



Clay

Use clay to form 1-3 bricks.

The air dry clay will harden in about 24 hours. (See sample.)

Use a toothpick to write “Pray” or “Pray without ceasing.” on your bricks. Stack them in a place you will see them and be reminded to pray. Leave them plain or paint them at home as you wish.

“Pray without ceasing.” 1 Thessalonians 5:17

Key Ideas:

1. God is ready to forgive and rebuild people's lives.
2. We must keep God's word or we might forget it.
3. God is faithful to each generation, even when there are problems, wars and destruction.
4. God can raise up leaders when they don't seem easy to find, even wine stewards!

Things to reflect on or talk about with others:

1. Where are you in this story? What part of the story do you like the best?
2. Every time Nehemiah was confronted with a problem or challenge the first thing he did was to pray — to talk with God about it. When are some times you pray? How might Nehemiah be an inspiration for you?
3. Ezra means “Helper.” Who are our helpers? How can you “help”? Who are the pillars, bricks and mortar of our congregation? Who are the builders? Who are the "wine stewards" who take on responsibility?
4. What might God be calling you to change/rebuild about yourself?
5. Ezra/Nehemiah's story "Foreshadows Jesus" and his ministry of salvation. "Restoration" and "salvation" come from the same root words — *to make whole*. Restoration is a familiar theme in the second half of the Old Testament. Nehemiah and Ezra are fulfilling the promises made by the prophets to restore God's people to the land.

The Messiah, Jesus, is the one who embodies that promise. Contrast Ezra and Nehemiah with Jesus' startling statement that he would rebuild the Temple in three days! When we build walls and Temples, how can we ensure they are the "right kind" of walls and Temples, not ones meant to keep people out (as in the Old days), but ones that embrace and welcome and protect people?

Additional Information and Resources for Online Learning: www.GloriaDeiOlympia.org

Feedback, ideas, questions?

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