

## Restoration Church

### ***The Fruit of Dedication*** *Nehemiah 6*

#### **I. Review**

#### **II. Introduction**

[Given the inevitability of the project at hand the enemy begins to focus in their assaults on the leader himself, Nehemiah]

We are going to see in Nehemiah a man of great discernment and as Charles Talleyrand once said “To succeed in the world, it is much more necessary to possess the penetration to discern who is a fool, than to discover who is a clever man.”

So we would all agree, I think, that discernment is a quality of all great men and women, but how does one take hold of such a quality? How can one, to answer Talleyrand, discern who is a fool in order that the proper decision can be made?

Well, I think Nehemiah will help us as we see that his devotion to the mission of God breeds discernment which then breeds an audience due to that devotion. Lets begin by seeing that....

#### **III. Dedication breeds discernment & discernment breeds faithfulness (6.1-14, 17-19)**

[Attacks come to Nehemiah at 4 distinct times in 4 separate ways, all attempting to destroy Nehemiah which would then destroy the mission]

[Nehemiah is dedicated, focused, and determined, and in each instance we will see how these things help sniff out the rat and keep Nehemiah and the people at large on mission]

##### *A. First attack – Poorly veiled Request for Diplomacy – READ 6.1-4*

1. Sanballat, Tobiah, Geshem, Arabs, & othr enemies hear doors are only left to hang
  - a. “Lets talk this through...come meet up”
2. Nehemiah smelled a rat & had concluded that (vs. 2b) they intended to harm him
  - a. I am convinced that Nehemiah knew this because of his devotion to God & the mission he was called to advance, namely getting the people of God back to display the measure of God
  - b. Because of that dedication anything that drew him away from that mission would be cause for pause and concern that whatever it is that would pull him away from so weighty a call must not be in keeping with the mission at hand

c. So, again, it was Nehemiah's dedication to God and therein the mission of God that he knew the request on the table was a plot to harm him and therein God's people

3. How does Nehemiah respond? He stays on mission

a. "Why should I stop putting trowel to mud and cease laboring alongside my brothers and sisters to come and talk to you guys?"

b. "What we are doing here is of infinite importance...it is a huge project and we have to get this done...I am not fooled by you guys."

c. "I have a job to do and I'm not leaving until it gets done."

[Nehemiah is so committed in advancing the purposes of God in the world that no amount of distraction can get him off the project.]

TRANSITION: Tell me...what is your plain of Ono? Do you have the dedication to Christ that would so keep you putting trowel to mud that a distracting request such as this would keep you working alongside your brothers and sisters? Would you respond like Nehemiah? "I am laboring here to advance the display of the glory of God among the people of God...if you would pull me away from such a mission I question your intentions." Do you have that sort of discernment? Likely not

So where is your susceptibility? Where are you vulnerable? What type of letter might show up on your phone, your email inbox, your television, your computer, your doorstep, that would draw you away from building the wall?

A. Because by and large we are not dedicated like a Nehemiah we are easily drawn away from the mission of God and drawn into what eventually becomes our own mission

B. If you are not aware of that weakness you will fall prey to the enemy and you will be destroyed

1. You will be a laughingstock, a reproach, a derision of the display of a glorious God

C. This isn't something that is only relegated to Christians...people are drawn away to the plain of Ono time and again by lustful eyes, greedy hearts, and lazy back sides so often that it keeps our local newstations working round the clock

1. Waiting with bated breath to catch the next slip up, the next failure

2. Our world loves catching Christians...why?

a. Because they know, sometimes better than us, that we are to be a Holy ppl

b. That type of behavior is not in keeping with the God of the Bible

D. Notice, Nehemiah doesn't bate an eye in turning away the devices of evil as he labors

1. Why? Because he is engaged, invested, dedicated to God and the mission of God so much so that he can smell alternative motives from a mile away

2. When we are sensitive to the heart of God we are sensitive to anything that irritates that mission

3. ILLUSTRATION: Think about when you get sunburned...consider how the

slightest scratch of the nail causes pain

- i. In like manner, let us be sensitive to God and His mission so that when that nail comes drifting across the surface of our lives that it immediately garners our full attention and we push away that hand and go on about protecting the life that has been so graciously given to us

