

*New
Beginnings*

SMALL GROUP STUDY GUIDE

January 2, 2022



OPENING PRAYER

Pray the Wesley Covenant Prayer in unison

I am no longer my own, but yours. Put me to what you will, place me with whom you will. Put me to doing, put me to suffering. Let me be put to work for you or set aside for you, Praised for you or criticized for you. Let me be full, let me be empty. Let me have all things, let me have nothing. I freely and fully surrender all things To your glory and service. And now, O wonderful and holy God, Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer, You are mine, and I am yours. So be it. And the covenant which I have made on earth, Let it also be made in heaven. Amen.

SCRIPTURE PASSAGES

Galatians 5:22-23 (NIV)

²² But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.

Nehemiah 6:2-4 (NIV)

² Sanballat and Geshem sent me this message: "Come, let us meet together in one of the villages on the plain of Ono." But they were scheming to harm me; ³ so I sent messengers to them with this reply: "I am carrying on a great project and cannot go down. Why should the work stop while I leave it and go down to you?" ⁴ Four times they sent me the same message, and each time I gave them the same answer.

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“New Beginnings”

INTRODUCTION

The New Year is full of possibilities that fuel the potential for a better future. That’s why we make resolutions... even though those resolutions often fall by the wayside. But there’s something simple you can do to make the most of this year. It begins by looking past what you think is possible in your life to what God thinks is possible.

As the new year begins, discern ‘what does God think is possible for me this year?’ One simple answer to this question is to focus on one characteristic of the ‘Fruit of the Spirit.’ Try to grow in that area throughout the year. But don’t let new opportunities, busy schedules, or fear distract you from the one thing you must do. Say with Nehemiah, “I am doing a great work and I cannot come down.”

QUESTIONS

1. Do you typically make New Year’s Resolutions? If so, how well do you typically keep them?
2. Are you a dreamer or a realist? How does that tendency influence the way you view the year ahead?
3. Is it difficult for you to believe that God sees potential in you that you can’t see in yourself? Why or why not?
4. Read Nehemiah 6:2–4 on page 1. What is your wall – the one thing you dare not come down from until the work is done? What obstacles need to be removed in order for you to stay focused on your number one priority this year? Is that potential distraction something you need to say “no” to just for now, or forever?
5. Read Galatians 5:22-23 on page 1. Which item in that list feels weak or absent in your life? What does that weakness or absence cost you?

FINAL APPLICATION

What is one thing you can do this week to begin growing the fruit of the Spirit you identified in question 5? How can this group support you?