

More than interested... I am concerned!

¹The words of Nehemiah the son of Hacaliah. Now it happened in the month Chislev, in the twentieth year, while I was in Susa the capitol, ² that Hanani, one of my brothers, and some men from Judah came; and I asked them concerning the Jews who had escaped and had survived the captivity, and about Jerusalem.

Nehemiah 1:1-2 (NASB)

Observation

Many times we hear stories of incredible injustice in the world. We show interest in the story, and it even makes us think, "I wish the world was not like this." But rarely do we move from interest to concern. Concern is defined as having a specific connection with or responsibility for. When we become deeply concerned about something, we begin to take personal responsibility for it. God is looking for people who are not just interested, but are willing to be concerned and take ownership of the problem. You can't do everything, but you can do something.

Nehemiah became concerned about the Jews who escaped and survived the exile. That concern turned into a burden and that burden moved him to action. As believers, we can not only be interested in making a difference in our city, we must become concerned. A deep concern for people who are far away from God will move our hearts to action. It will cause us to ask the right questions, and the right questions will cause us to provide answers. As believers, our concern for people should lead us to love and generosity. Today become more than interested, become openly concerned for those who are far away from God.

Application

Consider your responsibilities for your family, your church and the lost? As you evaluate your life, determine, "Am I interested or am I concerned?" If you are not concerned for the things God cares about, take time to pray and come up with a plan of action. That is what Open: Next Chapter is all about - a church concerned for our city.