E. Dedication to God and the things of God warns us when those invitations to the plains of Ono come to us...but the attacks continue

*B. Second Attack – False Rumors about Nehemiah’s intentions – READ 6.5-9*

[Said, “Ok, that didn’t work...lets try and spread some rumors about him]

1. Perhaps this would cause Artaxerxes to get upset that Nehemiah was trying to set up his very own kingdom in opposition to king Artaxerxes himself
  - a. Creating rumors that made it sound like this whole thing a power play by Nehemiah
2. This would then free up Tobiah and the other surrounding enemies to bring about all out war against the reforming people of God
3. With this type of threat the people of God would throw down their trowels & swords and stop the effort all together
4. All by simply creating false accusations as to the motives of Nehemiah
5. This of course could not be any further from the truth about Nehemiah
  - a. Time and again Nehemiah has gone out of his way to humble himself and go to great lengths in order to advance the mission of God
    - i. Remember the courage Nehemiah showed in asking the Artaxerxes to go back to Jerusalem and rebuild after being dismayed by the improper display of God in the city of God, Jerusalem
    - ii. Remember Nehemiah’s prayers over and over again
      - i. Remember how he confessed his own sin & that of Israel
      - ii. Remember how he asked God to return to His people
      - iii. Remember how we read that it was God Himself who had put mission into the heart of Nehemiah
      - iv. Remember the courage that Nehemiah showed time & again in responding faithfully to the threats of the enemy and how he always looked to God to make right the situation for His glory
      - v. Clearest of all, in 2.17-18 we see the motivation by Nehemiah... when he says “Come let us build the wall of Jerusalem that we [the people of God] may no longer suffer derision.” And I told them of the hand of my God that had been upon me for good
    - b. All these claims were trumped up charges by a desperate enemy to thwart the restoration of the people of God

6. So, how does Nehemiah respond? Vs. 8...Nehemiah says “your all lying”
  - a. But does Nehemiah stop at that? Surely by now you would expect something else wouldn't you? That's right...Nehemiah prays
  - b. He asks God in another “air prayer” to “strengthen my hands”
  - c. In other words...”These folks are lying and God I am asking you to strengthen me to finish the final stages of this mission as attacks come”
7. Yet again, Nehemiah's dedication to God and God's mission allows Nehemiah to confidently fend off the lies that are coming at him, and he calls to God to ask for strength to complete the project though lies are coming at him in order to bring about division...to bring about fear
  - a. Nehemiah's dedication navigates the waters of lies coming at them in order to guide them to their destiny

TRANSITION: Likewise, friends...if you are not grounded in the truth you will run straight into the jagged rocks that are the lies of this world

A. Remember that Satan is the great deceiver...he was the one that twisted the words of God to Adam and Eve in the garden and here we find him up to his same old tricks and guess what...his games have not changed

1. He still deceives by twisting the truth in order to get you to stop building
2. You stop building by believing the lies that come your way
3. So what do you need? You need be grounded in the truth
  - a. Jesus shows us this when he spoke to his own enemies in Matt. 7
  - b. [21] “Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. [22] On that day many will say to me, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?’ [23] And then will I declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.’ [24] “Everyone then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock. [25] And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock. [26] And everyone who hears these words of mine and does not do them will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand. [27] And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell, and great was the fall of it.” [28] And when Jesus finished these sayings, the crowds were astonished at his teaching, [29] for he was teaching them as one who had authority, and not as their scribes.

b. "Everyone who hears AND does" = This teaching must not simply be an intellectual assent...in keeping with the parable, this word is something that you build your life on

c. That word will be a rock, a place of stability in the winds of satans deception

d. What is that rock that will not allow us to be blown about and be deceived?

i. It is the Word of God, and the Scriptures tell us that the Word of God is Jesus Christ himself...He is the embodiment of the word

i. He is the rock of our salvation...

ii. In the beginning was the word and the word was with God and the word WAS God...and the word became flesh and dwelt among us

iii. And it was Jesus, the word himself who prayed for us in John 17 "Sanctify [clean] them in the Truth, your WORD is truth."

iii. This is why Paul says in Eph 4 that we need gifted people in the church to build us up to the "unity of the Son of God, to mature manhood to the measure of the stature of fullness, so that we may no longer be children tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning by craftiness in deceitful schemes."

