

## Discussion Guide

### **The Distractions Outside** (Building Lives #4)

Week of May 15, 2022

While this Discussion Guide is intended for use in a Riverwood Growth Group, it can be used personally as well. To get the most from these questions, we suggest you take 10-15 minutes to read, think, and pray through this Guide before participating in your Group. The point of this guide is not to “get through the questions” (there’s no quiz at the end!) but to pursue Jesus and grow spiritually.

#### **Icebreaker** (Optional)

What is the most common way you lose track of time? (YouTube, Netflix, a book, exercise, being in nature, a relationship, etc.)

#### **Discussion**

##### **Open to Nehemiah 4**

In chapter 4, we see some of the opposition the Jewish people faced as they sought to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem. The primary opponents to these efforts were Sanballat (governor of Syria) and Tobiah (governor of Ammon).

*Read Nehemiah 4:1-9 (Feel free to split among two readers)*

1. Why do you think Sanballat and Tobiah were against the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem? Should they be for it? After all, Tobiah's name is Hebrew (“Yahweh is good”), so he was most likely was a fellow Jew. And Sanballat was from a nearby region.
2. How did Sanballat and Tobiah attempt to stop the rebuilding of the walls?

3. How did Nehemiah and/or the people respond to these “outside distractions”?

#### **Making it Personal**

4. What “outside distractions” seem to derail your plans and goals?
5. What advice would you give someone who seems to be routinely distracted and derailed from achieving their goals or being the person they want to be?
6. How can the gospel help a Jesus-follower stay focused through the outside distractions?

#### **Memory Verse**

*“Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.”*  
(Hebrews 12:1-2 ESV)

#### **Prayer**

As you close in prayer, ask God to help you stay focused on Christ & the gospel through the distractions and trials of life.