

Build The Future

Part 6 — Distractions

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Warm-Up

1. Where have you seen God working this week?
2. What stood out to you from the message on Sunday?
3. What has the Lord been stirring in your heart over the past few weeks?

Know It

Read Nehemiah 6. What stands out to you?

1. What did opposition look like for Nehemiah and the Jews? How did they respond to it?

As God's chosen people, the Jews had no shortage of enemies and those who wished them harm and failure. It can be easy to forget that we have a very real enemy as well. The moment that we accept Jesus and step into His family of chosen people, there is a target on our backs. Opposition will come and we need to be ready for it.

Read 1 Peter 5:8-9

How do you see the enemy "prowling around like a roaring lion" in Nehemiah's story?



We've all seen people respond well to opposition and others who have responded poorly. We get to learn from both of these examples, so you could take some time to share them now.

2. How does this chapter contrast visible success (wall completion) with the invisible, ongoing spiritual battle?

Some distractions are big while others are sneaky and small. We get a glimpse into Nehemiah's life and the distractions he was faced with but we can also infer a lot more. Nehemiah was doing a great work for the Lord and we can be certain that the enemy was throwing every distraction in the book at Nehemiah to slow him down.

How do you see Nehemiah combating the distractions of opportunity, criticism, and fear?

Own It

1. When have you faced opposition while working towards a God-given vision?

When we are actively obeying the Lord and doing His work, the enemy will want to hinder us and trip us up. We can keep focus on God by maintaining our community, studying Scripture, praying, fasting, and practicing other spiritual disciplines.

Read 1 Corinthians 16:13-14

How were you able to “be on your guard” and “stand firm in your faith” despite this opposition?



We've all had times of opposition that we didn't handle well. We've all had moments where we gave into temptation, didn't guard our hearts, and strayed from our faith. Thanks to our loving Savior, there is an abundant amount of grace that covers our shortcomings.

2. What are you most easily distracted by? Do you tend to struggle most with distractions of opportunities, criticism, or fear?

Self awareness is one of the most important first steps to take when it comes to making a change. We need to be aware of the things that most tempt us and make us stumble. We all have that “thorn in our side” - a distraction or sin that captures our attention more than others, a struggle that persists. We need to be aware of it and proactively have a plan.

Read 2 Corinthians 12:7b-10

How is acknowledging and “delighting” in your weaknesses actually a strength?



Confession is an incredibly important part of healing, redemption, and transformation. We need to not only confess our sins to God, but also to our trusted community. There is so much power in bringing things into the light and asking for prayer, support, and accountability from people who love you. This is the perfect time and space to confess anything weighing on your heart.

Next Steps

1. Nehemiah consistently prayed and stayed focused. What spiritual practices help you stay focused on God's calling in your life?

A game plan is vital and a next step you're moving towards is necessary for a successful build. By sharing with your group how you need to be moving forward this week, you're putting yourself into a position to succeed and come one step closer to completing your build.

Read Hebrews 12:1-3

How can you keep running the race you are in right now?



Reflect on this question over the next few days and send out a text or email to the group when you have a specific step/answer. Be praying for the steps that other members have committed to and follow up with them throughout the week to see how you're doing.

2. What would you like to change or add this week to keep focus?

Our lives on this side of heaven will never be perfect. That is why the Lord gives us visions to work towards. Visions always involve change - making something different and better, creating something greater for the future, and building something new. The first step is always recognizing what needs to change and identifying the vision that the Lord has given us.

Read Ephesians 4:22-24

What piece of your "old" self do you need to cast off to make room for your "new" self?

Digging Deeper

This week, take some time to dig deeper into chapter 6.

1. Why did Sanballat and Geshem repeatedly invite Nehemiah to meet in the plain of Ono?
2. What do you think was their true motive?
3. Why is it significant that Nehemiah said, "I am doing a great work and cannot come down" (v. 3)?
4. Why would sending an "open letter" instead of a sealed one be a calculated move?
5. What was the purpose of accusing Nehemiah of rebelling against the king?
6. How does this reflect the tactics of spreading fear through public opinion?
7. In verse 9, Nehemiah prays, "Now strengthen my hands." What does this short prayer reveal about his state of mind and faith?
8. Who was Shemaiah, and what did he try to convince Nehemiah to do (v. 10)?
9. Why would hiding in the temple be considered a sin for Nehemiah?
10. What do verses 12–13 tell us about Tobiah and Sanballat's influence over religious figures?
11. What was the reaction of Israel's enemies when the wall was finished (v. 16)?
12. Why does it say, "they perceived that this work had been accomplished with the help of our God"?
13. Even after the wall was complete, how did Tobiah continue to exert pressure (vv. 17–19)?
14. Why do you think opposition doesn't always end when the work is done?