

## Small Group Guide: "Don't Let Them Get To You"

Series: The God Who Restores

Scripture: Nehemiah 4:6-9

### OPENING (5-10 minutes)

**ICEBREAKER Question:** Share about a time when you faced opposition or criticism while trying to do something good. How did you respond?

---

### REVIEW THE SERMON (10 minutes)

**Main Idea:** When opposition tries to hinder God's work, stay focused because the work belongs to God and He will handle it.

#### Key Points:

1. **The Identity of Opposition** - We need to identify who our true enemy is, because sometimes we make the wrong people our enemy.
2. **The Influence of Opposition** - Ongoing pressure from true enemies exposes internal weakness.
3. **The Instruction to Opposition** - The first response of faith is prayer, not to PANIC or throwing PUNCHES

#### Context Reminder:

Imagine returning to your homeland after decades of exile, only to find your capital city exposed and defenseless. Jerusalem without walls wasn't just inconvenient, it was shameful. A city without walls meant no protection from enemies, no economic stability, no national dignity, and no spiritual credibility.

The Jewish people had returned from Babylonian captivity in stages, rebuilding the temple and restoring worship practices. But the city itself remained vulnerable, its broken walls a constant reminder of defeat and disgrace.

When Nehemiah heard about Jerusalem's condition while serving as cupbearer to the Persian king, his heart broke. After prayer and fasting, he received permission to return and lead the reconstruction. The vision was clear: Rebuild what sin and exile had destroyed.

---

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

#### PART 1: Identifying Opposition

Not everyone who disagrees with you is your enemy. Miscommunication happens. Misunderstandings occur. People can disagree with you and still love you. Just because someone doesn't see things your way doesn't automatically make them an adversary.

However, you recognize true opposition when attitudes turn hostile and behaviors escalate. Notice the progression in Nehemiah's story:

- **Their Mood Changed** (Nehemiah 2:10) – They became "deeply disturbed" that someone sought the well-being of God's people.
- **They Misrepresented The Truth** (Nehemiah 2:19) – They accused Nehemiah of rebelling against the king, a false charge designed to intimidate and create fear.

- **They Mocked Relentlessly** (Nehemiah 4:1-3) – "What are these feeble Jews doing? If even a fox climbs on their wall, it will collapse!" Mockery often contains a kernel of truth twisted to discourage. Yes, the builders were ordinary people using imperfect materials, but they had something critics always miss: God's presence.
- **They became Malicious** (Nehemiah 4:7-8) – When mockery failed, they conspired to attack, threatening violence and attempting to create confusion among the workers.

1: Pastor Robert said, "Just because someone doesn't see it your way doesn't necessarily mean they are your enemy." Why is it important to distinguish between disagreement and true opposition?

2: Looking at Nehemiah 2:10, the opposition got angry when someone came "to seek the well-being of the children of Israel." Why does opposition often increase when we're making progress in God's work? Have you experienced this?

3: Review the progression of opposition in Nehemiah (mood changes → misrepresentation → mockery → malicious intent). Can you identify similar patterns in opposition you've faced personally or seen in ministry?

## **PART 2: The Influence of Opposition**

Ongoing opposition exposes internal vulnerabilities. Notice what happened among Nehemiah's workers: Nehemiah 4:10 shows three internal weaknesses that developed:

- **They felt Drained and Fatigued** (Nehemiah 4:10) – "The strength of the laborers is failing." Physical exhaustion and emotional depletion made everything seem harder.
- **They felt Disturbed by Fear** – Repeated warnings from neighbors created contagious anxiety: "From whatever place you turn, they will be upon us."
- **They felt Discouraged in Faith** – "There is so much rubbish that we are not able to build the wall." When vision weakens, discouragement strengthens. Focus shifts from God's promise to present problems.

The greatest threat had shifted from outside to inside.

1: Nehemiah 4:10 describes three internal threats that developed: feeling drained/fatigued, disturbed by fear, and discouraged in faith. Which of these three do you struggle with most when facing opposition? Why?

2: The sermon noted that "the greatest threat shifts from outside to inside." What are some warning signs that external opposition is beginning to affect us internally?

3: How does physical and emotional exhaustion make us more vulnerable to discouragement? What practical steps can we take to guard against this?

