



LOOKING UP!

By Matt Huddleston

Dear ...,

...I know I need to give it all to Christ, but it's so hard. Just when I think I'm getting the hang of giving it all up I find myself trying to take control of my life. It's spinning all around and around, and I can't grab a hold onto anything... I need to be completely honest with myself and to God and stop thinking I can fool him- he's God, for crying out loud! I can't make compromises. It's like being lukewarm- he'll spit me out if I keep it up. I can't ride the fence one day, trying to convince myself I'm just "reaching out to people" by acting "normal" and then trying to be a dedicated Christian the next. I don't want anyone to think of me as a hypocrite...

P. S. Honestly, I want to live completely for God. It's hard and scary, but totally worth it.

These are the words **Cassie Bernall** wrote to a friend at school on April 20, 1999. That was the day Eric and Dylan stormed the Columbine H.S. campus killing twelve students and one teacher. Cassie was one of those twelve. She was in the library praying as the gunshots rang through her school. One of the shooters pulled Cassie up and asked if she believed in God. Cassie answered, "**Yes**" in a strong, confident voice. They took her life, yet she continues to point to the Father.

You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes (James 4:14). Who are you serving with the time given to you? Are you looking to God? **Are you pointing to God?**

SERMON NOTES

God Gives Success

January 30



◆ God

◆ Time

◆ Our

_____ point =

_____ points =

_____ points =

Nehemiah's words are my words:

Next Week:

FEB. 6, 2022

MATT 13:44-46

GIVE OR INVEST

MATT HUDDLESTON

PERSONAL STUDY

It is rewarding to invest time each day in God's Word.

Mo Nehemiah 5:1-5

Nehemiah keeps listening to hear the new needs. New solutions will create new needs. The car brought the need for better roads, and longer trips need more gas stations. Are you listening today for new needs?

Tu Nehemiah 5:6-9

Tackling new challenges might mean ruffling some feathers. Nehemiah knows he will rebuke his main supporters. But right is right. Also, ruffling feathers is not an excuse to be rude or demeaning.

We Nehemiah 5:10-13

As you lead this week to solve the problems, face the challenges, and bless others, seek buy-in and share in the solution. Nehemiah continues to say, "Let us!" How can you share in the solution today?

Th Nehemiah 6:1-4

Social media can become an endless veg-out session, pointless arguments, and wild fantasies wasting our day. Notice Nehemiah's focus. What do you need to cut from your life to be more productive?

Fr Nehemiah 6:5-9

When Nehemiah responds, he points to his main task. He does not get distracted. And he takes the critic as fuel for even greater focus and prayer. How can you use your distracter's words to fuel your prayers?

Sa Hebrews 10:22-25

What can you do to maintain your focus as you face challenges and difficulties? 1- Profess your faith. 2- Hold on to your hope. 3- Encourage others. 4- Be around others so they can encourage you.

STUDY & DISCUSS

- Read Nehemiah 5.
 - Nehemiah's main responsibility was not rebuilding the wall. That was his first task. His primary responsibility was leading the people to honor God. Was Nehemiah right to connect poor business practices with an ungodly lifestyle?
 - How can our business practices glorify God?
 - Can our business practices destroy believers? The community?
 - David said in Psalm 84:10, "For a day in Thy courts is better than a thousand; I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness." How did Nehemiah resemble that in his life? How can you demonstrate that ethos in your life?
- Read Nehemiah 6.
 - Nehemiah faced significant challenges. Sanballat was relentless in his opposition. Have you ever faced criticism or attacks?
 - Why are people critical of others?
 - How do you respond when others criticize you?
 - Is there anything in Nehemiah's reactions that you find helpful as you face criticism and setbacks?
 - When God calls us to a task, He will provide ALL we NEED, but that doesn't mean the future is smooth sailing. How do you know if setbacks are part of the journey or a sign that door is closing?