4. This is why you must pick up those dusty Bibles, and not just read them, but study them...be built up in them and defined by them for their you will read of Christ and all those who are in Christ are embodied in that word

B. Satan and his minions have a field day by twisting and distorting the truth of God and then deceiving throngs giving them air conditioned rides to hell because of people not knowing or believing the truth of God...so they, unlike Nehemiah, believe a lie and live it out

1. Even though that teaching may use the name of Christian

2. Even though people stand in pulpits using the name of Christ, there are throngs who do so in order to deceive, to have you stray from God by believing lies

3. So we must labor to as Paul says to be "Built up in the knowledge of the Son of God"

C. That is why we preach the Bible here, that is why we don't avoid the hard texts, and that is why I don't try and entertain you by telling stories and calling it preaching, that is why we will say things here that will likely be offensive, not because it's the latest trend, it's the best way to draw a crowd or to make myself king of this city, but to build up the people of God and display a Holy God to the world!

1. The reality is I will come and go, but God's word will not, it is eternal and it will not return void, SO WHY WOULD WE DO IT ANY OTHER WAY!?

2. So if you want to learn abot Authentic Christianity, that is what Christians believe and have always believe and not have it mixed up with politics, personal opinions, or mere fluff stick around! By God's grace we will deliver it to you because we love

you!

3. We don't want to give people air conditioned rides to hell, we want people to know the truth

4. So, like Nehemiah, they won't believe the deception of the evil one, but they will stay on mission in advancing God's glory in a darkened world

D. Let me give you some of the lies that are floating around our own Jerusalem as we labor to build the wall in this city

[Joey mentioned last week that oftentimes the greatest danger is inside the walls]

[I find more junk, more lies, coming out of pulpits, books, songs, and conference speaker guys that are deceiving throngs into believing things that are not true and there deceive many]

1. Things like God wants to prosper if you only send 9.99 to the following address you will get that car you want or you will win the lottery...lie

2. If you come to church enough times, read your Bible, and be nice to people God will forgive you because that's just what He does...lie

3. Watching the preacher guy on TV and call that church...lie

4. Jesus is white with blonde hair and blue eyes and somehow he likes America more than he does everyone else expect for maybe Israel...lie

[Let me speak to those that don't know Christ who may be here]

1. Maybe you have been led to believe we Christians think we are better than everyone else

a. You should know that the Bible teaches us we are to think of others as better than ourselves

b. We learn this from the example of Jesus Christ Himself

c. Christians should understand the depths of their sinfulness more than anyone else in the world, and so any sense of arrogance does not equate to the Biblical Gospel

d. So where you have seen this you have not seen truth, you have seen deception of the truth

2. Like the accusations leveled at Nehemiah, maybe some of you think that by our longing to see people come to faith in Christ we are actually not interested in people at all, but only in building power for ourselves

a. Wal Mart, Iran, and North Korea want to take over the world & we are just like them

b. Little concern for people's lives, questions, hurts, and pains

c. Only interested in gaining a larger political voice, etc. etc.

d. You should know that Jesus Christ said Himself that "I came not to serve, but to be served and to give my life as a ransom for many"

e. Christians should not be power brokers, but the chiefest of servants

f. Where you have not seen that you have not seen the Truth, you have seen deception

g. We care about your questions, your concerns, your life, and we long to see you delight in the supremacy of Jesus Christ not because we want to build bigger churches and have a larger voice in American politics

i. We serve and call people to delight in the supremacy of Jesus Christ because we believe that He is the only thing that can free you from the enslavements of sin and set you free to live the life that you were created to live

3. Maybe you think that in order to be a Christian you have to be a card carrying Republican that has never had a beer, never watches an R rated movie, and anything That involves some level of enjoyment must be sinful.

