

Nehemiah Lesson 8

Building Ministry Through Opposition 3

Day 1 Read Neh 6:1-19 Beware of Enemies Posing as Friends

1. Nehemiah is approached in verse 2 with an invitation to a summit meeting with fellow governors Sanballat and Tobiah. Explain the statement, "**Change without repentance is no change at all.**" _____

2. Many a ministry has been ruined by "**responding wrongly to wrong**". How does Nehemiah's response in verse 3 follow Christ's principle of being "**wise as serpents and innocent as doves**"? _____

3. Relate an experience when someone opposed you personally while you were trying to "**build ministry**". Did you respond well? Understanding the principle in question number 2, how would you respond next time? _____

4. What character(s) in Scripture seem to clearly understand the motives of their enemies, but yet respond with an unflinching focus on God's work, while leaving vengeance in His hands? _____

Day 2 Read Neh 6:1-19 Don't Let the Enemy Wear You Down

1. Sanballat tries this ploy on 4 occasions, to which Nehemiah responds the same each time. Remember, this invitation is a big deal and would be flattering to anyone. What does Nehemiah look like by turning it down? _____

2. What would be the reasoning if Nehemiah gives in? Explain in terms of theology. _____

3. Contemporize this situation. Relate an instance where we as a body would seem narrow for **not** engaging the opposition in "**conversation**". _____

Day 3 Read Neh 6:1-19 Expect Your Reputation to be Assaulted

1. Sanballat attempts to destroy Nehemiah's reputation. What information does he use? What motives does he assign to this leader of the Jews? What could this look like for us as a body of believers building ministry together? _____

2. If the first plot was to assassinate, the second (verses 5-7) is blackmail. By not "**playing Sanballat's game**", what uncertainty is Nehemiah having to endure? How should we deal with uncertainty? (verse 9b) _____

Day 4 Read Neh 6:1-19 Watch Out for Double Agents

1. Opposition also comes in the form of entrapment. What temptation is being offered by this false prophet in verse 10? How is this temptation one of the hurdles to building ministry today? _____

2. What makes him a false prophet? How do we see this played out today when Christians speak of "**hearing God's will**"? _____

Day 5 Read Neh 6:1-19 Let Your Actions Speak for Themselves

1. We used the illustration "**Speak softly and carry a big stick.**" Nehemiah's big stick is God's work in his ministry. How can you practically translate this in dealing with opposition in your Christian life? _____

Day 6 Read Neh 6:1-19 Realize the Battle May Be Won. But the War is Not Over

1. Opposition continued through intrigue (v. 17-18) over the course of his ministry. What needs to change in your mindset, so that you will be effective in ministry by expecting and dealing appropriately with opposition? Essentially, what rattles you, that you need to get over? _____

