

Nehemiah – Week 6 – Victory over Fear – Bible Study Helps

Sermon Summary: This sermon explores Nehemiah chapter 6, focusing on how God's people can overcome fear tactics employed by the enemy. It emphasizes the importance of discernment, faith, and persistence in doing God's work despite opposition. The sermon draws parallels between Nehemiah's experiences and modern-day challenges faced by Christians, encouraging believers to trust in God's word and continue His work regardless of obstacles.

Key Points:

- The enemy uses various fear tactics to stop God's work
- Nehemiah's faith-based responses to fear tactics serve as an example for believers
- Discernment is crucial in identifying and resisting the enemy's strategies
- Persistence in God's work leads to victory and glorifies God
- Fear should not manipulate believers into compromising or stopping God's work
- The shield of faith is essential in quenching the fiery darts of the wicked

Scripture Reference:

- Nehemiah 6

Stories:

- The rebuilding of Jerusalem's walls under Nehemiah's leadership
- The opposition faced by Nehemiah from Sanballat, Tobiah, and others
- The completion of the wall in 52 days as a testament to God's work
- Brief mention of Joseph's life story as an example of trusting God through difficulties
- Allusion to Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection as the ultimate victory over fear and death

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Discipleship and Small Group Guide: Victory Over Fear (Nehemiah 6)

Opening Question:

Share a time when you faced fear or opposition while trying to do something important. How did you respond?

Key Takeaways:

1. The enemy uses fear tactics to try to stop God's work.
2. Nehemiah demonstrated how to respond to fear with faith and discernment.
3. God's people should keep working and trusting Him despite opposition.
4. Discernment is crucial for identifying and resisting manipulation through fear.

Discussion Questions:

1. What were the main fear tactics used against Nehemiah? How do you see similar tactics being used today?
2. How did Nehemiah respond to each fear tactic? What can we learn from his responses?
3. The sermon mentioned the "shield of faith" (Ephesians 6:16). How can we practically use this shield in our daily lives?
4. Discuss the statement: "God doesn't give us the spirit of fear." How does this truth impact how we should view and respond to fear?
5. How can we develop better discernment to recognize manipulation and fear tactics?
6. The sermon emphasized continuing God's work despite opposition. What "walls" might God be calling you to build or rebuild in your life or community?

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7. How does the completed wall in just 52 days demonstrate God's power? Share an example of how you've seen God work in seemingly impossible situations.

Practical Applications:

1. This week, identify one area where fear might be holding you back. Apply Nehemiah's strategy of saying "no" to compromise and trusting God instead.

2. Practice using the "shield of faith" when confronted with fearful thoughts or situations. Write down Bible verses that counter specific fears you face.

3. Commit to a specific "work" for God this week, whether it's sharing your faith, serving others, or addressing a personal area of growth. Don't let fear stop you.

4. Spend time in prayer asking God to strengthen your hands for His work, just as Nehemiah did.

Closing Prayer:

Thank God for His Word and the example of Nehemiah. Ask for courage to face fears, wisdom to discern manipulation, and strength to continue doing God's work despite opposition.

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Discipleship Questions

How can we discern between godly fear and ungodly fear in our lives, and what practical steps can we take to overcome fear tactics used by the enemy?

In what ways might we be unintentionally using fear tactics or manipulation in our relationships with others, and how can we align our communication more closely with God's ways?

How does Nehemiah's response to opposition and fear provide a model for modern Christians facing challenges to their faith or mission?

What are some specific examples from your own life where you've had to choose between compromising with the world and staying committed to God's work?

How can we develop better spiritual discernment to recognize and respond to the enemy's tactics, as Nehemiah did?

In what ways might our focus on past failures or sins be hindering our current walk with God, and how can we apply the principle of 'forgetting what is behind' (Philippians 3:13)?

How does the concept of the 'shield of faith' (Ephesians 6:16) apply to our daily lives, and what practical strategies can we use to strengthen our faith shield?

What does it mean for our lives and ministries to be 'a work wrought of God', and how can we ensure we're not taking credit for God's work?

How can we maintain vigilance against the enemy's ongoing tactics (as seen in Tobiah's continued letters) while also celebrating God's victories in our lives?

In what ways might God be calling you to 'keep working' despite opposition or fear, and what support do you need from your faith community to persevere?

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A 5-day Bible reading plan and devotional guide

Day 1: Overcoming Fear with Faith

Reading: Nehemiah 6:1-9, Ephesians 6:10-18

Devotional: Nehemiah faced intense opposition and fear tactics as he worked to rebuild Jerusalem's walls. Yet he responded with unwavering faith and determination. Like Nehemiah, we too face "fear-mongering" from the enemy who seeks to derail God's work in our lives. But we have a powerful weapon - the shield of faith (Ephesians 6:16). Today, identify an area where fear is holding you back. Take up your shield of faith by declaring God's promises over that situation. Remember, "God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power, love, and a sound mind" (2 Timothy 1:7). How can you practically apply your faith to overcome fear today?

Day 2: Discernment in a World of Deception

Reading: Job 12:11-12, 1 John 4:1-6

Devotional: In a world full of conflicting voices and information, discernment is crucial. Nehemiah demonstrated keen discernment, recognizing the enemy's tactics and responding wisely. The Bible encourages us to "try the spirits" and to develop spiritual discernment. Reflect on how you consume information and make decisions. Are you taking time to seek God's wisdom and test things against His Word? Ask the Holy Spirit to sharpen your spiritual senses, that you may clearly distinguish truth from deception. Consider a decision you're facing - how can you apply godly discernment to this situation?

Day 3: Perseverance in God's Work

Reading: Nehemiah 6:15-16, Philippians 3:12-14

Devotional: Despite relentless opposition, Nehemiah and the people completed the wall in just 52 days - a testament to their determination and God's enabling power. The Apostle Paul likewise encourages us to "press toward the mark." What "walls" is God calling you to build in your life or community? It might be developing a godly character, serving others, or standing firm in your faith. Whatever it is, commit today to persevere, knowing that God is faithful to complete the good work He has begun in you (Philippians 1:6). What small step can you take today to move forward in God's calling?

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Day 4: The Finished Work of Christ

Reading: John 19:28-30, Colossians 2:13-15

Devotional: While Nehemiah's completed wall was a great accomplishment, it pales in comparison to the finished work of Christ on the cross. When Jesus declared "It is finished," He signaled the complete payment for our sins and victory over evil. Meditate on the profound implications of Christ's finished work in your life. How does this truth impact your identity, purpose, and daily walk with God? Take time to thank Jesus for His sacrifice and the new life He offers. Is there an area of your life where you need to more fully embrace the freedom and victory Christ has secured for you?

Day 5: Being God's Testimony to the World

Reading: Nehemiah 6:16, Matthew 5:14-16

Devotional: When the wall was completed, even Israel's enemies recognized it as a work of God. Our lives should similarly shine as testimonies to God's transforming power. Reflect on your own journey with Christ - how has He changed you? What "unexplainable" things has God done in your life? Consider how you can more intentionally let your light shine before others, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven. Pray for opportunities to share your testimony and for the courage to seize them when they come. How can your life be a clearer reflection of God's work today?