

The 21st Sunday after Pentecost ~ Sunday, October 18, 2015

A Time to Build: Lessons From the Book of Nehemiah

Defeating Discouragement

Nehemiah 4

“Save me, O God, for the flood waters are up to my neck. Deeper and deeper I sink into the mire; I can’t find a foothold. I am in deep water, and the floods overwhelm me. I am exhausted from crying for help; my throat is parched. My eyes are swollen with weeping, waiting for my God to help me. “ (Psalm 69:1-3)

3 REASONS WHY DISCOURAGEMENT IS A SERIOUS PROBLEM

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Discouragement =

7 COMMON CAUSES OF DISCOURAGEMENT

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- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF DISCOURAGEMENT

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THE CAUSES OF DISCOURAGEMENT

There are two main causes of discouragement in Nehemiah 4: _____ and _____.

A. External Causes

“At last the wall was completed to half its height, for the people had worked with enthusiasm.” (Nehemiah 4:6)

#1. _____

“Sanballat was very angry when he learned that we were rebuilding the wall. He flew into a rage and mocked the Jews.” (Nehemiah 4:1)

Mocked = la’ag, =

Ridicule is the language of the _____.

“What does this bunch of poor, feeble Jews think they’re doing? Do they think they can build the wall in a single day by just offering a few sacrifices? Do they actually think they can make something of stones from a rubbish heap—and charred ones at that?” (Nehemiah 4:2)

“That stone wall would collapse if even a fox walked along the top of it!” (Nehemiah 4:3)

#2. _____

“But when Sanballat and Tobiah and the Arabs, Ammonites, and Ashdodites heard that the work was going ahead and that the gaps in the wall of Jerusalem were being repaired, they were furious. They all made plans to come and fight against Jerusalem and throw us into confusion.” (Nehemiah 4:7-8)

B. Internal Causes

“**Meanwhile the people in Judah said...**” =

#1. _____

“Then the people of Judah began to complain, ‘The workers are getting tired and there is so much rubble to be moved. We will never be able to build the wall by ourselves.’” (Nehemiah 4:10)

Tired = kasha =

When we're _____ drained or tired, it's easy to become discouraged at the slightest problem.

#2. _____

"...let us strip off every weight that slows us down, especially the sin that so easily trips us up. And let us run with endurance the race God has set before us..." (Hebrews 12:1)

This verse challenges us to _____ of anything in our life that causes us to be frustrated in our pursuit of godliness.

#3. _____

Those most affected by fear were those who lived _____ to the threat.

"Then the Jews who lived near them came and told us ten times over 'Wherever you turn, they will attack us.'" (Nehemiah 4:12)

If we want to limit the negative thoughts that bring fear into our life, we need to stay away from _____ people because negativity spreads like a disease.

Often we spend a lot of time and energy worrying about something that _____ happens!

3 ANTIDOTES FOR DISCOURAGEMENT

Thankfully discouragement is a _____ disease—and there is an _____.

"Why am I discouraged? Why is my heart so sad? I will put my hope in God! I will praise him again—my Saviour and my God!" (Psalm 42:1)

As the psalmist tells us, the best thing we can do when we're discouraged—when our hearts are sad—is put our _____ in _____.

PUTTING OUR HOPE IN GOD

#1. _____

"Hear us, O God, for we are being mocked. May their scoffing fall back on their own heads, and may they themselves become captives in a foreign land. Do not ignore their guilt. Do not blot out their sins, for they have provoked you to anger here in front of the builders." (Nehemiah 4:4-5)

Nehemiah shows us that when people talk against us, instead of talking back, we need to _____ to God.

When you're struggling with discouragement do you request God's help—do you pray?

#3. _____

"Therefore I stationed some of the people behind the lowest point of the wall at the exposed places, posting them by families, with their swords, spears and bows." (Nehemiah 4:13)

This not only _____ the enemy from attacking, it also _____ the people by giving them something proactive to do in the face of fear.

When you're struggling with discouragement do you reorganize your priorities?

#3. _____

"We will never be able to build the wall by ourselves." (Nehemiah 4:10)

And they were right—they needed _____.

"...Don't be afraid of them. Remember the Lord, who is great and awesome, and fight for your families, yours sons and your daughters, your wives and your homes." (Nehemiah 4:14)

Nehemiah knew that faced with opposition on all sides, their only hope was _____.

"I'm convinced that God, who began this good work in you, will be faithful to complete it..." (Philippians 1:6)

When we feel like giving up, we need to turn our attention from discouragement to:

As we go about building this new community, we need to be _____ instead of _____.

When you're struggling with discouragement do you remember who God is?