

Glenn Ugerio Rosario
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Making Christian Community Work

Christian community is essential—but not always easy. The story of Nehemiah shows us that real, lasting community is built through commitment, grace, and time. Christian community works when commitment keeps us together, grace keeps us healthy, and time helps us grow.

1. Christian community works when we are united by shared values, purpose, and commitment.

“Let us rise up and build.” So they strengthened their hands for the good work” (Nehemiah 2:18)

“So we built the wall... for the people had a mind to work” (Nehemiah 4:6).

“Those who carried materials did their work with one hand and held a weapon in the other” (Nehemiah 4:17).

Observation: The people worked side by side, even under pressure and opposition. They didn’t quit when it got hard. Commitment means staying connected—even when it’s inconvenient, uncomfortable, or challenging.

Application: Christian community grows when people say, *“I’m not going anywhere—I’m in this with you.”*

2. Christian community works when we embody grace, forgiveness, and humility.

“I was very angry... I pondered them in my mind and then accused the nobles... ‘You are exacting usury from your own brothers’ (Nehemiah 5:6–7)!

“Return to them immediately... their fields, vineyards, olive groves and houses...” (Nehemiah 5:11)

“We will give it back... We will not demand anything more from them” (Nehemiah 5:12).

Observation: Community isn’t just threatened from the outside—it can break down from within. Grace is not ignoring problems—it’s addressing them in a way that heals relationships. Nehemiah confronted injustice, but the goal wasn’t punishment—it was **restoration**.

Application: Healthy Christian community requires forgiveness, humility, and choosing people over being right.

3. Christian community works as we keep gathering, learning, and growing together.

“So the wall was completed... in fifty-two days... and all the nations... were afraid... for they realized that this work had been done with the help of our God” (Nehemiah 6:15–16).

“Ezra the priest brought the Law... and read it aloud... from daybreak till noon... and all the people listened attentively” (Nehemiah 8:2–3).

“Do not grieve, for the joy of the Lord is your strength” (Nehemiah 8:10).

Observation: Even after the wall was finished, the people continued gathering, learning, and growing. Transformation is not a moment—it’s a process. The wall wasn’t built overnight—neither is spiritual maturity.

Application: Deep community is built through consistent time together, not quick experiences.

5 Small Group Discussion Questions

1. **Commitment:** Where is it hardest for you to stay committed in Christian community—and why?
2. **Shared Responsibility:** In Nehemiah, everyone had a role. What part do you feel God is calling you to play in your community?
3. **Grace:** Think of a time when you needed grace from others. How did it impact you? How can you offer that same grace?
4. **Conflict & Restoration:** Why is it sometimes difficult to address problems in community? What can we learn from Nehemiah's approach?
5. **Time & Growth:** How have you seen spiritual growth happen slowly over time in your life or others?