a. The Scriptures don't teach that any of those things define what it means to be a Christian

b. Where you have heard people calling themselves "Christians" advocating such things you have been deceived

c. The Scriptures teach us that we are desperately sinful...wicked to the core entirely hostile to the things of God, but God with His great mercy reached down and entered into our broken world to make a way for us who have done nothing but curse God

d. Scriptures teach us that WE put Christ on that Cross

e. Scriptures teach us that Christ was crucified, buried, and resurrected from the grave for the sins of the world

f. All those who trust Christ as their substitute can be reconciled to their God because those sins have been forgiven

g. That's the Gospel...the good news, we get God

h. Any time we add things or take things away from that message the Bible says plagues will be added to them

i. Truth is we Christians are far from perfect, Christ is our perfection

j. The apostle Paul called himself the chief of sinners

h. We submit to the Truth of Christ not because we do so to try and earn the favor of God, no amount of works can do that...

i. We submit to Christ because God's favor was offered to us though we did nothing to deserve it

ii. If you haven't done that I pray you would do the same and taste the goodness of God

E. So, Satan the great deceiver is still at work, but like Nehemiah, we must hold firm to the mission of God and not be distracted and in doing so discernment will be strengthened in us to give us faithfulness...but the attacks continue

*C. Third Attack – Poser Prophet – READ 6.10-14*

[Attempting to play on fear of Nehemiah to lose his life and doing so with an apparent “prophet”, that is, someone speaking for God, his enemies try and lure him into self destruction]

[Why is going into a Temple self destruction?]

1. At first glance it would seem that Nehemiah’s going in being destruction was dependent upon him not being a priest
  - a. But we will see Nehemiah going into the Temple later with no problem
2. Nehemiah saw that Shemaiah was not from God and did not speak for God, but instead Nehemiah, with great discernment again, smelled the rats of Sanballat & Tobiah, so...
  - a. Nehemiah’s obedience to Shemaiah would not have been obedience to God in cultivating purity
  - b. Therefore Nehemiah’s entry into the Temple would have been to his ruin
    - i. As opposed to when Nehemiah goes in later to the Temple it is for the purposes of God in bringing about purity
3. Had Nehemiah sought his own protection and thought of himself and his own life more than He did God, and the people of God he would have (look at vs. 13)
  - a. Sinned
  - b. Nehemiah would then have been given a bad name
  - c. More taunts would come by his enemies
  - d. And in vs. 14, they tried to make him afraid
4. Nehemiah’s enemies try to decimate Nehemiah’s leadership in the eyes of the people by drawing him into sin which would then have the people to question his leadership
  - a. Divide the people of God and their mission by bringing down the leadership

TRANSITION: Does all this Sound familiar? Yet again, another age old trick by Satan to cause division in the body in order to have people stop advancing the mission of God

A. The leaders of this church or any other church are not any better than its members, we simply have a higher profile and greater potential in bringing down the work of God

1. Towards that end, Joey and I beg of you to pray for us
2. Pray that we would be faithful in keeping our eyes on the work
3. Pray we would not give into the temptations of the evil one to pull us away
4. Pray that we would love our wives and our children
5. Pray that our souls would be happy in the Lord
6. Pray that we would faithfully teach and lead
7. Pray that we would be faithful evangelists



8. Pray that we, like Nehemiah, would be jealous for the display of the glory of God Washington, DC

B. Let me encourage you also to pray for the leadership of the church worldwide

1. You'll notice we do this regularly on Sunday evenings and we invite you to do the same

2. Ask God to advance His glory through the church to every corner of this world

3. Ask God to raise up, protect, and send out more Godly leaders for His glory

C. We would ask you to help us in staying devoted to the work and not be pulled away

1. Reality is, the Evil One would love to pull Joey and I down

2. He will try all of the tactics we have learned about and then some

3. You can help us by praying for us and by laboring on the wall yourselves

a. Picking up the rubble and not leaving it all to Joey and I

b. I am grateful you all have done that in many ways

*D. Fourth Attack – Intimidation – READ 6.17-19*

[So there was this give and take between those indebted to Tobiah & Tobiah himself, of course, through letters to try and bring about fear to Nehemiah]

1. Imagine environment...Abimelech & His buddy Elam standing next to Nehemiah as he is supervising the work and with a loud voice they speak to one another..saying 'Did you hear about what Tobiah did the other day? He helped that old lady across the street...yeah, what a great guy', "What a great guy, who would be against that guy?"

