



A STEADFAST CHURCH

Preaching and Teaching Resources

ADRIAN ROGERS





A Steadfast Church

ADRIAN ROGERS

We are grateful for the opportunity to provide this transcript produced from a live sermon preached by Adrian Rogers while serving as pastor of Bellevue Baptist Church in Memphis, Tennessee. This transcript is intended for your personal, non-commercial use.

Note: Though it has been transcribed from a version used for broadcast, it may contain stutters, stammers, and other authentic remarks as would be common in a live setting.

In order to ensure our ability to be good stewards of Adrian Rogers' messages, Love Worth Finding has reserved all rights to this content.

Except for your personal, non-commercial use and except for brief quotations in printed reviews, no part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means—electronic, mechanical, photocopy, recording, or any other—without the prior permission of the publisher.

Copyright © 2024 Love Worth Finding Ministries, Inc.

Transcripts are used by permission of the Rogers Family Trust.



A Steadfast Church

SERMON REFERENCE: Nehemiah 4

LWF SERMON NUMBER: #2495

Anyone who does something in the name of the Lord will face spiritual warfare. This is why a steadfast church is bound to be attacked by the enemy.

Our enemy is very methodical. But the Holy Spirit is our ally. Not only can we know the enemy's methods, but we can also stand against them.

In the Book of Nehemiah, the walls of Jerusalem were rebuilt, despite spiritual opposition. We can clearly see the enemy's tactics at work in Nehemiah 4.

First, he tries derision.

He mocked Nehemiah and his team, calling them feeble, futile, and foolish. The devil will try to laugh us away from our purpose.

If that doesn't work, he'll try discouragement.

About halfway through any big task, we'll find we are discouraged by fatigue or frustration. This is on purpose; we must stay on track.

Next, the devil tries dismay.

He will use physical intimidation to scare us. But when threatened, Nehemiah and his team remembered the Lord and resisted the enemy; they continued to build and stood ready to battle at the same time. (See Nehemiah 4:18.)

The devil will also attack with discord and division.

We cannot let Satan drive a wedge in our fellowship. Whenever we stand for things within the church body, they must be for the right purpose, in the right spirit, at the right time.

Adrian Rogers says, "If you are wise, you'll always be a part of the solution, never a part of the problem."

Next, he tries to distract us.

Satan's motivation never changes; if he seems to be reasoning with us, it's a diversion tactic. He is not our friend; we must keep our eyes on the Lord and continue serving Him.

Finally, as he did with Nehemiah, the enemy will defame us among our peers and criticize our motives.

When we live for Jesus, we will be slandered. We must never listen to any slander about another child of God. It is all garbage.

Isaiah 54:17 says, "'No weapon formed against you shall prosper, and every tongue which rises against you in judgment You shall condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is from Me,' says the Lord."

Life Application

Christians: don't be afraid of the enemy's attacks. Commit to doing good work—a child of God is always building and battling at the same time.



A Steadfast Church

SERMON REFERENCE: Nehemiah 4

LWF SERMON NUMBER: #2495

1) INTRODUCTION

- a) Churches will be under attack.
 - i) The door to the room of opportunity swings on the hinges of opposition.
- b) When we do something in the name of the Lord, we raise up the ire of the devil.
- c) The church has an enemy; he is the devil.
 - i) The Bible calls him a deceiver, a liar, a murderer, an accuser, a tempter, the destroyer, and the evil one.
 - (1) All of these speak of the same person.
 - (2) He is like any criminal; he has many aliases.
- d) The devil has one purpose, and that is to come against us, our families, and the church.
 - i) The Bible speaks of his methods.
 - (1) Ephesians 6:11
 - (a) "The wiles of the devil."
 - (i) The Greek word here means "the methods" of the devil.
 - (2) The devil methodically sets about to ruin our lives and to stop the work of the church.
 - ii) Not only does the Bible speak of the wiles of the devil, but the Bible also speaks of the devices of the devil.
 - (1) 2 Corinthians 2:11
 - iii) The Bible also speaks of the snares of the devil.
 - (1) 2 Timothy 2:26
 - e) The book of Nehemiah can be used as a template that we can study to see how Satan would try to stop any work for God.
 - i) Nehemiah was attempting to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem that had decayed.
 - ii) The Bible tells us how the devil tried to stop Nehemiah, but he could not stop him.
 - (1) What Satan has tried before, Satan will try again.
 - f) The background to today's message:
 - i) The Jewish people had been carried away into captivity.
 - ii) During that time, the city of Jerusalem had fallen into ruins, and the walls around the city had crumbled.
 - iii) Nehemiah's heart was broken, and he wanted to go back to the city of God and rebuild the walls.
 - iv) But Satan wanted to stop the work.
 - (1) Satan raised up two men: Sanballat and Tobiah.
 - (a) They were agents of the enemy to stop Nehemiah from building the wall.
 - g) In today's society, the walls of decency and conviction have crumbled and decayed.
 - i) All of us have a job to rebuild the walls.
 - h) We are wall builders.
 - i) When we say, "Let's rise up and build," the devil says, "Let's rise up and stop them."
 - i) Today's message will give us seven of the devil's devices or dirty tricks that he uses to attack the church.

