

## God Time Day 1: The Faith to Start (or Stop)



You may have heard the saying, “The longest journey begins with a single step.” God often calls people to obey in something relatively small before they ever catch sight of His long-term objective. We see this dynamic in many areas of life: crawling comes before walking; numbers come before addition, which comes before multiplication, which comes before algebra.

The challenge in our spiritual life is that we often think we know the end goal. We fail to take the small steps God puts in our immediate path because we are too focused on our ideas of the big dream. E.g., someone may believe God is calling them to write a book, but they never clear enough space in their schedule to begin writing on a regular basis.

What is God calling you to do (or stop doing) right now?

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## God Time Day 2: A Little Background



After God brought the Jewish people into the Promised Land to make it theirs, they repeatedly disregarded His commands for the kind of behavior which would allow them to remain at peace within the land. Therefore, God let them be conquered and taken away into captivity. The Temple, which was known as one of the Wonders of the ancient world, was destroyed and the walls of the capital city were knocked down.

In the land of their captivity, God called a man named Nehemiah to begin something big, but it started with a commitment to prayer.



Read Nehemiah 1:11

*Please, Lord, let your ear be attentive to the prayer of your servant and to that of your servants who delight to revere your name. Give your servant success today and grant him compassion in the presence of this man.*



Look again at your response at the end of Day 1 above. Begin today by committing the calling to daily prayer. Journal your prayer times and the responses received.

## God Time Day 3: How Do You Do Something Big?



Everyone wishes that their life would have significance. But we often mix up cause and effect (put the cart before the horse) and want the result without putting in the work.

After Nehemiah spent time in secret praying, he finally went before the king with his request. He didn’t ask for permission to go to Jerusalem without having considered at least some of what might be involved, and so he was ready when the king asked him how long he might be gone. Nehemiah had even thought about needing permission to cut trees for building himself a house when he got there.



Read Nehemiah 2:6,8

*<sup>6</sup>The king, with the queen seated beside him, asked me, “How long will your journey take, and when will you return?” So I gave him a definite time, and it pleased the king to send me. <sup>8</sup>And let me have a letter written to Asaph, keeper of the king’s forest, so that he will give me timber to rebuild the gates of the temple’s fortress, the city wall, and the home where I will live.” The king granted my requests, for the gracious hand of my God was on me.*

What “big” or significant goal(s) do you have for your life; having a great marriage, making a good living, raising successful children, reaching people for Jesus?

None of these kinds of things will happen without a lot of work on the front end. Consider how to make one big goal happen and write the key elements for each:

- Pray: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Prepare: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Plan: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Prioritize: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## God Time Day 4: It Takes Small Steps



Many of the word pictures Jesus used to describe the kingdom of God communicated the idea that small beginnings often have massive, systemic results:

- A little leaven in lots of dough. (Matthew 13:33)
- A tiny mustard seed growing large. (Matthew 13:31-32)
- A little faith that moves mountains. (Matthew 17:20)

Nehemiah's story also communicates this idea of having the faith to start small. Often just one person's faithfulness is all that's needed for others to also take a step forward.



Read Nehemiah 2:17-18

*<sup>17</sup>So I said to them, "You see the trouble we are in. Jerusalem lies in ruins and its gates have been burned. Come, let's rebuild Jerusalem's wall, so that we will no longer be a disgrace." <sup>18</sup>I told them how the gracious hand of my God had been on me, and what the king had said to me. They said, "Let's start rebuilding," and their hands were strengthened to do this good work.*

Underline where Nehemiah told how God blessed his initial step of faith.



Circle how the people responded.

In a similar story from this time, some people were upset that the new temple wasn't going to be as grand as the one built by Solomon, but God had something to say about it through His prophets.

Read Zechariah 4:10

*For who despises the day of small things? These seven eyes of the Lord, which scan throughout the whole earth, will rejoice when they see the cornerstone in Zerubbabel's hand.*

What small step(s) have you been avoiding because they didn't seem to be important enough?

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## God Time Day 5: Take Another Step



Persistence in taking small steps is also important – since once you start, the enemy is likely to step up his efforts to hinder you (Week 3, Day 4). This opposition happened with Nehemiah's efforts to rebuild the wall of Jerusalem.



Read Nehemiah 2:19-20

*<sup>19</sup>When Sanballat the Horonite, Tobiah the Ammonite official, and Geshem the Arab heard about this, they mocked and despised us, and said, "What is this you're doing? Are you rebelling against the king?" <sup>20</sup>I gave them this reply, "The God of the heavens is the one who will grant us success. We, his servants, will start building, but you have no share, right, or historic claim in Jerusalem."*

Here is one practical example of persistent steps:

- You commit to the step of participating in "1<sup>st</sup> Saturday Serve" each month as part of CBC's Go2 initiative\*. It wouldn't be surprising if the next month something seemingly important came up to pull you away from participating again. (\* [cbcfamily.net/go2](http://cbcfamily.net/go2))

Growing in faith requires repeated service and pushing on to further steps, like monthly participating in "Go2 Fast & Pray" by refraining from one meal during the second week of each month to pray for someone who needs Jesus.

In addition to Go2, our 4Gs can be a way to keep on stepping. Progress from not only participating in Sunday's Gathering to joining a 4G Group and daily God Time devotionals. What about our 3Ds: Demonstrate, Declare, & Disciple?

What next step can you take this next week?

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Read Galatians 6:9

*Let us not get tired of doing good, for we will reap at the proper time if we don't give up.*

Set aside some time to specifically pray for the steps you are taking, and will be taking, to follow God's will.