

Nehemiah: Facing Opposition

[Nehemiah 4:1-23](#)

As Nehemiah and his followers continue the work of building the wall around Jerusalem, they encounter harsh and threatening opposition. While they take action to defend themselves and move ahead with God's work, they must grapple with the reality that only God can protect them and make his mission succeed. Likewise, we must navigate a difficult world in which we both fight for God's kingdom and trust him with the outcome.

Application

1. We are all tempted to trust in the "walls" we build in our lives to protect us or give us identity. What "walls" are you trusting in (retirement, marriage, children, work, education, ministry)? How can you move towards trusting God in those areas?
2. Can you think of a time in your life when you invested a lot of effort into building a "wall" for yourself, but then became disillusioned when it didn't give you the security, status, or comfort that you desired? How did that affect you?
3. What is something in your life that you are trusting God for—where you are putting work in, but you cannot control the outcome? How can you both trust God and take action in that situation?
4. Discuss the idea that God is orchestrating the world around you to gain your attention and draw you into relationship with him. How does this affect the way you view both the difficulties and the victories in your life?

Key Points

- Nehemiah and his followers are being opposed by both external and internal forces. They will have to trust God in a way that they have not previously had to.
- When mocked by his enemies, Nehemiah prays and places the burden on God. Rather than engaging them himself, he humbly acknowledges that the battle belongs to God.
- As they continue to work in the face of opposition and even death, the Israelites are exposed. In the same way, God continually brings difficulties into our lives in order to humble and teach us. This is part of the Christian journey.

- Having to trust God with an outcome we cannot control is an important shaping experience for believers. Like Nehemiah, we must both trust God and take action according to his will.
- The world is a challenging and difficult place. We have to work hard and fight hard in the areas where God has given us responsibility. But, we also have to maintain a deep sense that everything we build belongs to God.

Other Scripture References

[Matthew 6](#)