**2) SATAN WILL ATTACK WITH DERISION (NEHEMIAH 4:1-2)**

- a) Satan will try to make the church a laughing stock.
- b) Nehemiah 4:1
 - i) In this verse, the word “wroth” means that he was angry.
 - ii) Sanballat ridiculed the Jewish people.
 - (1) He made them a laughing stock.
- c) Today, if we stand for the old-time religion, we will be mocked.
 - i) We will be laughed at
 - ii) There will be derision.
- d) We are not better than Jesus; Jesus was mocked.
 - i) Mark 5:40
 - ii) Luke 22:63
 - iii) Luke 23:35-37
 - iv) When Jesus was doing miracles, they laughed at Him.
 - v) When Jesus was being abused, they jeered at Him.
 - vi) When He was on the cross, they ridiculed Him.
 - vii) If we stand up for Christ, then we will be mocked and ridiculed.
 - viii) A church that has a high profile will be ridiculed.
- e) Not only will we be ridiculed as a church, but we will also be ridiculed as individuals.
 - i) College students on secular campuses who stand up for Jesus will be mocked.
 - ii) An ungodly spouse may make fun of the faith of a godly spouse.
 - iii) A person in business who is trying to live the principles of Jesus in an ungodly society and business world will be laughed at.
- f) What did they ridicule?
 - i) They ridiculed the feebleness of God’s people.
 - (1) Nehemiah 4:2
 - (2) The world puts an emphasis upon military, physical, intellectual, and societal strength, but they look at us as weaklings.
 - (a) They think of us as feeble.
 - (b) 1 Corinthians 1:26
 - (3) Strength can be disguised.
 - (a) Nehemiah was not feeble.
 - (i) He was very strong; but outwardly, he looked feeble.
 - (b) Appearances can be deceiving.
 - (4) A church with God’s power on it is not feeble.
 - (a) We are mighty through God.
 - ii) They ridiculed the futility of their task.
 - (1) Nehemiah 4:2
 - (a) They said that the walls could not be rebuilt.
 - (i) The walls had burned.
 - (ii) The stones were buried under garbage.
 - (iii) They were called day dreamers.
 - (2) The world wants us to think we cannot do anything great.
 - (3) They want us to have an inferiority complex.
 - (a) They say that not only are we feeble, but our task is also futile.
 - iii) They ridiculed the foolishness of their faith.
 - (1) Nehemiah 4:2



- (2) The world thinks that what we do is foolishness.
 - (a) They think we make a colossal waste of our time when we attend church, and we make a waste of our money when we give.
- (3) 1 Corinthians 1:18
- (4) Someone who mocks the Bible, the cross, and the Word of God is someone who is wicked.
- (5) 2 Peter 3:3
 - (a) They have the devil's initials carved in their hearts.
 - (b) They are covered with the fingerprints of sin.
- (6) People will mock our sacrifice and our worship.
- (7) Luke 6:26
 - (a) If you have not been laughed at for your faith, then there is something wrong with you.
- g) What should we do when we are mocked?
 - i) Just remember that we are no better than Jesus.
 - ii) Don't be laughed out of a work for God.
 - (1) To the contrary, the Bible says that when we are persecuted, great is our reward in Heaven.
 - (a) Matthew 5:11-12
 - (b) The greater the ridicule, the greater the reward.

3) SATAN WILL ATTACK WITH DISCOURAGEMENT (NEHEMIAH 4:10)

- a) Nehemiah 4:10
 - i) The sad thing is that it was Judah, the dominant tribe, who said this.
- b) God have mercy on us when there are those who discourage us and say that it cannot be done.
 - i) They are doing the work of the devil.
 - ii) God is the God of all consolation.
 - (1) That means all encouragement.
 - (2) Romans 15:5
 - iii) There is a gift in the Bible called the gift of exhortation.
 - (1) This means to encourage.
 - (2) Romans 12:7-8
 - (3) We need to encourage, not discourage, one another.
- c) Many times, discouragement comes from within.
 - i) When we try to do something great for Jesus, we are told that it cannot be done.
 - ii) There are people who will try to discourage us.
- d) Discouragement comes when the job is half done.
 - i) Nehemiah 4:6
 - ii) Any of us can get excited when we begin a work.
 - (1) It is like trying to climb a mountain.
 - (a) Halfway up, we decide it wasn't such a good idea.
 - (i) We get discouraged.
 - (b) Halfway through life, we may get what is called a midlife crisis in our business or marriage.
 - (i) We get discouraged sometimes.
- e) They were discouraged because of their fatigue.
 - i) Nehemiah 4:10
- f) They were discouraged because of the problem of frustration.
 - i) All of the stones were down there.
- g) But Nehemiah encouraged them.



- i) May God help us to always encourage our children, mate, and brothers and sisters in the church.
- ii) We are able to build whatever it is we are building.

