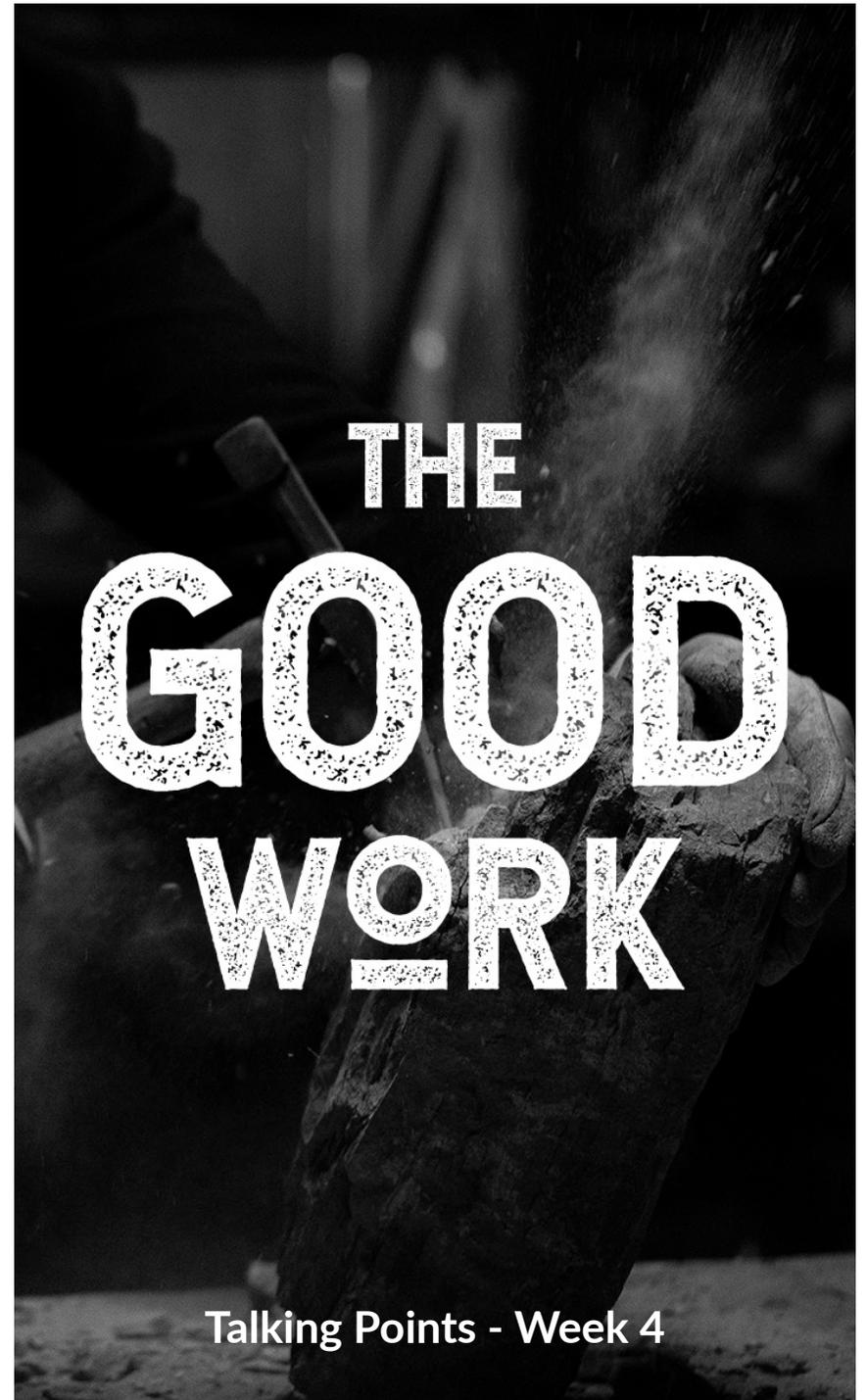


NOTES & QUOTES



CONNECT (BUILD RELATIONSHIPS)

1. What is a distraction that you wrestle with most often? If there was one distraction that you could eliminate or reduce in your life what would it be?
2. Years ago, Richard Foster started his book, "The Celebration of Discipline" with the statement, "Superficiality is the curse of our age...". His son Nathan now suggests that "distraction" is an even greater threat. How are these two similar, different and connected?
3. What unnecessary and unhelpful things do people get distracted by in the church?

THRIVE (EXPLORE BIBLICAL TRUTH)

4. Read Nehemiah 5:1-13. Summarize the outcry of the people in 5:1-5.
5. In 5:6-13, Nehemiah responds to the situation with anger against the injustice and a call to action. What specifically does he call those with power and authority to do? How does he demand they change their ways?
6. In 5:13 it says, "...the people praised the Lord and did as they had promised." How do you normally respond when you are made aware of a need or are spiritually confronted? What does it look like to have an open and responsive heart before God?
7. In 5:14-19, we learn that Nehemiah does more than just make convincing arguments – he is also extremely generous. Summarize how his actions back up his words to the nobles and officials.

8. Read 6:1-4. Even if the invitation to meet was well-intentioned, how does Nehemiah not let the "good" distract him from the "better"? What better purpose keeps him from accepting the invitation to meet?
9. In Nehemiah 6:9-10, intimidation and discouragement only served to fuel Nehemiah's determination and prayer. What can we learn from his example?
10. In 6:15 -16 the rebuilding of the wall, an enormous accomplishment, is completed in record time and the opposition is overcome. When the Lord grants you great favor and success, how do you respond in your thoughts, words and actions? What temptation to sin do we face in those times?

COMMIT (BE ON MISSION)

11. Is there an area of need or an issue of injustice in our community that you have noticed that the people of God could help address? What action might you take personally as a first step?
12. Why are distractions so effective at derailing the good work God is doing in our church and in our lives? What steps can you take, on your own or with the help of others, to help remain focused on what God has called you to in this season?
13. This week Compass shared a significant and urgent financial need the church is facing. Why do you think God allows these challenges to occur? What is the best way for us as God's people to respond?

PAUSE, PONDER & PRAY

"Lord, you are a generous God, giving to those who do not deserve your grace. Teach us to be openhanded with the things you have entrusted to us. Help me to see the needs of others. Thank you that, even in the face of distractions, you're with us. Help us to learn to keep our eyes on you as we pursue the work you've given us, and to see our distractions for what they are. Give us the strength and perseverance we need to see your work through to the end. In Jesus' name we pray, amen."