2. Nehemiah probably says something like "Well, if he opposes this mission, God is against him."

3. And Abimelech and Elam tell Nehemiah "I am going to tell him you said that" and they scurry off

4. All of this was done in an effort to try and make Nehemiah afraid

a. The intimidation of all the people indebted to Tobiah and all the well wishers of Tobiah working together to try and push Nehemiah around

b. In hopes that maybe he would be so fearful or so discouraged he would just give up and go back to Susa

TRANSITION: Have you ever had this happen to you? People loathe you so much they will do just about anything to intimidate you, make fun of you, whatever, just so you will stop doing what it is your doing?

A. Reminds me of Junior High where little boys and girls would snicker, write little notes about you and pass them around just to make you feel stupid and fearful against the attacks of others

- B. When I hear of these types of attacks what I hear is one thing...what we are doing is working...it is having its intended effect
- C. Where people are indebted to a particular cause that is in opposition to Christ or where someone is attempting to intimidate you to stop your faithfulness to Christ be encouraged that this is happening because your life is having its intended effect
- D. The Gospel, friends, is divisive
1. We don't need to make it unnecessarily divisive by adding things or taking things away, as I have mentioned
  2. But the Gospel is not a message that is well received by the world we live in
- E. The world says, "if you love Jesus, love him in the privacy of your home or in your gatherings, don't bring him out in public"
1. Jesus says: "Let your light shine before men, that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven."
  2. "Go and make disciples of all nations"
  3. And "everyone who acknowledges me before men, I also will acknowledge before my Father who is in heaven, but whoever denies me before men, I also will deny before my Father who is in heaven."
- F. The world says, "Jesus was a good teacher, a wise man, there is no one way to God"
1. Jesus says: "I am the way the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."
- G. The world says to "play life safe, be happy, do what you want, avoid confrontation"
1. Jesus says: "Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you."
- H. I think Jesus said it well when he said "If they persecute me, they will also persecute you."
1. We should not be surprised at such attacks on Nehemiah and the people of God as they advance God's mission
  2. Likewise, we should not be surprised that people will ridicule, intimidate, and try and harm us as we push the light of the Gospel into a darkened city
- I. The answer is not to change our doctrine in hopes of bringing in a few
1. Too many churches in our city have done that, and it should grieve us
  2. We take the blow on our cheek and we turn the other cheek to our foes
  3. We love them and pray for them because we remember we too were enemies of God
- J. Nehemiah fended off all of these diversions quickly and easily because of his devotion to the mission of God...that devotion heightened his discernment which heightened his faithfulness, may it be for us as well

[With all these attacks and in fighting did these Israelites actually complete this wall?]  
[Take a look at verses 15-16 and see]

#### **IV. Dedication demands an audience – READ 6.15-16**

[To begin with...is anybody surprised at vs. 15...seems a little ho hum doesn't it?]

[Story opens with Nehemiah wanting to see this wall built and he gets the courage up to ask about it and get all the materials to build it...and then it is completed with a "and the wall was finished...so anyway"]

[It shouldn't surprise you because its never been about building a wall, but about rebuilding a people]

A. We have said all along to not get wrapped up in thinking this is a story about rebuilding a wall

1. Nehemiah was grieved at the continued devastation of the city of God and therein the people of God, which revealed his heart motive of displaying the greatness of God among those people in that city

2. Look down at 7.4

- a. There weren't many people in it

- b. There weren't even many houses in it

- c. We have every reason to ask the question why this account of a tiny beleaguered city is even here to be read about, why should we care?