4) SATAN WILL ATTACK WITH DISMAY (NEHEMIAH 4:11)

- a) Satan will attack with dismay and fear.
- b) Nehemiah 4:11
- c) Satan is not always dainty.
 - i) Sometimes Satan will shed blood to stop the work of God.
 - (1) He may shed your blood or mine.
 - ii) In the last days, the Bible says that those who kill us will think that they are doing God a service.
 - (1) John 16:2
- d) We should not be intimidated by physical intimidation.
 - i) Philippians 1:28
 - ii) If we have threats against us, then we need to carry them to the Lord.
 - (1) Psalm 118:17
 - iii) Sometimes we do die, but Satan doesn't win; he fails.
 - (1) Revelation 12:11
- e) Don't let Satan frighten us out of a work for God.
 - i) What did Nehemiah say when he was threatened?
 - (1) Nehemiah 4:14
 - ii) The answer to fear and dismay is to remember the Lord.
- f) Nehemiah 4:18
 - i) They were building and battling at the same time.
 - (1) This is what the child of God is always doing.
- g) Remember the Lord, and don't be terrified by your adversaries.
- h) James 4:7
 - i) Have you ever thought of Satan fleeing from you?
 - (1) Some will say that they are not afraid of the devil.
 - (a) But the question is, "Is the devil afraid of you?"
- i) First, there was derision.
 - i) They tried to laugh them away.
- j) Second, there was discouragement.
 - i) They tried to get them to quit.
- k) Next, there was dismay.
 - i) They tried to stampede them, but they kept on working.
 - (1) Satan will try all of these things.

5) SATAN WILL ATTACK WITH DISCORD (NEHEMIAH 5:1)

- a) Satan will try to get a division in the church.
- b) Nehemiah 5:1
 - i) A furor had begun.
 - ii) There was a fuss among the people.
- c) Proverbs 6:16-19
- d) Never be a part of discord in a church.
 - i) There are times when we have to stand for things, and points have to be made.
 - (1) But do it in a right purpose, in the right spirit, and at the right time.
 - ii) Proverbs 20:3



- (1) If you are wise, then you will always be a part of the solution, never part of the problem.
- e) In this particular case in Nehemiah 5, the problem was over money.
 - i) Many times in a church, family, or between friends, the problem is over money.
 - ii) Sometimes, those who say the most about money are the poorest stewards.
 - iii) There was a discord over money, but they solved the problem.
- f) There are no problems too big to solve, just people too small to solve them.
- g) Any church will have problems, but God will help us to stay together.

6) SATAN WILL ATTACK WITH DISTRACTION (NEHEMIAH 6:1-4)

- a) Nehemiah 6:1-4
 - i) Nehemiah was too wise to leave the wall and go out to the plains of Ono.
 - ii) If Satan cannot come against the church as a roaring lion and his fear tactics do not work, then he will try to come as an angel of light.
 - (1) If he cannot beat them, then he will join them.
 - iii) They wanted Nehemiah to come down from the wall and go out and talk.
 - (1) But Nehemiah knew that there was mischief in the making.
 - (a) He would not come down from the wall.
- b) The devil wants to negotiate with us.
 - i) Sometimes, this tickles our ego.
- c) The devil wants to distract us and get us to come down from the wall and get away from our purpose.
 - i) The purpose of the church is the following:
 - (1) To magnify Jesus through worship and the Word.
 - (2) To move believers in Jesus toward maturity and ministry.
 - (3) To make Jesus known to our neighbors and the nations.
 - ii) We must keep serving the Lord and keep our eyes upon the Lord.
- d) It is easy to get distracted.
 - i) Sometimes, pastors turn from their calling.
 - (1) They have to step down to step out of the high calling of God which He has put upon their lives.
 - ii) Some women who have little children get distracted and leave their motherhood to get a job in the world and leave the babies in the care of someone else.
 - (1) Our hearts go out to those mothers who have to work to put food on the table, shelter overhead, and do the things that are necessary to keep a family going.
 - (2) Being a mother is perhaps the highest calling on Earth.
 - iii) Some people who have been Sunday school teachers, deacons, or served on committees in the church, don't do it anymore.
 - (1) They have gotten into something else that may be good in their own sight, but it is not what God called them to do.
 - (2) They join societies, clubs, and causes that are not bad in themselves, but they have come down from the wall to do something else.
 - (3) We need to be a part of the church with all of our hearts.
- e) Don't let the devil distract you, and don't let him distract the church.

7) SATAN WILL ATTACK WITH DEFAMATION (NEHEMIAH 6:5-6)

- a) Nehemiah 6:5-6
 - i) An "open letter" is like a letter to the editor.



- (1) You want everyone to read it.
 - ii) They said that Nehemiah was going to build his own kingdom.
 - (1) They basically claimed that Nehemiah was on an ego trip.
 - (2) They claimed that he didn't care about the walls of Jerusalem or the glory of God.
- b) They will defame you and criticize your motives.
 - i) For example, they will claim that you go to church for business reasons.
- c) Jesus was accused of being a winebibber and a glutton.
 - i) Matthew 11:19
- d) Never listen to any defamation or slander about a child of God.
 - i) Make certain that if you hear anything like this, that it is not from just one witness but more, and that it is true.
 - (1) Be very careful.
 - ii) They tried to say that Nehemiah didn't really love God and that he was building his own kingdom.
 - (1) That he had another purpose for rebuilding the walls.
 - (2) Nehemiah 6:6
 - iii) Don't listen to these untruths.
- e) There are those who will do to you just like they did to Nehemiah.
 - i) They will try to defame you.
 - ii) They will impugn you with wrong motivation.

