

Nehemiah 2:9-20 \\ Assessment and Antagonism \\ 1-29-23 @ RCBC

Three big things from Nehemiah so far:

- God really does answer prayer.
- God really is good.
- Nehemiah's God can be *your* God because of Jesus.

_____ is key and _____ is prudent.

When Nehemiah "*inspected*" the walls and gates [v.13], I can't imagine him doing it with a dry eye.

- "*Inspected*" means to probe, like probing a wound to see how bad the damage is.

Nehemiah needed to know how bad a shape the walls were in to know how they could be fixed.

Nehemiah knew that he would need the _____ of God to accomplish the _____ of God.

"Come, let us build the walls together..." – if God could move the heart of a pagan king, Nehemiah believed He could certainly move the hearts of his own people!

The rebuilding project involved bricks and mortar and sweat, but it was really about the hearts of the people. [v.17]

The people would be rebuilding the walls while tearing down _____ and _____.

Each stone that was placed in that wall would be firming up the foundation of faith that had taken hit after hit over the years. Each gate that was returned to its hinges was a reminder that God was not finished with them yet.

God's rebuilding work often involves physical action, but it always involves _____ action.

- As the people build the wall, their faith is also built.
- As you follow where the Lord is leading, your faith is built, too.

Nehemiah's testimony had reminded the people that their situation wasn't irreversible; God can change things in an instant.

As a result, the people didn't just talk the talk - "*Let's rise up and build*" - they walked the walk - "*they strengthened their hands for the good work*". This means that they got ready, they encouraged one another, they made preparations to get down to business.

But there was opposition to God's work [v.19]. Scoffers heard that the people were motivated to get to work rebuilding the walls & rebuilding their reputation as God's people, and they didn't like it because they didn't like God.

Nehemiah's boldness continues in how he responds to the naysayers and mockers – "*The God of heaven will make us prosper...*"

- In his response, Nehemiah starts with God - "*The God of heaven...*"

Nehemiah doesn't claim king Artaxerxes' permission to rebuild, he claims _____ permission.

He claims a divine authority to carry out this work.

** Ezra 4:1-3*

Ezra said, "*You have nothing to do with us...*"

Nehemiah says, "*You have no portion or right or claim in Jerusalem*".

- And the mockers' actions proved that they had no part of what God was doing.

Are you joining God in His work?

- Or are you resisting and obstructing it?

Are you encouraging others to what God has called them?

- Or do you only look at the negatives and listen to the scoffers?

Are you preparing for the hard work of doing your part in the building of God's kingdom?

- Or are you content to avoid difficult things because they're too much work, require too much time, or take you away from the worldly things you'd rather be doing?

Sometimes we need the reality of how bad things are before we will be motivated to work for the better.

Challenge: **Positive progression forward is always accompanied by** _____.

- Don't shrink back from it, move towards it for your good and the glory of God.

Encouragement: **You're not** _____ **in this work.**

- Your brothers and sisters in Christ are in the trenches with you, and the Holy Spirit will lead you into truth and holiness.

Additional Notes: _____