

[00:00:01.390] - Lisa Qualls

Welcome to the Adoption Connection podcast, where we offer resources to equip you and stories to inspire you on your adoption journey. I'm Lisa Qualls.

[00:00:10.310] - Melissa Corkum

And this is Melissa Corkum. Don't worry, we get it, and we're here for you.

[00:00:19.170] - Melissa Corkum

Hey, friends, welcome to episode 164 of the Adoption Connection Podcast. Between the two of us, Lisa and I have been blogging for over two decades and creating content and encouraging adoptive and foster families. And so once a month on the podcast this year, we would like to share some words of encouragement from something we've recorded or written in the past. Today I'm bringing you day eight, which is my contribution to the devotional that we edited in 2019 called Faith, Hope, and Connection. Adoptive and foster families often find themselves barely functioning and just trying to survive when caring for children with hard behaviors. For a lot of adoptive families, trauma has left a trail of devastation not unlike what Nehemiah found when he returned to Jerusalem. The parallel of rebuilding something after and even during a period of crisis and brokenness is not lost on me. But just like the temple was rebuilt, so can we rebuild our hearts and our families using these principles. Grieve. From Nehemiah 1:4, "When I heard these words, I sat down and wept. I mourned for a number of days, fasting and praying before the God of the heavens." Friends, you are not crazy. You're not alone, and what your family has lost is real. Sometimes it can feel overwhelming to consider the cost you've paid for parenting a child from a hard place. But trust me, there is hope. This season will not last forever. My experience was that I couldn't move forward until I accepted the state of our family and grieved it properly. Secondly, prayer. Nehemiah 1:5-6, "I said, Lord the God of the heavens, the great and awe inspiring God who keeps his gracious Covenant with those who love him and keep his commands. Let your eyes be open and your ears be attentive to hear your servants prayer that I now pray to you day and night for your servants, the Israelites." Understanding our kids behaviors and having connected parenting tools are imperative for this journey, but really, healing is a God-sized job. It's a job for the one who created not just our kids, but our whole world. No one understands like he does. Pray day and night and all those little moments in between for your family as Nehemiah prayed for Israel. Thirdly, change what you can control. Nehemiah 1:6, "I confess the sins we've committed against you. Both I and your father's family have sinned." I know the word "sin" may sound harsh, and I believe you're a good parent doing hard but good work. But can we all at least just agree that we're not perfect? It's so tempting to put everything we have into changing and healing our kids. Unfortunately, while sometimes we can influence them, we cannot change them. The only person we really have control over is ourselves. Take it from someone who has tried this both ways. Working on yourself is hard work, but way more satisfying. Fourthly, find your people. Nehemiah 3:2, "The men of Jericho built next to Eliashib, and next to them Zaccur son of Imri built." Throughout Nehemiah, chapter three, we read about all the people who helped rebuild each section of the wall. They are not always easy to find, but friends and professionals who are on your side make all the difference in the world. Fifthly, be persistent. From Nehemiah 4:1,6, "When Sanballat heard that we were rebuilding the wall, he became furious. He mocked the Jews before his colleagues and the powerful men of Samaria. So we rebuilt the wall until the entire wall was joined together up to half its height for the people had the will to keep working." Parenting kids from hard places is a marathon, not a sprint. Actually, it's like running a marathon into the wind. What you're doing is not easy. It is going to take grit and persistence. Be persistent in both prayer and action. Nehemiah continues in verse nine, "So we prayed to our God and stationed a guard because of the mockers day and night." Next, stay singularly focused. In Nehemiah 6:3, he says, "I am doing important work and cannot come down. This task we've undertaken is important. More important than all of the other pools in life, for now." In this season, give yourself permission to sit the next meal train out, and bow out of volunteering at school and Church. Besides, you need to conserve your energy so you can be persistent. And lastly, remember the truth. From Nehemiah 6:8-9, "Then I replied to him, 'There is nothing to these rumors you are spreading. You are inventing them in your own mind. For they were all trying to intimidate us, saying they will drop their hands from the work and it will never be finished. But now, my God, strengthen my hands.'" Whether it's your own doubts or external voices bouncing around in your head, remember these three truths. You are the parent your child needs. With God, healing is possible. And you can do this! Write the things you know to be true on index cards and place them in strategic

places. Each time you see them, you will be reminded of the truth. For more reflections from other foster and adoptive parents, please check out the Faith, Hope and Connection devotional. You can find out more at the show notes for this episode at theadoptionconnection.com/164.

[00:07:03.150] - Melissa Corkum

Before you go, we'd love to connect with you on social media. Our new Instagram handle is @postadoptionresources. Or better yet, join our free Facebook community at theadoptionconnection.com/facebook.

[00:07:18.150] - Lisa Qualls

Thanks so much for listening. We love having you and remember you're a good parent doing good work.

[00:07:26.430] - Melissa Corkum

The music for the podcast is called New Day and was created by Lee Rosevere.