8) CONCLUSION

- a) These are the devil's dirty tricks:
 - i) The devil will attack with derision, discouragement, dismay, discord, distraction, and defamation.
- b) Isaiah 54:17
- c) Our churches need to be unified and steadfast.
 - i) By God's grace, we will stay on the wall and do a good work.
- d) If you don't know the Lord Jesus Christ as your personal Savior and Lord, then today is the day that you need to receive Him.
 - i) You need to step from a life of darkness to a life of light.
 - (1) From a life of fearfulness to a life of faith.
 - (2) From a life of condemnation to a life of salvation.
 - ii) Jesus suffered, bled, and died for you.
 - iii) He will save you, not to make you a nicer person, but to give you a new nature.
 - (1) He will transform you if you will trust Him.
 - (2) He will help you to grow into the grace and likeness of Jesus Christ.
- e) Acts 16:31
- f) Do you know Jesus personally? If not, you can pray to Him today by asking Him to come into your life.
- g) Call upon Jesus today. Repent (turn) from your sins, and turn to Jesus. Ask Him to forgive you of your sins, and acknowledge Him as Lord of your life.
 - i) Romans 3:23
 - ii) Romans 10:9-10
 - iii) Romans 10:13
 - iv) John 3:16



A Steadfast Church

SERMON REFERENCE: Nehemiah 4

LWF SERMON NUMBER: #2495

Be finding Nehemiah chapter 4. We're in a series of Bible studies, things that I want to say to the church. What kind of a church should this church be? What kind of a church have I been trying in these past years to allow God to lead me to make this church to be? Last Sunday, we talked about a unified church, that we might be one in the bond of love. Today, I want to talk to you about "A Steadfast Church", one that can overcome the devices of the devil.

Now, may I tell you that it is obvious that Satan does not want this church to succeed, to be mightily used of God! And Satan has all kinds of machinations and devices and tricks to stop or to slow down or to discourage the people of God. Now, you say, "Pastor, I don't feel any satanic opposition." Well, don't brag about it. If you and the devil have never met head on, it's because you and the devil are going in the same direction. You turn around, and rather than being in collusion with him, you'll be in collision with him. Now, there is always the opposition of Satan. And that doesn't mean when Satan opposes that God is not for us. Paul said in First Corinthians 16:9, "There is a great and open door, but," he said, "there are many adversaries." And the door to the room of opportunity swings on the hinges of opposition. There's no cheap way, there's no easy way, there's no lazy way. And when you try to do something for God, endeavor to let God use you, you're going to meet satanic opposition.

I was thinking of the words that the Bible uses to describe the devil. He is described as a deceiver, as a liar, as a murderer, as an accuser, as a tempter, as a destroyer. Now, he has many aliases like other criminals, but he has one desire, and that is to dishonor, discredit the church of the Lord Jesus Christ and every member of it.

And I was looking this morning in some of the Scriptures that describe his activity. The Bible, for example, speaks in Ephesians chapter 6 and verse 11 of, "The wiles of the devil." Think of that, "The wiles of the devil." That word in the Greek is *methodeia*. It's the word we get method from. Satan has sinister methods, "The wiles of the devil." And then, in Second Corinthians chapter 2 and verse 11, the Bible speaks of "his devices." Get that word in your mind now, "his devices." Satan has all kinds of devices to come against the church. And then, again, the Bible mentions there in Second Timothy chapter 2 verse 26 "The snare of the devil." Now, put those words together: wiles, devices, snares, liar, temptation, destroyer, evil one. Put them all together and that will give you some idea of who is against us, so, therefore, it's all the more important that we remember who is for us.

Now, in this message on the devices of the devil and overcoming his devices, the Book of Nehemiah is the basis for our study. And I want to take what applied to Nehemiah so long ago and apply it to the church today. Nehemiah was a man of God. Nehemiah saw that the walls of the City of Jerusalem had fallen. The Jews had been carried away into captivity, and Nehemiah got a message about the terrible condition of Jerusalem. Now, Jerusalem is a city with beautiful walls, but those walls had fallen, and Nehemiah was heartbroken because the wall symbolized protection and separation and beauty, what God has for His people. But the walls had fallen, and Nehemiah wanted to rebuild the wall. Nehemiah said, "Let us rise up and build." But there were some enemies, some locals, who did not want it to happen. And so, when God's man said, "Let us rise up and build," they said, "Let us rise up and stop them." There's always satanic opposition. I remind you again that the door to the room of opportunity always swings on the hinges of



opposition. And so, what we're going to do here in the Book of Nehemiah is we're going to see what Satan did to discourage Nehemiah and to stop Nehemiah and to destroy the work of Nehemiah.

Now, I want to mention some ways, therefore, that the devil will try to stop the church. Are you ready? Number one: Satan will attack the church with **derision**. Write down the word derision. And look here in Nehemiah chapter 4 verse 1, "And it came to pass that when Sanballat heard that we builded the wall, he was wroth," kids, that means he was hot, angry, steamed, "he was wroth, and he took great indignation," now underscore this phrase, "and mocked the Jews." That means he ridiculed them. He had them in derision. And this church will be in derision if we stand for Christ.

