



SEPTEMBER THEME

**DIRTY JOBS**  
Somebody's Gotta Do it

**BIBLE STORY**

**Nehemiah 2:19-20; 4; 6**

He Came in Like a Wrecking Ball |  
Nehemiah and Sanballat

**BOTTOM LINE**

Stay focused on what needs to be  
done

**MEMORY VERSE**

"Work at everything you do with  
all your heart. Work as if you were  
working for the Lord."

Colossians 3:23a, NIV

**LIFE APP**

**Initiative** | Seeing what needs to be  
done and doing it

**BASIC TRUTH**

I need to make the wise choice, and  
with God's help...I can!

**FOR LEADERS ONLY**

**GOD VIEW:** the connection between **INITIATIVE** and God's character, as shown through God's big story.

**THIS WEEK—Key Question:** **What distracts you from doing what needs to be done?**

We've all started projects that end up unfinished because we were distracted by something else that was happening. We want families to start thinking about some of those distractions. Some might be out of their control, but for the ones they can control, we hope they can leave with a plan to ignore those distractions and get their jobs done.

In week four, we see how Nehemiah dealt with some distractions in **Nehemiah 2:19-20, 4, and 6**. Not everyone liked what Nehemiah was doing. He had enemies who tried to distract the people from finishing the wall. But he saw through their plan and stayed focused on the job God gave him to finish.

**Bottom Line: Stay focused on what needs to be done.** From cleaning our rooms to finishing homework to yardwork to work projects, we have all sorts of things that need to be done. But it often doesn't take long for cleaning a room to become playing with the toys you're supposed to be picking up or home projects to sit idle while we seek more motivation. We hope families will see that focusing on the task at hand is important. God has all sorts of jobs for us to do. We can trust God to give us the focus we need to finish them.

**SOCIAL: PROVIDING TIME FOR FUN INTERACTION**

Welcome kids and spend time engaging in conversation and catching up. Get ready to experience today's story.

Before kids arrive, **PRAY** for each group member by name. At this phase, most kids will have a hard time recognizing when they're being distracted, so pray for God to give them that self-awareness. Also pray that God would protect kids from distractions so they can do what needs to be done.

**•• JUST FOR FUN**

**Made to Play** | *An activity that encourages learning through following guidelines and working as a group*

**What You Need:** No supplies needed

**What You Do:**

- Ask kids to, as a group, count to 25 out loud.
- Once they hit number 10, try to distract them by saying arbitrary numbers out loud.
- Ask:
  - What happened once I started saying different numbers?
  - Was it hard to stay focused on your counting?
  - Why do you think that is?



- Variation 1: Make them stop counting every few seconds while you say some random numbers, and then ask them to resume counting where they left off.
- Variation 2: Tell kids to partner up. One partner will say random numbers to the other while she tries to count.

## •• GET YOUR HEAD IN THE GAME

*Made to Play | An activity that encourages learning through following guidelines and working as a group*

**What You Need:** No supplies needed

### What You Do:

- Divide the group into two teams.
- Coordinate the teams to sing “Row, Row, Row Your Boat” in a “round” fashion.  
—One team starts singing and when they finish singing the first line, “Row, row, row your boat,” (*and before they start singing “gently down the stream”*) the other group starts singing, “Row, row, row your boat.”  
—Lyrics are:  
    Row, row, row your boat  
    Gently down the stream  
    Merrily, merrily, merrily, merrily  
    Life is but a dream
- Ask kids if they know the following songs: “The Alphabet Song,” “Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star,” or “Baa, Baa, Black Sheep.”
- Explain the three songs have the same melody but different words.
- Tell kids to choose one of the three songs and on your cue, instruct them to sing their song simultaneously.
- Encourage them to stay focused and sing without messing up and singing someone else’s words.
- Repeat a few times.

