)

Courageous Confidence: throne & crown - The devil will always attack Jesus' disciples when they advance his kingdom. Jesus has already claimed victory over the enemy, and we walk in his triumphant authority. (2:19-20)

Discuss

Read Nehemiah 2:1-6. Share about a time when your heart was broken and someone noticed. Share about a time when you walked through suffering with someone else. How do brokenness and pain bring us closer together?

Read Acts 17:16-34. How did Paul and his team scout out Athens to discover their beliefs? How did Paul bridge from their views about God to the gospel? Why is learning about and listening to others' beliefs a good evangelism strategy?

Read 1 Peter 4:12-16. Why do you think our culture considers suffering people to be cursed? Share about a time when you experienced unbearable pain or an overwhelming challenge. How did you make it through?

Read Jude 1:17-23. What are some spiritual strongholds in our generation that have become barriers to people receiving eternal life? Why is there a warning to anticipate rejection from those we are reaching? How does Jude describe the Church as a Holy Spirit led mission team?

Disciple

Let's get practical. Nehemiah demonstrates remarkable wisdom at each stage of God's mission to restore his people. How can we catch God's love for the lost around us? Whom do you know that still rejects his love today? What is the Holy Spirit revealing about one next step of faith you can take to reach them? Ask God right now to give you a loving heart for lost people and the courage to reach out.

Dedicate

Father, you are Heaven's Missionary. Your love for the lost is too great for us to imagine. Please help us to love the lost as you do, in Jesus' name and for his glory we pray, amen.