Do you know what a Christian is today in today's society? He's called a do-gooder. He's called a blue-nose Puritan. He's called a fundamentalist. He is called a fanatic. Recently, those of us who've taken a stand for righteousness here in the heartland of America have been renamed "Jesus land. Jesus land." Yeah, I think it's a pretty good title, myself. But it was a term of derision by these who are mocking those of us in America who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now, listen, there is no way, are you listening church, there is no way that you can stand for Jesus without becoming the laughing stock of this world. Do you think you're better than Jesus? Listen to this, Mark chapter 5 verse 40, concerning Jesus, "And they laughed him to scorn." Can you imagine anybody mocking the Lord Jesus? They laughed Him to scorn. Luke 22 verse 63. When Jesus was being crucified, the Bible says, "They mocked Him and smote Him." Not only did they mercilessly beat Him; they are laughing while they are doing it. "They mocked Him and smote Him." In Luke 23 verses 36 and 37, "And the soldiers also mocked Him, coming to Him and offering Him vinegar, and saying, 'If Thou be the King of the Jews, save Thyself.'" Now, you're not better than Jesus. If they mocked the Lord Jesus, they're going to mock you.

And ridicule has a sting. There's not a one of us that wants to be laughed at. A Christian wife who tries to live for Jesus may be mocked for her faith by her husband. Some of you college students, if you go away to school and stand up for the Lord Jesus Christ and let the banners unfold and stand on the Word of God, I can promise you you're going to be laughed at. You're going to be mocked at any college today that is not a Christian college. If you're a businessman and you try to stand for the principles of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, this world is going to mock at you.

Now, what, what was the nature of their ridicule? First of all, **they ridiculed the feebleness of God's people**. Look if you will here in Nehemiah 4 verse 2, "And he spake before his brethren and the army of Samaria, and said, 'What do these feeble Jews?' "What are these feeble Jews trying to do?" In other words, they said, "Look, they're insignificant. They are weak; therefore, we laugh at them." And from the world's viewpoint, we don't have any strength. The world boasts of its power, its education, its erudition, its influence. And they look at us and they just sort of tolerate us. They feel, basically, that we're those feeble Baptists.

I heard about a man one time who applied for a job as a lumberman to cut down trees, and this man was about 120 lbs, about 5'6". And they said, "Look, being a lumberjack is a hard job. You've got to have great strength to be a lumberjack." He said, "I can cut down trees." They said, "O, can you? You look pretty feeble. There's a sapling; cut it down!" He took his axe and went wickerty-whack, and the sapling fell. They said, "Well, that's all right, but try this on a larger tree." Wickerty-whack, and that one fell. He said, "All right, try it on this great big tree." Wickerty-whack, and that one fell. They said, "Good night! Where did you learn to chop down trees?" He said, "The Sahara Forest." He said, "You mean the Sahara Desert." He said, "Yeah, now!" You know, it's easy to underestimate the church of the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus started out with 12 unlettered fishermen and turned the world upside down. Jesus went out against the imperial might of Rome, against the religious bigotry of His day and turned that world, He and His disciples, upside down. They mocked the feeblety, the feebleness of God's people.



Secondly, **they mocked the futility of the task.** Look in the last part of Nehemiah chapter 4 and verse 2, “Will they make an end in a day? Will they revive the stones out of the heaps of the rubbish that are burned?” They said, “Look, there’s no way you can do it. It is futile.” They were looked upon as dreamers, visionaries; impractical, wasting their time with an impossible task and, therefore, they laughed at them. They laughed at the feebleness of their strength, and the futility of their task.

And **they also laughed at the foolishness of their faith.** Look in Nehemiah chapter 4 and verse 2, “Will they sacrifice?” Now, what he’s saying is this, “Are they going to worship their God?” Their devotion to the God of Heaven was a source of ridicule. May I tell you that what we believe, the old-fashioned, old-time religion, the truth of God’s Word, its inerrancy, its impeccability, the deity of Jesus, His blood sacrifice, the things that we hold dear, people laugh at; they mock. It has always been that way. First Corinthians chapter 1 verse 18, “For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness.” Now, I’m going to tell you something, folks, they’re going to laugh at you if you believe this old-time religion.

Harry Ironsides used to be the Pastor of Moody Memorial Baptist Church. And he and some friends were out in Oakland, California, and they were on a ferry crossing that bay. And they were singing choruses and praising the Lord. And a man standing there said, “Who are you?” He said, “Well, we’re some Christians.” “What are you doing?” “Well, we’re praising the Lord.” And the man said, “You’re fools.” Ironsides said, “Yes, that’s true. We are fools.” But he said, “We’re fools for Christ’s sake. Whose fool are you?” Now, the world thinks that we are fools, and we have to be ready to be ridiculed.

Why do they ridicule us? Think of their character. You know, the reason a person laughs at holy things is he’s a wicked person. The Bible says in Second Peter 3:3, “There’s going to come in the last days scoffers walking after their own lusts.” You show me a scoffer, you show me somebody, like Sanballat and Tobiah, who laugh at God’s work and laugh at God’s people and I will show you, beyond the shadow of any doubt, someone who has the devil’s initials carved in their heart, someone who is covered with the slimy fingerprints of sin. Scoffers walking after their own lusts. That’s the reason they do it is the character that they have.