**What You Say:** “It was difficult to count and sing while other group members were doing other things at the same time. We were distracted from our assigned tasks, weren’t we? Nehemiah and his crew had a lot of distractions too as they rebuilt the wall around Jerusalem. **[Transition] Today in Sunday CM worship/WOW family worship we are going to hear/we heard about the distractions that threatened to keep the wall from being built.”**

*[Sunday Leaders: Lead your group to the Family Room for Children’s Ministry worship. Wednesday Leaders: Continue with the study.]*

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## GROUPS: CREATING A SAFE PLACE TO CONNECT

Create a safe place to connect and learn how the Bible story applies to real life experiences, through interactive activities and discussion questions.

### •• TAKE A SNAPSHOT [Live for God | Application Activity]

*Made to Create | An activity that explores spiritual ideas through the process of drawing, building, and designing*

**What You Need:** Copy paper, pens

### What You Do:

- Review the plot of the book “If You Give a Mouse a Cookie”: A boy gives a cookie to a mouse. The mouse asks for a glass of milk. He then requests a straw (*to drink the milk*), a mirror (*to avoid a milk mustache*), nail scissors (*to trim his hair in the mirror*), and a broom (*to sweep up his hair trimmings*). Next he wants to take a nap, have a story read to him, draw a picture, and hang the drawing on the refrigerator. Looking at the refrigerator makes him thirsty, so the mouse asks for a glass of milk. The circle is complete when he wants



a cookie to go with it.

- Divide the group into teams or let kids work alone if they choose.
- Explain to the teams that they are going to create a circular story, similar to the style of the book *If You Give a Mouse a Cookie*.
- Give teams paper and pens to write their stories down.
- If necessary, give teams a starting point for their stories.
  - If you start cleaning your room, then...
  - If you start your homework, then...
  - If you are taking out the trash, then...
- Allow teams to share their stories.
- Ask kids to identify some of the distractions found in the stories.

•• **BIBLE STORY EXTENSION** [Talk about God | Bible Story Review | Application Activity]

***Made to Imagine | An activity that promotes empathy and facilitates biblical application through role-play and reenactment***

**What You Need:** Bible, “Bricks 4/5” activity cards, pens, tape, the WALL OF INITIATIVE

**What You Do:**

- Review the Bible Story. Potential review questions could be:
  - What were some of the distractions Nehemiah faced? (*Refer to Nehemiah 4:1-3, 7-12, 6:2—mocking, fighting, the Jews were tired, enemies were trying to hurt him, enemies trying to trick him*)
  - How did Nehemiah avoid each distraction? (*Refer to Nehemiah 4:4-6, 13-15, 6:3-9—he prayed, encouraged the Jews, came up with a plan to help the Jews keep building, said “no” to leaving the job site, Nehemiah knew God’s truth and didn’t believe his enemies’ lies*)
- Give each kid a brick and a pen.
- When you say “GO,” each kid should write as many distractions as she can think of on her brick.
  - Encourage kids to refer to the distractions in the stories they wrote for the “Take a Snapshot” activity, distractions they face in their own lives or the distractions Nehemiah and the Jews faced.
- When you say “PASS,” kids stop writing (*even if they are in the middle of a sentence*) and pass their bricks to the kids on their right.
- Kids should read what is on the paper passed to them and:
  - Write an “!” if they agree with the distraction written by other kids
  - Write one way they could avoid one of the distractions on the brick.
  - Encourage kids to remember the ways Nehemiah avoided distractions.
- Briefly discuss the answers:
  - What did you notice?
  - What are some of the common distractions that you all face?
  - What were ways to avoid common distractions?
  - What examples of ways to avoid distractions do you think would be helpful to you? Why?
- Instruct kids to tape the bricks to the WALL OF INITIATIVE.

•• **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS** [Live for God | Application Activity]

***Made to Connect | An activity that invites kids to share with others and build on their understanding***

**What You Need:** No supplies needed

**What You Do:**

- Ask some of the following questions...
  - Have you ever been doing something, maybe homework, when you get distracted and suddenly a half hour goes by and you haven’t done any of your homework? Encourage kids to share times this has happened to them.
  - How can you know when you are being distracted?