## **PART 3: Instructions for Handling Opposition**

How do you keep opposition from derailing God's work? Nehemiah's response offers timeless wisdom:

1. **Pray First** - Nehemiah's immediate response wasn't panic or punches, it was prayer (Nehemiah 4:4-5).
2. **Keep Pushing** - (Nehemiah 4:6). Dependence on God doesn't cancel our diligence. Faith and action work together.
3. **Get Practical** - (Nehemiah 4:9). God's sovereignty doesn't cancel human responsibility. Faith doesn't ignore reality.
  - a. **You Need Community** - Nehemiah positioned people according to their families, creating support systems where no one stood alone (Nehemiah 4:13). Community strengthens courage. Support fuels stability.

b. **You Need Covering** - Half the workers built while the other half stood guard. Those carrying materials worked with one hand and held a weapon in the other (Nehemiah 4:16-18). God honors faithful endurance and protects what He assigns to our hands.

4. **Lift Your Perspective** Courage multiplies when we remember three things (v. 14, 19-20):

a. **Who God Is v.14** "*Remember the Lord, great and awesome*"

b. **Who God Gave You v.19** "*... fight for your brethren, your sons, your daughters, your wives, and your houses...*"

c. **What God Will Do v.20** "*Our God will fight for us*"

**Q1:** Nehemiah's first response was prayer (4:4-5), not panic or punches. Why is prayer the most powerful first response to opposition? Share a time when prayer changed your perspective on a difficult situation.

**Q2:** Read Nehemiah 4:6: "So we built the wall... for the people had a mind to work." How do we balance praying about opposition while also continuing to work? Why are both necessary?

**Q3:** Nehemiah got practical by setting watches and positioning guards (v. 9, 13). What does it look like to "trust God AND strategize" in your current circumstances?

**Q4:** The sermon emphasized community (v. 13) and being covered/protected (v. 16-18). How does your small group or church community help you withstand opposition? How can you better support others facing opposition?

**Q5:** Which of these three do you need to remember most right now?

---

## KEY TAKEAWAYS

Group Activity: Which of these truths resonated most:

- Not everyone who disagrees with me is my enemy
  - Opposition often increases when I'm making progress in God's work
  - My first response should be prayer, not panic
  - I need to keep working while I'm praying
  - I cannot face opposition alone—I need community
  - Remembering who God is restores my courage
  - God will fight for me
- 

## CHRIST CONNECTION — THE TRUE BUILDER UNDER PRESSURE

1. **Nehemiah built a wall under pressure, But Jesus endured far greater opposition.**

a. He was mocked, ridiculed, falsely accused, and He was crucified.

2. **Just as Nehemiah prayed and kept building, Jesus prayed in Gethsemane and kept walking toward the Cross.**

a. The Cross proves:

i. Opposition does not stop God's plan.

ii. Pressure does not cancel divine purpose.

iii. Mockery cannot overturn resurrection.

3. **Because Christ endured pressure faithfully, we now have access to His strength through the Spirit. We connect to Christ by:**

a. Trusting His finished work.

b. Depending on His Spirit daily.

c. Following His example of perseverance.

---

## **PRACTICAL APPLICATION (10 minutes)**

### **This Week's Challenge:**

**1. PRAY:** Use the **BLESS** prayer model for someone on your VANCE Street or **F.R.A.N.C.E.S.** list:

- Bless (physical health/safety)
- Labor needs (work/school/finances)
- Emotional needs
- Social needs (relationships)
- Spiritual needs (relationship with Christ)

**2. IDENTIFY:** Write down one area where you're facing opposition. Answer these questions:

- Is this disagreement or true opposition?
- Am I drained, disturbed, or discouraged?
- What is one practical step I can take this week?

**3. REMEMBER:** Memorize Nehemiah 4:14b *"Do not be afraid of them. Remember the Lord, great and awesome, and fight for your brethren, your sons, your daughters, your wives, and your houses."*

**4. REACH OUT:** If you're facing opposition, share it with someone in your group this week. Ask them to pray with you and help you stay focused.

---

## **CLOSING PRAYER (5 minutes)**

### **Prayer Focus:**

- Thank God that He fights for us
- Ask for wisdom to distinguish disagreement from opposition
- Pray for strength to keep building what God has called us to build
- Pray for those facing specific opposition in the group
- Commit to supporting one another in community