And then I want you to consider the company that you’re in when they laugh at you. You’re no better than Jesus. I’ve already told you that. If they mocked the Lord Jesus, they’re going to mock at you. Now, nobody is laughing at you. If you haven’t been ridiculed, perhaps Satan doesn’t think that you’re worthy of any worry. But if you’re getting some flack, it just may be that you’re over the target. Just consider the company that you’re in.

And consider the reward that’s yours for being laughed at. Jesus said Matthew chapter 5 verses 11 and 12, “Blessed are you when men shall persecute you and revile you, and say all manner of evil against you falsely for My sake; rejoice,” now, listen, “and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward.” If somebody laughs at you because of your faith, you ought to go home and throw a party. Say, “How wonderful it is that people can see a difference in me!” Satan will attack you personally. Satan will attack this church with derision.

Now, secondly, Satan is going to attack the church with **discouragement.** Look in Nehemiah chapter 4 verse 10, “And Judah said” now, Judah was one of the leaders. “And Judah said, ‘The strength of the bearers of burdens is decayed, and there is much rubbish; so that we are not able to build the wall.’” That’s sad. They were discouraged, and the discouragement did not come from the outside. This time, Satan used somebody from the inside. Do you ever get discouraged? Discouragement is one of life’s most deadly diseases. It’s universal and it’s reoccurring, but thank God it can be cured.

Now, what are the causes of discouragement? Well, number one: **they were worn out.** There’s the problem of fatigue. Look in Nehemiah chapter 4 verse 10, “The strength of the bearers of burdens is decayed.”



Sometimes we get tired. Vince Lombardi, the famous, former coach of the Green Bay Packers, said, "Fatigue makes cowards of us all." Sometimes the most spiritual thing we can do is go to bed, did you know that?

Here these people were worn out. And when did this come? When did this discouragement come? When they were half done, right in the middle. Look, if you will, in Nehemiah chapter 4 verse 6, "So built we the wall; and the wall was joined together unto the half." They were half done. Do you ever start to climb a mountain, even a mole hill, and get about half way up and you decide it's not a good idea. Have you ever heard of a midlife crisis, when you come to a certain stage in your life when you say, "I'm not going to be able to do the things that I thought I ought to do. I'm not going to be able to make it." Do you ever buy a new car? It's so wonderful. Then the newness wears off about half the time the car is paid for. You see, this always happens to us. When we can get discouraged because we're worn out.

And not only were they worn out; **they were weighted down**. Look if you will in Nehemiah chapter 4 verse 10, "And Judah said, 'The strength of the bearers of burdens is decayed.'" Why, he said that, "There's much rubbish; so that we're not able to build the wall." The church will face rubbish. You will face rubbish. Serving the Lord Jesus Christ is not always glamorous. Now, you can't build without stones, but those stones sometimes are buried in rubbish. But you can't build on rubbish, either. Church, listen to me, it's not going to be just all easy, all honey and no bees. If the devil cannot laugh you out of service to the Lord Jesus Christ and your personal life and corporate life, then he will try to discourage you. And he'll come when the job is half done and say, "It can't be done! You are worn out. You are weighted down. It cannot be done!" And it's sad when this comes from within. I've had people to discourage me; try to, anyway. Some people are like a drink of water to a drowning man.

I pastored a little church on the Gulf Coast of Mississippi when I was in seminary. It was a little church, we met in a barracks building. It was a little army barracks building. We had a church there. Had about 50 members; 25 of them were crooks. I'm serious. They, it wasn't much now. We kind of got the crooks straightened out after a while, but it was a hard little church to pastor. And I knew that we needed to grow. I knew that we needed more buildings. We didn't have any money. Hardly any leadership in that church. But I went to Jackson to our Sunday School Board and got some architectural plans that I thought would fit that church. We needed a building. Had no money. I got three shovels. I got two other young men and myself and I said, "Let's mark off the foundation of this building and let's begin to dig." We had no money! We had no builders! We had no help! We got out there in the blazing sun and began to dig the footing of that building. One of the leading members of that church came by. She was a woman. Her husband was a contractor. Little did he help! She came by and she stood and said, "What are you doing?" We said, "We're digging the footing for our new building." She said, "It will never be done!" I said to myself, "O yes, it will!" And, friend, that building is built today. There are those who tell you that it cannot be done. But it can be done. Don't you let the devil discourage you and talk you out of a work for the Lord Jesus!

Now, here's a third way that Satan will come against you. Not only will he come with derision to laugh you out of the work for God, or not only will he come with discouragement to cause you to lie down and quit, but he will also come with **dismay**. He will try to frighten you out of a work for God. Look now in Nehemiah chapter 4 and verse 11, "And our adversaries said, 'They shall not know, neither see, till we come in the midst among them, and slay them, and cause the work to cease.'" You see, terrorism is not new. He says, "When they walk, working on the wall, we're going to pounce them. They won't know where we've come from. And we are going to kill them."

