PDF created on 13th May 2022 for rickandcathyjames@gmail.com

Session created by Cathy James, Rick James & Steffie Kemp for Home Groups.
View the session and the rest of the series here.

home groups

Session 5 - Everyone playing their part

Key Text: Nehemiah 2:1-10; 3:1-32

Prepare: envelopes and squares prepared as below.
Cut the squares of paper into the shapes according to the templates. Shuffle the pieces all together and divide them randomly into the five envelopes (make sure that no pile contains all the pieces for a complete square)

Feedback from Act of Love

Ask if anyone found an organisation that helps people to identify and use their own resources to solve their own problems.

Activity: Broken Square

Steps:

1. Split participants into 5 groups and give each group a pile of pieces – numbers in a group do not matter, it can be one person alone and up to four people.
2. Explain that the aim of the activity is for each group to form a square.
3. Without any more explanation, say 'go!'

Key point: people try and do things on their own without thinking of the resources that we would have by working together as a group or global community. You should find that after some time,

people realise that they do not have the pieces on their own and that they can coordinate with other groups. If not, you may need to prompt them when they begin to get frustrated.

Questions to discuss:

- What did you observe about how we naturally respond when given a task?
- How did we feel and react at different points in this activity?
- What did you learn from this experience about working with other people?

Bible study: Everyone playing their part (Nehemiah 2:1-10; 3:1-32)

Pray for wisdom from the Holy Spirit to guide you as you are reading the passage.

Partnering with those in power: Nehemiah 2:1-10

Context: Nehemiah is in exile with other Israelites - they have been captured. He hears that the walls of Jerusalem, the capital city of Israel, are in ruins.

Questions to discuss:

- What can we learn from the way that Nehemiah took responsibility for a concern affecting his people?
- Why did Nehemiah choose to approach the king?
- What can we learn from Nehemiah's attitude and behaviour about how to approach those in power?
- From the preparation people did from Nehemiah 3, what do we learn about who needs to be involved to achieve change?

Key point: it is vital for everyone to play their part, including the government, for development to be successful.

Principles in Practice: Malawi

Case study: Unable to attend school, Daniel's future looked bleak. But now he has hope: **"I am so happy!"** he says joyfully, swinging round the pole on the veranda of the new village school.

Before Eagles began working with Alawe village, very few children could attend school as it was so far away. Instead, many had to work, often labouring long hours shepherding goats and other animals. Challenged by Eagles' training in God's heart for the most vulnerable, an innovative group of pastors determined to end child labour and ensure every boy and girl has an education. **"Now they are all in school!"** announces Effie Phiri, a church member, delighted with their achievement.

The village had begged the government for years to build a school but without success. Dispirited and disillusioned, they did not know where to turn. However, Eagles used Bible studies to

challenge and transform their thinking. Pastor Chidule says: **“From the Bible studies, we learned we could use resources that we have in our community. We also learned how important it is to help the needy. We learned from Eagles how to work together as a church and community.”** Effie adds: **“Instead of doing nothing, we asked ourselves, ‘How long will we wait? Let’s do what we can!’”**

One church lent its building to provide a temporary school and in 2016 community volunteers began teaching the 275 primary-age children! Meanwhile, all the churches and villages around joined together to build their own school. They contributed sand, moulded bricks and their own labour, while the church generously raised money for other materials.

Local government began to help once they saw the villages’ commitment. They sent people to give advice on the building and promised to supply the school with government teachers once it was completed so that it would be a sustainable part of the system. Effie says passionately. **“In the future, we’ll have educated children because of our school! They will be able to find jobs and to take care of their own lives!”** *(www.eaglesmalawi.org).*

Principles in Practice: UK

Isaac, a Local Government Officer working on Climate Change: “Climate change affects all of us and can't be 'solved' by any one group. It needs everyone involved which means everyone needs to be empowered to do what needs to be done. Through citizens assemblies, workshops and social media we try to empower residents to take action. In the process, I learn myself how I should act."

Act of Love:

Partnering with government is vital for sustainable change. Good campaigns can influence the laws and systems needed to support change in communities. Reflect together on the organisations that you have identified as effective. Research this week whether they are already linked to a campaign that you can support. If not, here are two examples of effective advocacy organisations where you could get involved in a campaign:

- Client earth: using the power of the law to achieve systemic change and protect people, nature and the planet. https://www.clientearth.org/
- Freedom United: the largest modern anti-slavery community in the world https://www.freedomunited.org/

Gods-Heart-for-Justice-session-5Download

Cathy James

Cathy James is a social development consultant and practitioner with over twenty-five years’ experience in international development. She combines a strong academic background with

twelve years living and working in Africa and Latin America. Her extensive consultancy work provides support for UK and international organisations and their southern partners across the world. It includes working with faith groups and organisations, helping them work in effective, empowering ways that bring about long-term and holistic change. She brings expertise in church and community processes, participatory development, theory of change, monitoring and evaluation and assessing. She has also co-founded two Malawian NGOs and two UK supporting charities.

More by Cathy James

Rick James

Dr Rick James is an organisational change specialist in international development. He has spent 30 years working in Africa, Latin America and Europe, consulting for more than 100 aid agencies and churches. His focus is on leadership development, strategy and culture change. As well as consulting, coaching and training, Rick is a Senior Teaching Fellow at CASS Business School, London University, as Course Director for the Masters in NGO Management pathway. Rick has published extensively including books on: ‘Consulting for Change’, ‘Creating Space for Grace’; ‘Inspiring Change’; and ‘Capacity building for NGOs: Making it work’.

More by Rick James

Steffie Kemp

Steffie Kemp has lived in Malawi for twelve years and currently works for Eagles Relief and Development Programme (www.eaglesmalawi.org) in church and community mobilisation as the Advocacy and Learning Coordinator. Eagles mobilises and empowers local churches and communities to work together, take responsibility for their own development and achieve holistic change. Her focus is on the role of faith and mindset change in community-owned development and the connection to long-term change. Her consultancy work includes UNICEF, Mothers’ Union, Comic Relief and the Joint Learning Initiative (JLI). She is pursuing an MSc in Human Rights Law from Oxford University.

More by Steffie Kemp

Home Groups is a project of SPCK.

Supported by Allchurches Trust and The Jerusalem Trust.

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