

BEFORE THE SESSION:

- Pray for each of your group members by name
- Look over the questions on the right and choose the ones that are most appropriate for your small group. If you're really feeling motivated, you might even think of a few on your own.
- Think through how you might prompt your group a little if they have difficulty getting started in discussion.
- Take a look at the accountability question below. Lead members to gather one on one or in same sex clusters to discuss it over coffee this week.

THIS WEEK'S BIG IDEA

There is no plan B.

ACCOUNTABILITY QUESTION

Are there any commitments that you have broken with someone in your life? If so, how can you restore this relationship?

TO PREPARE FOR NEXT WEEK:

Read Malachi; Matthew 1-4; Mark 1; Luke 1-5; John 1-4;

AS YOU READ...

...Think about what God's plan is for your life.

CONNECT**(10 min.)**

Choose one or both of the following questions to begin your time together as a group.

1. **Recall a significant agreement you put your name to in writing (home, military, loan, etc.). Did it matter whether the agreement was in writing or not?**
2. **What is one thing you are waiting on now to be "signed, sealed and delivered"?**

EXPLORE**(40 min.)**

Say something like, "Today we will talk about the Israelites reaffirming the covenant between them and God." Then guide your group through these questions.

3. **If you were in worship this week, what statement or experience stood out to you? What stood out during last week's reading?**

(Leader: Take some time to discuss any questions that may have arisen as your members read through this week's assigned reading.)

4. **Read Nehemiah 9:38. How was this agreement made?**
5. **Read 10:30-39. What subjects are covered by the provisions of this covenant?**
6. **What rationale can you see for the restrictions in verse 30? in verses 31-33? For the duties in verses 35-36?**
7. **In verses 37-39, how did the Jews demonstrate they were good stewards? What had neglecting the house of God taught them in the past (see Nehemiah 13:11)?**
8. **For the Christian, is there any similar covenant that reflects the values or principles of these verses (Ex. baptism, membership, small group covenant)? Are these made like the Israelites made theirs in 9:38? What does having witnesses or putting it in writing play?**
9. **Are there any commitments that you have made with the church or with God that you need to renew? Do you need to refresh your Radical Commitments?**

TRANSFORM**(10 min.)**

Wrap up your time by recalling a few things from your meeting that stood out to you. Then, ask the following question and pray together.

10. **If you need to renew any covenant vows, what are some steps you can make next week to follow through with these commitments. How can the small group help you with these steps?**

This Week's Study Notes:

Scripture Notes

Nehemiah 10:31-33

The agreement spelled out the leaders' commitment to avoid intermarriage, keep the Sabbath by refraining from work (Ex. 20:10), and provide for the needs of the temple. Fields were to be left uncultivated and debts forgiven every seventh year (Lev. 25:1-7).

Nehemiah 10:37

The "firstfruits of our land" means giving to the Lord from the first and best crops to acknowledge that God owns the land. First fruits of the trees meant giving over and above what the Law required to provide wood to keep the altar fire burning constantly (Lev. 6:12-13).

Leader Tips

AS YOU READ THIS WEEK...

- Think about and pray for each member of your small group.
- Think through the following questions:
 1. Whom does God bring to mind as I read these verses? Why?
 2. What needs to change in my own life as a result of what I'm reading?
 3. Whom do I need to tell about these verses?

FOR ADDITIONAL STUDY WE RECOMMEND...

- Bible Commentary: Bible.org
- Bible Commentary: DesiringGod.org
- Pronouncing Biblical Words: Netministries.org/Bbasics/bwords.htm

* Scripture Notes adapted from and used by permission of Serendipity House Publishing, 1 LifeWay Plaza, Nashville, Tennessee

