



## WEEK ONE - SEPTEMBER 2018 - PRETEEN (456)

**Bible Story:** *If I Had a Hammer* • Nehemiah 1:1-2:9

**Key Question:** *What around you needs to be done?*

**Memory Verse:** *"Work at everything you do with all your heart. Work as if you were working for the Lord." Colossians 3:23 NIrV*

**Life App:** *Initiative - Seeing what needs to be done and doing it*

**Basic Truth:** *I need to make a wise choice.*

**Summary:** In our first week, we start at the beginning of Nehemiah's story in Nehemiah 1:1-2:9. We discover that Nehemiah was working for King Artaxerxes when his brother brought news from the exiles living in Judah. When he heard about the devastation in Jerusalem, Nehemiah was heartbroken. He recognized the huge need, but before he did anything he prayed. Nehemiah knew that whatever he would do, he'd need God's help to accomplish it.

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**8:50-9:00 | 10:20-10:30 | 11:50-12:00 - FREE PLAY**

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**9:00-9:10 | 10:30-10:40 | 12:00-12:10 - PRESERVICE ACTIVITY**

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### **1. Get Your Head in the Game**

*Explore: an activity that extends learning through hands-on experimentation and discovery*

**What You Need:** N/A

#### **What You Do:**

- Direct kids to sit in a circle facing the center of the circle.
- Select a volunteer to stand in the center of the circle.
- Explain to the group that one thing about the volunteer will change and the group will have to use their power of observation to figure out what is different.
- Encourage the volunteer to strike several "modeling" poses so the group can get a good look at him.
- Tell kids to turn around so their backs are facing the center of the circle and to close their eyes.
- Allow the volunteer to change one thing about his appearance.
  - For example, untie his shoes, tuck or un-tuck his shirt, remove glasses, remove a watch and place it on the other wrist, etc.
- When the change has been made, instruct the group to turn around facing the center of the circle.
- Encourage the group guess what change has been made. The kid who guesses correctly gets to stand in the center of the circle next.

#### **What You Say:**

*"You did a great job observing changes made with each of our volunteers. [Transition] Let's go to Large Group to hear why it is important to be on the lookout and alert to what is happening around you."*

**Lead your group to the Large Group area.**

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**9:10-9:45 | 10:40-11:15 | 12:10-12:45 - LARGE GROUP**

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## OVERVIEW:

**Key Question:** *What around you needs to be done?. Often it seems like preteens are in their own world where everything revolves around them. We kick off the month with this question, because initiative starts with noticing there's a need in the first place. We hope that preteens will begin to see beyond themselves to see what's going on around them.*

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**9:45-10:05 | 11:15-11:35 | 12:45-1:05 SMALL GROUP**

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### 1. Take a Snapshot

#### [Application Activity]

*Play: an activity that encourages learning through following guidelines & working as a group*

**What You Need:** "Picture Scenario Cards" Activity Pages; "Blank Cards" Activity Page; markers

#### What You Do:

- Sit in the circle with the group. Spread out a little so kids aren't right next to each other but are still in a circle.
  - This works best with 5-10 kids. If you have fewer than five kids, join with another Small Group.
- Give each kid a set of "Picture Scenario Cards."
  - A set of "Picture Scenario Cards" is one "Picture Scenario Card" and "Blank Cards" for each kid in the group. If you have five kids in your group, the set will contain one "Picture Scenario Card" and five "Blank Cards."
- Tell kids to read the scenario and identify something that needs to be done.
- Instruct kids to move the card to the back of the stack so a blank card is now on top of the stack.
- On the blank card, tell kids to draw a picture representing what needs to be done.
- Inform kids of the game's guidelines:
  - Artistic ability is not important.
  - Don't look at any of the cards except the top card on the stack that gets passed to you.
  - Don't let the group know what you see on the cards passed to you or what you are passing on to the next kid.
- When everyone is finished drawing, instruct kids to pass the stack of cards to the person on their left, making sure their own drawing is the only thing visible on top of the stack.
- Tell kids to interpret what the drawing is and move that card to the bottom of the stack.
- On the blank card, tell kids to write one sentence describing the drawing.

- When everyone is finished writing, instruct kids to pass the stack of cards to the person on their left, making sure their written description is the only thing visible on top of the stack.
- Tell kids to read the sentence or word and move that card to the bottom of the stack.
- On the blank card, tell kids to draw a picture representing the sentence they just read.
- Repeat until the stacks of cards make it all the way around the circle and kids end up with their original stack.
- Encourage kids to share their "Picture Scenario Cards" and discuss how the cards evolved over time.
  - Did any of the end results match the initial scenario?
  - What were some of the best interpretations?
  - What about the craziest interpretations?

## 2. Discussion Questions

### [Application Activity]

*Connect: an activity that invites kids to share with others & build on their understanding*

**What You Need:** N/A

### What You Do:

- Ask:
  - What are some typical things that need to get done at your home?
  - We all get caught up in our own stuff, only thinking about the things WE need to do. What are some ways you can start to notice other things that need to be done?
  - What if you see something that needs to be done but you don't know what to do? How can you figure out where to start? (ask God for help, talk to other people, collect information, etc.)
  - Once we identify something needs to be done, why ask God for help?
  - Even though God didn't tell Nehemiah exactly how he was going to help Jerusalem, how did talking to God help Nehemiah? (This is an opportunity to discuss God may not show you the entire picture, but instead He may show you how to start. Nehemiah didn't know how he would rebuild the wall . . . yet . . . but in asking God for help, Nehemiah was strengthened and encouraged and given hope. Nehemiah was given hope and courage to simply begin and trust God.)

## 3. Verses to Take With You

### [Memory Verse Activity]

*Move: an activity that increases the oxygen in the brain & taps into the energy in the body*

**What You Need:** Bibles

**What You Do:**

- Look up the memory verse, Colossians 3:23a, and read it out loud together.
- Challenge kids to think of an action of some kind to replace "everything you do." (For instance, "play an instrument" or "do your homework.")
- Challenge kids to act out their replacement action word, without making a sound, for the group to guess. Be prepared to give an example if necessary.
- To make it competitive, give a point to each kid who guesses correctly and uses the word in the memory verse.
  - For example, if the words were, "play soccer," kids would say, "Play soccer with all your heart" or "Play soccer as if you were playing for the Lord."
- To dig deeper, ask: How can this verse help you with initiative? How does this verse help motivate you to have initiative?

***As kids are dismissed, hand out the monthly overview cards to each child and challenge them to look at the story that they learned today throughout the week.***