

After the Exile



"Boots in the Rubble"

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**Second Sunday of Lent, February 28, 2021**

*"We are using this season of Lent to envision God's mission for Highland on the other side of the Coronavirus Exile"*

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## **"After the Exile"**

When will Highland return to in-person worship?

Stewarding this kairos moment to gain clear vision for our mission ahead

Last week: looking back to understand, looking ahead with dreams

Dreams remain ethereal unless we do the work of "scoping"

## **Nehemiah Inspects the Walls: 2:9-20**

I was there three days. A prophetic nod to resurrection? **v.11**

Nehemiah inspects the walls secretly at night: **2:12-16**

- Clear assessment: what was needed, was it really possible?
- Avoid the delay of detractors before clarity was achieved

Nehemiah casts the vision and the people buy in: **2:17-18**

Opposition begins: **2:19-20**

## **The Spiritual Practice of Scoping**

Coining a term for correctly assessing and understanding one's context

Calibrating the scope on the marksman's rifle:

Elements of calibration: elevation (vertical) and windage (horizontal)

The necessity of double-interpretation in sharing God's good news

Paul scopes Athens: the altar unknown God, Epimenides, Aratus' *Phaenomena*

Don Richardson's *Peace Child and Eternity in Their Hearts*

Redemptive analogies in every culture, analogies change as cultures change

It is our responsibility to correctly scope our contemporary context

## **Scoping Our Current Social Reality**

- Increase of generalized fear and anxiety:
  - Getting sick, new epidemics, sense of mortality, losing loved ones, economic woes
- Increased sense of globalization

- Shared trauma, shared solutions, small world
- Increased societal division and polarization
  - Bubbles, suspicion of authorities, political vitriol, media skepticism
- Increased dependence on technology
  - Commerce, community, communication, recreation
- Longing for embodied human community and interaction
  - Celebration, worship, parties, competition, arts and entertainment, public spaces
- Children behind in school with pressure to catch up
  - Disparities in access, mental health, strategies for closing the gap

### **In Light of These Things What Shall We Build?**

An exercise for March 3: Lenten Gathering: Opportunities and Threats

The King is with us and for us! (elevation) **v. 18**

There is much that stands in the way (windage) **v. 19-20**

Defining the target (the vision)