

# Nehemiah: Opposition, Threats, and Lies

## [Nehemiah 6:1-19](#)

In this passage, Nehemiah faces serious opposition from outside forces who threaten to take his life and stop God's work. However, it becomes clear that he is also facing opposition from within. We must examine our hearts and motives to determine if we are actually opposing God's work either in our own hearts or on a larger scale. Only if we fear God above all else will we be true and effective agents of life change.

## Application

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1. Fear of man can cause us to act in ways that oppose God's work, and valuing the opinions of others can prompt us to either self-promote or self-protect. Consider the following questions as a diagnostic. Do you tend to self-protect or self-promote?
  - Do you give into things against your will to make others happy?
  - Do you avoid saying yes to anything because you have a deep fear of failure?
  - Do you bask in praise? Or do you avoid praise because it has expectations attached to it?
  - Do you keep people from knowing you?
  - How do you take personal criticism? Does it devastate you?
  - Are you obsessed with your body (in a good or bad way)?
  - If you compare yourself to others, does it make you feel good?
2. After considering these questions, ask yourself—what is the motivating factor behind what you do and why you do it? What drives you to get up each morning? What energizes you?
3. We are going to serve, obey, and follow what we fear the most. Take some time to look at your life. Where do you invest time, energy, and money? What do those investments reveal about what you fear and what you value?
4. To be a catalyst for life change in others, we must be willing to inconvenience ourselves for the sake of the gospel. Whom can you lay your life down for in order to promote life change for them?

## Key Points

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- Three governors who oppose the rebuilding of the wall try various methods to entrap Nehemiah and put an end to God's work. However, God grants Nehemiah clarity, steadfastness, and discernment to handle this opposition.
- Because Nehemiah fears God above all else, he doesn't feel the need to vindicate himself. He realizes that his integrity and even his life is not at greatest risk in this situation—God's work is. He is not overwhelmed by fear because he fears rightly.
- It becomes clear that a segment of God's people are informing and enabling the outside opposition. We must also consider if we as believers are acting in ways that oppose God's work.
- Fear of man can be a powerful influence in our lives, and we often fear man more than God because we lack an understanding of God's holiness and our sinfulness.
- Fear of the Lord will give a deeper satisfaction and freedom to serve him than anyone's approval. We must therefore pursue understanding who God is through studying his Word and asking him to reveal himself.
- When we fear God above all else, we will be free to do the good work he has called us to do. Only then we will be effective as catalysts for life change in those around us.

## Other Scripture References

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[Nehemiah 4:1](#)