



SERIES: LESSONS ON THE POWER OF COMBINED EFFORT

Lesson #4: “Joining Together with God’s Purpose”

Nehemiah 4:1-23

Announcements and opening prayer.



Connect: an opportunity for people to immediately interact and connect with each other; icebreaker/attention getters. **Icebreaker:** If you were stuck on a deserted island with one person who was dripping with sarcastic comments about everything you did and another person who laughed and mocked everything you did, which one of them would anger or frustrate you the most?

Transition: Life is filled with people who will ridicule or try to discourage you from giving your life in service to Christ. Christians are not always celebrated for their vision. So, what to do we do?

The Bottom Line: Today Nehemiah is going to teach us that a godly person keeps their eyes on the vision, not on the critics of the vision. God did great things through Nehemiah and His people because of their focus on God’s vision He had given them.

LESSON PLAN



Denotes “Apply”

Illus – People laughed at Walt Disney when he looked at the swamps of Florida and said, “This is going to be a family paradise.” They said, “It just can’t be done. It’s a swamp!” Do you think that maybe they wish they would have invested money rather than laughed at Disney?

Read Nehemiah 4:1-3

1. What tactics did Sanballat and Tobiah use to discourage the Jews from rebuilding the city walls?

Background: Sanballat was the governor of Samaria. If the Jews rebuild Jerusalem, then Samaria will no longer be the political center of Judea. We learned that Sanballat and Tobiah, who governed the area east of Judah, were already mad. Now it says Sanballat “became angry” (lit., became hot”) and mocked the Jews when he saw what was happening in Jerusalem. Disputes between rival Persian governors were quite frequent. Sanballat rapidly fired five derogatory questions to taunt the Jews and discourage them from their efforts. Regarding his last one, fire had damaged the stones, which were probably limestone, and had caused much of

the stone to crack and to disintegrate. Tobiah sneers saying any wall the Jews built would be so flimsy that even the light footsteps of a solitary fox would collapse it.

Read Nehemiah 4:4-6

2. How did Nehemiah respond specifically to the taunts and plots of his enemies?

🕒 List the parts of Nehemiah's prayer to God on the board.

3. According to Nehemiah, why were the Jews so successful in their work?

🕒 What lesson do you think God wants our church to learn from this God-inspired example?

Read Nehemiah 4:7-12

4. Were the people without fear?

Read Nehemiah 4:13-14

5. What does God's great leader do in the face of one more problem?

🕒 What lesson do you think God wants our church to learn from Nehemiah's example?

Read Eph. 6:10-19

🕒 How does this NT text relate to the problems Nehemiah and the Jews were facing and how they responded?

“Perseverance in the Christian life is a ceaseless warfare against the forces of the kingdom of darkness (see.). Christians therefore need to be reminded to expect hardships and persecution and not be dismayed by them. Jesus promised that ‘in the world you have tribulation’ (John 16:33). ‘Suffer hardship with me, as a good soldier of Christ Jesus,’ Paul exhorted Timothy, since ‘all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted’ (2 Tim. 2:3; 3:12). James gave the good news that such tribulation produces spiritual endurance (James 1:2–4).” —John MacArthur

Read Nehemiah 4:15-23

- ⑥ What do you most appreciate about Nehemiah and the Israelites? Why?
- ⑥ In future instances of opposition, how do you plan to respond in a fashion that pleases and honors God?
- ⑥ To what project or church endeavor do you need to renew your commitment (regardless of the opposition you might face)?



CARING TIME: SHARE AND PRAY

Close with a Prayer Time: *Pray that God builds our church into the church that He longs for it to be!*



Going Deeper/Homework:

Memory Verse: “Let love and faithfulness never leave you; bind them around your neck, write them on the tablet of your heart” (Proverbs 3:3).