

Group Resource

Sermon Notes – Sunday, February 24, 2013

Just Do It

Message: “Overcoming the Fear of Opposition”

Scripture: Nehemiah 6:15-16

- I. God expects us to manage our fear of others – other’s approval, other’s opinions, other’s words, other’s advice, etc.
 - a. Our fear of others can stem from not knowing how to engage in healthy relationships. As a result, we can seek an unhealthy level of validation from others. The fear of invalidation motivates us to act in accordance with our emotions rather than with a Godly mindset.
- II. Nehemiah was called by God to rebuild the walls around Jerusalem. In order to finish the project, Nehemiah had to deal with vast opposition from other individuals. Nehemiah was not afraid of what others would say or think, but he constantly sought God when he faced opposition.
- III. **Any idea, whether good or bad, can encounter opposition. We must use wisdom in responding to the opposition. (Nehemiah 4:1-6)**
 - a. When Sanballat and Tobiah heard that Nehemiah was rebuilding the wall they hurled insults at his effort. Nehemiah didn’t let their opinion distract him from fulfilling the will of God.
 - b. It is wrong to judge the wisdom of a choice simply by the number of people that agree or disagree with us. Popularity or unpopularity doesn’t dictate the godliness of our decisions.
 - c. People’s words can be a source of fear in moving forward according to God’s will. Words of opposition that we allow to stay in our heart will eventually hurt us.
- IV. **As we commit our plans to God, He provides us with strategic solutions to help us in our time of need. (Nehemiah 4:7-15)**
 - a. Nehemiah had to make strategic adjustments in his plan for rebuilding the wall in order for the plan to come to fruition. God knows the challenges that we will experience as part of the journey, but He wants us to trust Him as he reveals the steps to respond.
- V. **Fear is designed to overwhelm us and make us forget the truth of what God has said. (Nehemiah 6:2-9)**
 - a. Nehemiah’s enemies summoned him four times as part of a scheme to harm him. The fifth time, his enemies intensified the attack by discrediting his motives. Nehemiah chose to respond according to God’s truth and not let Sanballat’s threats overwhelm him. Nehemiah said, “Nothing like what you are saying is happening; you are just making it up out of your head.”
 - b. Nehemiah knew that his enemies were trying to make him fearful, but Nehemiah turned his weaknesses into his prayer points. He prayed, “Now strengthen my hands.”
- VI. **Beware! Not every word of counsel is Godly advice (Nehemiah 6:10-14)**
 - a. Nehemiah’s enemies hired a false prophet to intimidate him and give him false counsel.
 - b. Just because someone has something intimidating to say doesn’t mean that it comes from God. Faith is the ability to trust God’s truth, even when others say things to the contrary.

Group Resource

Let's Talk Notes – Week of February 24, 2013

Message: "Overcoming the Fear of Opposition"

Scripture: Nehemiah 6:15-16

- 1) Name one thing you really like about yourself.
- 2) As you reflect back on last weekend's sermon, what one principle or insight stands out as being particularly helpful, insightful or difficult to grasp? Were you challenged in any area of your personal walk with God?
- 3) Are you someone that likes conflict or avoids conflict? Why? How do you respond when you face opposition in doing something that you know you are called to do?
- 4) **Read** 1 Timothy 3:12-14. What does the Apostle Paul say about Godly people facing opposition? How are we to respond to that opposition?
- 5) In this week's message, Pastor Joseph shared the story of Nehemiah who faced constant opposition as he worked to rebuild the wall in Jerusalem. Can you identify with any of the opposition that Nehemiah faced? How did you deal with that opposition?
- 6) People's words can be a source of fear in moving forward according to God's will. Has the fear of other people's words ever stopped you? How do you counteract negative words that are in your heart? **Read** Romans 12:2 and Philippians 4:8
- 7) Your best friend, Olivia, is struggling with fear. Every time she makes a decision to get serious about her relationship with God, she encounters opposition from others. Some of her co-workers comment that she "thinks that she is better than everyone else" because she doesn't do the things that they do anymore. Olivia really wants to fit-in but she also wants to keep her commitment to God. She is fearful that the social cost of living Godly is too much.
 - a. How would you advise Olivia? How can she deal with her fear?
 - b. What are some scriptures that you can share with Olivia?