Nehemiah: Facing Opposition

Living With Purpose

With Purpose Comes Opposition

- **Ridicule**

  "...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 the 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?

  ... What they are building—if even a fox climbed up on it, he would break down their wall of stones.'"
  Nehemiah 4:1-3 (NIV)

- **Physical Threat- Fear**

  "They all plotted together to come and fight against Jerusalem and stir up trouble against it."
  Nehemiah 4:8 (NIV)

  "But they thought to do me harm." Nehemiah 6:2 b (NIV)

- **Manipulation**

  "They were all trying to frighten us, thinking, 'Their hands will get too weak for the work, and it will not be completed.'"   Nehemiah 6:9 (NIV)

Discouragement

- **Stone of Discouragement**

Compromising our Spiritual integrity

Fulfilling Our Purpose Requires Us To:

1. Know <u>WHO</u> we are

2. Know <u>WHOSE</u> we are

   "For the Spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love and self-discipline." 2Timothy 1:7 (NIV)

3. Live like we <u>BELIEVE</u>

   "Understanding is the reward of faith. Therefore, seek not to understand that thou mayest believe, but believe that thou mayest understand." Augustine.

Small Group Questions

1. Read Jeremiah 29:11. What plans does God have for us?

2. Read Nehemiah 4:7-9. As the persecution continued, what did Nehemiah and the people continue to do? What can we learn about faith and action? (see James 2:22; Eccl 11:6)

3. Read verses 5-9. How did the enemy slander Nehemiah in these verses? How could this gossip tempt Nehemiah to become fearful? How did Nehemiah handle false accusations?

4. Read Nehemiah 6:10-14. How did Shemaiah's words threaten Nehemiah and tempt him to act selfishly? How did Nehemiah respond? How can we recognize a false prophet? (see Isaiah 8:20)