

DEFEND

Mike Howerton - Lead Pastor

_____ the Oppressed and Impoverished

About this time some of the men and their wives raised a cry of protest against their fellow Jews. They were saying, "We have such large families. We need more food to survive." Others said, "We have mortgaged our fields, vineyards, and homes to get food during the famine." And others said, "We have had to borrow money on our fields and vineyards to pay our taxes."

Nehemiah 5:1-4 NLT

When I heard their complaints, I was very angry. After thinking it over, I spoke out against these nobles and officials. **Nehemiah 5:6,7 NLT**

Then I pressed further, "What you are doing is not right! Should you not walk in the fear of our God in order to avoid being mocked by enemy nations? You must restore their fields, vineyards, olive groves, and homes to them this very day. And repay the interest you charged when you lent them money, grain, new wine, and olive oil." **Nehemiah 5:9,11 NLT**

"And he will answer, 'I tell you the truth, when you refused to help the least of these my brothers and sisters, you were refusing to help me.' **Matthew 25:45 NLT**

It is criminal to ignore a neighbor in need but compassion for the poor—what a blessing! **Proverbs 14:21 Message**

HOW TO RESPOND:

Set the _____...**...and God will _____ with favor**

Remember me with favor, O my God, for all I have done for these people.
Nehemiah 5:19 NIV

God is not unjust. He will not forget your work and the love you have shown him as you have helped his people and continue to help them. **Hebrews 6:10 NIV**

Learn to do good. Seek justice. Help the oppressed. Defend the cause of orphans.
Isaiah 1:17 NLT

But if anyone has the world's goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God's love abide in him? **1 John 3:17 ESV**

God sets the lonely in families. **Psalms 68:6 NIV**

Everyone to whom much was given, of him much will be required... **Luke 12:48 ESV**

QUESTIONS FOR GROUPS //

- *Read Psalm 68:6, How can you be thankful for this in your own family setting?*
- *For you what is the hardest part about “defending”?*
- *How do you think God has wired you to “defend”?*
- *Are there certain parts of the Kitale Project that really resonate with you?*
- *Read Luke 12:48. Discuss this verse as a group.*