



Facing Opposition

Pastor Bill West

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Expect Opposition

1. Ridicule

When Sanballat heard that we were rebuilding the wall, he became angry and was greatly incensed. He ridiculed the Jews, and in the presence of his associates and the army of Samaria, he said, “What are those feeble Jews doing? Will they restore their wall? Will they offer sacrifices? Will they finish in a day? Can they bring the stones back to life from those heaps of rubble—burned as they are?” Tobiah the Ammonite, who was at his side, said, “What they are building—if even a fox climbed up on it, he would break down their wall of stones!”

Nehemiah 4:1–3

2. Resistance

So we rebuilt the wall till all of it reached half its height, for the people worked with all their heart. But when Sanballat, Tobiah, the Arabs, the Ammonites and the men of Ashdod heard that the repairs to Jerusalem’s walls had gone ahead and that the gaps were being closed, they were very angry. They all plotted together to come and fight against Jerusalem and stir up trouble against it.

Nehemiah 4:6–8

3. Rumors

Also our enemies said, “Before they know it or see us, we will be right there among them and will kill them and put an end to the work.” Then the Jews who lived near them came and told us ten times over, “Wherever you turn, they will attack us.”

Nehemiah 4:11–12

Anticipate Discouragement

Meanwhile, the people in Judah said, “The strength of the laborers is giving out, and there is so much rubble that we cannot rebuild the wall.” Also our enemies said, “Before they know it or see us, we will be right there among them and will kill them and put an end to the work.”

Nehemiah 4:10–11

Signs of Discouragement

1. ***Fatigue:*** “The strength of the laborers is giving out”
2. ***Frustration:*** “there is so much rubble”
3. ***Failure:*** “we cannot rebuild the wall.”
4. ***Fear:*** “they will kill us”

Respond with Faith and Common Sense

1. Pray

Hear us, O our God, for we are despised. Turn their insults back on their own heads. Give them over as plunder in a land of captivity. Do not cover up their guilt or blot out their sins from your sight, for they have thrown insults in the face of the builders.

Nehemiah 4:4–5

2. Work Together

So, we rebuilt the wall till all of it reached half its height, for the people worked with all their heart.

Nehemiah 4:6

But we prayed to our God and posted a guard day and night to meet this threat.

Nehemiah 4:9

3. Remember Why.

After I looked things over, I stood up and said to the nobles, the officials and the rest of the people, “Don’t be afraid of them. Remember the Lord, who is great and awesome, and fight for your brothers, your sons and your daughters, your wives and your homes.”” (***Nehemiah 4:14***)

**Bottom Line:
Face Opposition with Faith and Common Sense**

1. Share a time when you faced some real opposition and criticism. Did it surprise you? Why did it happen? How did you respond? What did you learn?
2. **Read Nehemiah 4:1-3:** What stands out to you here? Why do people resort to ridicule and making fun of someone? Why is mocking and ridicule tough to deal with? Have you ever dealt with this in your life?
3. **Read Nehemiah 4:6-8 and 11-12:** Why did the opposition continue? Is there anything we can learn from this?
4. **Read Nehemiah 4:10-11:** What do we learn about the condition of the people in these verses? What tells you that they are discouraged? How do you know when you are discouraged or when those close to you are? What helps you when you are discouraged?
5. **Read Nehemiah 4:4-5:** Nehemiah responded to the opposition and discouragement with prayer. What are your thoughts about the content of his prayer?
6. **Read Nehemiah 4:6 and 4:9:** How does faith and common sense show up here?
7. **Read Nehemiah 4:14:** Why do we need to remember the Lord when we face opposition and discouragement?
8. **Read John 16:33:** Discuss how this verse applies to you today? Where do you need to exercise faith or common sense in your life this week?
9. **Pray for each other.**