

If your enemy can't destroy you, he will distract you.

The things you're distracted to are never as important as the things you're distracted from.

Sanballat and Geshem sent me this message: "Come, let us meet together in one of the villages on the plain of Ono." But they were scheming to harm me; ³so I sent messengers to them with this reply: "I am carrying on a great project and cannot go down. Why should the work stop while I leave it and go down to you?" ⁴Four times they sent me the same message, and each time I gave them the same answer. Nehemiah 6:2-4

How Nehemiah deals with three big distractions...

▪ **Opportunities**

"Come, let us meet together in one of the villages on the plain of Ono." But they were scheming to harm me... Nehemiah 6:2

- Sometimes to say, "yes" to God, you gotta be willing to say, "no" to good opportunities.

▪ **Accusations**

Then, the fifth time, Sanballat sent his aide to me with the same message, and in his hand was an unsealed letter ⁶in which was written: "It is reported among the nations—and Geshem says it is true—that you and the Jews are plotting to revolt, and therefore you are building the wall. Moreover, according to these reports you are about to become their king ⁷and have even appointed prophets to make this proclamation about you in Jerusalem: 'There is a king in Judah!' Now this report will get back to the king; so come, let us meet together." ⁸I sent him this reply: "Nothing like what you are saying is happening; you are just making it up out of your head." Nehemiah 6:5-8

- "I am doing a great work and cannot come down."

▪ **Fear**

One day I went to the house of Shemaiah son of Delaiah, the son of Mehetabel, who was shut in at his home. He said, "Let us meet in the house of God, inside the temple, and let us close the temple doors, because men are coming to kill you—by night they are coming to kill you." ¹¹But I said, "Should a man like me run away? Or should someone like me go into the temple to save his life? I will not go!" ¹²I realized that God had not sent him, but that he had prophesied against me because Tobiah and Sanballat had hired him. ¹³He had been hired to intimidate me so that I would commit a sin by doing this, and then they would give me a bad name to discredit me. Nehemiah 6:10-13

- Don't allow fear to divert you from what God has given you to do.
- Don't allow fear to drive you into a decision that will derail you from the good work God has for you.

Let's Connect

- What is one of your greatest accomplishments?

Let's Talk About It

Isn't this true for all of us...It is so easy to get distracted? As Nehemiah nears completion in rebuilding Jerusalem's walls, he's bombarded with distractions. But, instead of getting sidetracked, he stays focused and leads the people to finish the wall in 52 days! How did he do that? He didn't allow good things, opportunities, accusations or fear to distract him from the main thing. If your enemy can't destroy you, he will distract you. When he does, remind him (and yourself): "I am doing a great work and cannot come down!"

Nehemiah 2:18; Nehemiah 4:14; Matthew 28:18-20; Nehemiah 6:1-13

- Which part of the message made an impact, caught your attention or challenged you?
- Read Nehemiah 6:1-4. What distractions do you most commonly face? Is there something you should say, "no" to, so you can say, "yes" to what God wants?
- Read Nehemiah 6:5-13. How have you seen opportunities, accusations and fear distract you from your vision? If you're willing, be specific in the areas of relationships, family, finances, faith... What steps can you take to deal with these three distractions?
- What steps can you take to stay focused on your vision and remain solid in your convictions? How can you encourage others in your group to remain focused on the work God has given them to do and stay solid in their convictions?
- Where do you feel like you want to give up right now? Where do you feel fear pushing you to make a decision that could derail you from your vision? How can you trust God in this area rather than being driven by fear and sidetracked by distraction?

Take a Step

- Identify the distractions you face while doing good work and commit to avoiding those distractions in the future.
- SOAP reading: **Day 1:** Psalm 36, Matthew 19; **Day 2:** Psalm 53, Matthew 20; **Day 3:** Psalm 70, Matthew 21; **Day 4:** Psalm 83, Matthew 22; **Day 5:** Psalm 99, Matthew 23; **Day 6:** Psalm 114, Matthew 24; **Day 7:** Psalm 132, Matthew 25

Here's My Prayer

- Father, thank You that, even in the face of distractions, You're with us. Teach us to keep our eyes on You as we pursue the work You've given us. Help us see distractions for what they are. Stir in us the courage and perseverance we need to see Your work through to the end. I am doing a great work for God and cannot come down.
- Heavenly Father, thank you for miraculously bringing us to *The Willows* property. Please increase our faith and courage as we focus on You and move forward together in the process of taking possession of *The Willows*.