Now, you see, Satan is not always dainty. Satan is not above taking your life, killing you, inciting somebody to do that. In my ministry I've had not a few death threats. I have been the target of wicked people who would like to put me to death. You say, "Pastor Rogers, I thought you were a better man than that." No.



Friend, if they sought to put our Lord to death, don't you think they'll want to put us to death? Jesus said, "The time will come when they who slay you will think that they have done God a favor." Satan will stop at nothing.

Now, what do you do when Satan comes to give you dismay to frighten you away from a work for God? If he can't laugh you away, and if he can't discourage you away, he'll try to threaten you away. Well, do what Nehemiah did. Number one: **remember the Lord**. Nehemiah chapter 4 verse 14, look at it, "And I looked, and rose up, and said unto the nobles, and to the rulers, and to the rest of the people, 'Be not ye afraid of them: remember the Lord.'"

I got a call from the Sheriff's Department. They said, "Pastor, we need to tell you there's a man with a rifle who said he's coming down there to kill you. We don't know where he is, but we just need to tell you." I'm sitting in my study. I said, "Lord, what do You want me to do?" I thought, well, first of all, I'm going to get a word from the Word. And I went over there, and I keep my Bible open to Psalm 119 there in my study and try to get a word out of that. It's about the Bible and it's about preaching. Before I step out here, many times I'll just glance and get a word from that. So I walked over there and I said, "Lord, I want a word from the Word," and I put my finger down. But it wasn't Psalm 119; it was Psalm 118. I put it down on the wrong page, but the right page. One verse! I put my finger on and looked down to see what it was, and it said in verse 17, "You will not die, but live, and declare My Word." And I said, "Well, that's a good verse." Amen.

Well, you say, "Pastor, haven't people been killed for serving Jesus?" Of course they have. Does that mean they lost? No, that means they won! "We overcome him by the blood of the Lamb, the word of our testimony, and be not loving our lives unto the death." Revelation 12:11. Do not let Satan terrify you. "In nothing be terrified by your adversaries." Philippians 1:28. Now, the time's going to come when to be a Bible Christian will be dangerous. And so, what Nehemiah says to his people, "Look, remember the Lord."

And then he says, number two: **reflect on the issues**. Look, if you will, again in Nehemiah 4 verse 14, "Remember the Lord, which is great and terrible, and fight for your brethren, your sons, and your daughters, your wives, and your houses." Remember what's at stake! Remember your sons, your daughters, your wives, your houses! Stand up for Jesus, ye soldiers of the cross.

Satan will attack with derision. Satan will attack with discouragement. Satan will attack with dismay. Now, listen, folks, **resist the enemy**. Look, if you will, now in Nehemiah chapter 4 and verse 18, "For the builders, every one of them had his sword girded by his side, and so builded. And he that sounded the trumpet was by me." They were building and battling at the same time, and so must you be! The devil would like to terrify you, but the Bible says in Philippians 1:28, "In nothing be terrified by your adversaries." To the contrary, James chapter 4 verse 7 says, "Resist the devil and he'll flee from you." It's not enough for you to say, "I'm not afraid of the devil." The devil ought to be afraid of you, a man armed in the power and the anointing of Almighty God.

Now, again, number four: Satan will attack Bellevue with **discord**. Look, if you will, in Nehemiah chapter 5 and verse 1, "And there was a great cry of the people and of their wives against their brethren the Jews." Now, Satan, if he can't intimidate us with bodily harm or humiliate us with laughter, he will try to sow discord among the brethren. That's why I preached last Sunday on a unified church. And here in this, these people are supposed to be building. They turn against one another. There was discord in the ranks. And I remind you that the devil had rather start a church fuss than to open a porno palace. Are you going to let Satan divide you as a church? No!

But here's what happened. There was a discord. Do you know what it was over? It was over finances, and some people didn't like the way the finances were being handled. And, very frankly, they were not doing the



best job of handling the finances. But you have to watch people who sometimes get upset over finances in a church. Now, there's a time, obviously, when people need to be held to account. But there's another category of people who knit-pick. Those of you who are from smaller churches and country churches know that every one of those churches has its kind of self-style watchdog.

One man in this particular church opened a broom closet and there were five brand new brooms in that closet. He got all upset. He asked the janitor, "Whoever authorized anybody to buy five new brooms at one time? We're not meeting our budget and there are five brand new brooms." The janitor said, "I don't know." He said, "Maybe you ought to ask the pastor." So the man, very irate, came in to talk to the pastor. He said, "Why do we have five brand new brooms in the closet?" The pastor said, "Well, I don't know. Maybe there was a sale on brooms. I don't know." Later, the pastor was having coffee with the church treasurer and he mentioned this to the treasurer. The treasurer just smiled and said, "Oh, pastor, that's easy to understand. How would you feel if you saw everything you'd given to the church in the past year tied up in five brooms?" It was over money. But they solved the problem. And they got the answer to the problem. Now, Bellevue, I want to tell you something. There are no problems too big to solve; only people too small to solve them. And Satan will attack this church, and any church with discord.

