

The city was large and
spacious...
(Nehemiah 7 v 4)



Photograph: Courtesy of Faith in Community Scotland (Billy Cullen)



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The Bible is like a photograph album which holds all kinds of photographs. There are important photographs. And there are photographs which apparently have no importance. The criteria for saying which photograph is important and which is not depends on each person. A photograph taken with a cheap camera by an inexperienced person (adult or child) could be more important than the expensive photograph taken by the official photographer in her or his studio. Both photographs are, however, unimportant for an identity document. They were not taken for this purpose. But, in a photograph album everything has a place and an importance. It holds everything. It is an unorganised order, following the life of the people who appear in it. Yet, it offers a faithful picture of the life of the people. It is fun for the younger generations who leaf through its pages as they learn who they are and where they come from. With this in mind, all photographs are important. Even those that appear unimportant.

So it is with the Bible. It has something of everything: official, formal photographs and snap shots with lost dates and places. Some were taken to document history and others serve only to draw a smile from the observer. It is a faithful grouping of the life of a people, held together in old pages in which future generations will be able to discover who they are and where they have come from.

Adapted from words by Carlos Mesters



**Unlocking real life stories of urban people
Revealing Good News of the Down to Earth Christ
Releasing life changing skills and confidence**

We begin each session with one of the photographs taken in the city of Glasgow. The photographs are a "Code" and are used to "Unlock real life stories of urban people". We can use the following three questions to unlock the photograph...

- (a) What do we see in the photograph?
- (b) Who took the photograph?
- (c) Why was the photograph taken?

(a) What do we see in the photograph?

This question can be related to the 5 senses. Encourage people to put themselves into the photograph and consider sight, sound, smell, taste and touch.

(b) Who took the photograph?

This question can help to identify if the person is part of the photograph or is an outsider. It can help us to discover how we ourselves look at different situations and to what extent we are part of the situation.

(c) Why was the photograph taken?

This question can help us to reflect a little more about the circumstances of the photograph



These three questions will form the basis for our approach to the Bible. We need to consider that when we read the Bible we are looking at a photograph. It can be helpful to consider who wrote the text that we are reading. And we can ask why would somebody want to write the text.

Our approach to the Bible passage is in three stages:

(1) What do we see in the passage?

We can think about the following: What is happening in the passage? Who is in the passage? Where is the passage set?

(2) Who wrote the passage?

This is not an exact science (sometimes it is obvious and sometimes not). All answers are relevant and each person should be allowed to explain their suggestion and the group should be allowed to discuss it.

(3) Why was the passage written?

Again, there is no right or wrong answer. In light of the previous two questions people should be encouraged to make their own reading of the passage.

**The city was large and spacious...
Urban stories for urban people**

Look

Photograph 1

What do we see in the photograph?

Who took the photograph?

Why was the photograph taken?

Reflect

Text: Nehemiah 1 v 1-4

What do we see in the text?

Who wrote the text?

Why was the text written?



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Look

Photograph 2

What do we see in the photograph?

Who took the photograph?

Why was the photograph taken?

Reflect

Text: Nehemiah 2 v 11-18

What do we see in the text?

Who wrote the text?

Why was the text written?



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Look

Photograph 3

What do we see in the photograph?

Who took the photograph?

Why was the photograph taken?

Reflect

Text: Nehemiah 4 v 1-4

What do we see in the text?

Who wrote the text?

Why was the text written?

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Look

Photograph 4

What do we see in the photograph?

Who took the photograph?

Why was the photograph taken?

Reflect

Text: Nehemiah 5 v 1-10

What do we see in the text?

Who wrote the text?

Why was the text written?



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Look

Photograph 5

What do we see in the photograph?

Who took the photograph?

Why was the photograph taken?

Reflect

Text: Nehemiah 8 v 1, 9-12

What do we see in the text?

Who wrote the text?

Why was the text written?



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