Now, next: Satan will attack us with **distraction**. Look, if you will, now in Nehemiah chapter 6 verses 1 and 2, "And it came to pass when Sanballat and Tobiah and Geshem the Arabian, and the rest of the enemies, heard that I had builded the wall, and that there was no breach left therein," though at that time I had not set up the doors upon the gates, that Sanballat and Geshem sent unto me, 'Come, let us meet together in some one of the villages in the plain of Ono.' But they thought to do me mischief." Now, they couldn't stop the work, so they said, "Let's come down here and talk about this thing. Stop building. The gates are not there. But, come, let's have a little conference." But Nehemiah said, "They sought to do me mischief. They really did not want to help me. What they wanted to do was to distract me from the work." Satan will try to distract this church.

Why are we built? Why are we here? What is our purpose? What is it? To magnify Jesus through worship and the Word. To move believers in Jesus toward maturity and ministry. To make Jesus known to our neighbors and the nations. And the devil will try to distract us and to get us to do something else, to come aside and sit down, and talk about these things. Nehemiah said, "I can't do it. I'm doing a great work and I will not come down." Don't ever get distracted. We're here to glorify Jesus and to win souls. Now, say Amen. Oh, the late, great Dr. Vance Havner said, "Every now and then a church says we're going to major in evangelism." If you ever heard Dr. Havner speak, kind of a nasal voice. He said, "Well, for me, for a church to major in evangelism would be very much like a railroad majoring in transportation." Now, it's a no-brainer. Now, we are doing a great work.

Some of you mothers are doing a great work as a mother to your children. But somebody says, "Well, you need to stop that and go out into the job market and get a job." Now, if you have to do that to put food on the table or covering over the heads or clothes on the back, fine, if you have to do it. But if you are a mother raising little children, you are doing a great work! And the devil will say, "O, step down." Some of you who used to serve the Lord Jesus Christ in church are now not serving the Lord, but you're members of other kind of clubs and organizations. Why is that? Why have you allowed the devil to distract you? You become the First Vice President for the "Society of Prevention of Cruelty to Grandmothers with Athlete's Feet." You get out in some of these things that don't really matter. Stay with the church. You're doing a great job. Do not come down!

Now, and I must finish. But Satan will also attack the church with **defamation**. Nehemiah chapter 6 verses 5 and 6, "Then sent Sanballat his servant unto me in the like manner the fifth time with an open letter



in his hand; wherein was written, 'It is reported among the heathen, and Gashmu saith it, that thou and the Jews think to rebel: for the which cause thou buildest the wall, that thou mayest be their king, according to the, their words.'" Now, here was a rumor, a vicious rumor to defame them. They said, "You're building these walls. We know why you're building these walls. You're building a kingdom for yourselves." Have you ever heard anybody say that the church is building a kingdom? Have you ever heard anybody say, "That pastor is motivated by personal gain or pride or ambition?" That's what they said about Nehemiah. "He doesn't really love God. He's really not doing a spiritual thing. He is trying to set himself up as some kind of a king."

And notice how he did it. Some individual, Gashmu, saith it. Who in the world is Gashmu? And there was an open letter, very much like a letter to the editor, to defame God's people. There are always those, listen, you're never more like the devil than when you spread rumors about godly people, never! When you defame the good and the godly, you're doing the work of the devil.

A little three-year old had heard the model prayer. She didn't get it right, but I think she said, "And forgive us our trash baskets, as we forgive others who put trash in our baskets." Don't let somebody put trash in your basket! I've just got to finish this message. But there are people who say things that they have no business saying.

A godly pastor was doing a good job, but two men in the church didn't like him. They came to him and they said, "Pastor, we think you should be the pastor no longer in this church, and we're going to ask you to step aside and resign." He said, "Well, gentlemen, thank you for coming to me." He said, "I'll tell you what I'll do. I will take it to the Lord and pray over it and I'll get back with you." They said, "All right, we'll meet next week." Next week came and they met, and the men said, "Well, what did God say to you?" Pastor said, "God said He'd never heard of you two guys." Now, what I'm trying to say is this: there are always people who will be used of the devil to defame the good.

Well, I've got to quit. Now, church, you listen to me, in this time, Satan will do everything he can do to get you to come down from the wall. And by God's grace, you're not going to do it. You're not going to do it! You're going to be God's people, and you're not going to let derision or discouragement or division or dismay or defamation, or any other thing keep you from being a steadfast church. And God's people said, Amen.

Now, bow your heads in prayer. If you're a child of God and you know Jesus Christ as your personal Savior, would you pray God's blessing upon this church. Would you say, "O, dear Lord God, bless us as we build walls of defense and walls of doctrine and walls of decency. Help us to be one in the bond of love." Now, while we have our heads bowed, if you have never, ever given your heart to Jesus Christ, you're wasting your life and you're headed for a terrible eternity. But if you know the Lord Jesus Christ, you have a purpose for living and you have a hope in dying. And you're saved by believing that Jesus Christ died on the cross and paid your sin debt with His shed blood. And when you put your faith where God has put your sins, you'll be saved. Would you pray, "O, Lord Jesus, I need You and I want You. Come into my heart. Forgive my sin and save me." Father, I pray that many will do that today. In Jesus' holy name. Amen.



2941 Kate Bond Road | Memphis TN 38133 | (901) 382-7900