B. Because God was building a people and we find him moving, stirring, acting, to bring about His good purposes in the world...that's why we have this story

1. Remember time and again we read about God's hand being on Ezra

2. Remember here in Nehemiah in 2.8 that Nehemiah received all that he asked for to rebuild the wall because the good hand of God was upon him

C. We can read these books and I can pull out all sorts of principles for us to learn about but if we don't stop to see that it is God's hand directing these events for His purposes we will miss the entire purpose of this account

1. God is moving and like the Temple in Ezra, the wall in Nehemiah is like a step on a ladder that is ascending to the throne of a Holy God

2. God had decimated that ladder and He was rebuilding it again in order that God could land His presence in His people again in order to shine His worth to a watching world

3. Here we see another step completed and here we see a glimpse of what happens

D. Enemies became fearful and they suddenly felt small...why?

1. Because God was moving and they SAW it!

2. They couldn't explain it any other way

- a. This wall was finished in 52 days!

3. Before they were the ones trying to impart fear, now they were the recipients of

their own devices

4. That's what the reality of God does to people
  - a. Previously proud and haughty people suddenly feel small and insignificant
    - i. Like rising above the ground in an airplane...these people suddenly feel very vulnerable
5. You recall the prophet Isaiah seeing God and crying out "Woe is me, I am lost, for I am a man of unclean lips!"
6. Its very easy to make fun of God, to make fun of the people of God, and closer to home, it is easy to stand in church and make a bunch of jokes and entertain people for an hour or so, but the second the presence of God shows up we all would shut up pretty fast and be like Isaiah and cry, Woe is me!
  - a. Reason being, I don't have to convince anyone here that they are sinful, they are not perfect
  - b. Also, assuming you believe God exists I also don't have to convince you of God's greatness and holiness
  - c. But we often live like the enemies taunting the people of God don't we? Even Christians, we often live uninspired, lives and the true adventure is found Outside the Holy...why?
    - i. Because, like the enemies of Nehemiah's day, we are numbed to living before a Holy God because we don't practice the presence of God
    - ii. In so doing, we think very highly of ourselves
7. ILLUSTRATION - Think of it like this...the drop out rate for NAVY Seals is 70-80%, why?
  - a. Dudes sit at home, watch the movies, see the commercials and say "yeah! Sign me up!"
    - i. Do so while sitting in an air conditioned room, in between games of Call of Duty, sipping down a slushy
  - b. But when they are in the face of the Navy Seal they typically shrivel up
8. So if your wondering how you will react if God walked through the door, vs. 16 is a good indicator...they "fell greatly in their own esteem"...why?
  - a. Because they perceived that this work had been accomplished with the help of God!

## **V. Conclusion**

A. Phil and I were talking about Nehemiah the other night and he made a very keen observation

1. He said that he had been reading through Nehemiah on his own and he had begun to realize that both Ezra and Nehemiah weren't really about those main characters at all
2. He is exactly right...Ultimately these books are not about rebuilding a Temple or

rebuilding walls

a. These books are not even about exemplary leadership of these main characters, though there is a great deal to glean from them

3. These books, like every book in the Bible is about God and how He is restoring a people to reflect His character and shine forth His glorious grace!!

a. That story is not relegated to the Bible

b. That story is to be our story as well

B. Jesus Christ did not come to suffer and die so that we could make a name for ourselves...Jesus Christ died for your sin so that people would look at the church and then "fall greatly in their own esteem for they perceive the work to have been accomplished by God."

C. I have met a lot of Christians in my life and a good chunk of them live uninspired, casual, hedonistic lives that amount to monuments to self, not to their God

1. I think this is why most people don't take our Faith seriously, because WE don't take it seriously, so why should they

a. I get more excited watching guys on Whale Wars give their lives up for whales, than I do talking to guys who call themselves Christians

D. We read about Nehemiah and we stand amazed at his dedication to God and God's mission, and it virtually seems foreign to us

1. We explain it away and say "we'll that's the job for pastors or missionaries, not for me"

2. If you call yourself a Christian then this story is to be your story as well

E. I don't know about you, but I read guys like this in the Bible and it convicts me

1. Listen I love leisure as much as the next guy

2. I like going to baseball games, playing the occasional video game, and trying to get that little white ball in the hole

3. But...I don't want people to stand over my casket at my funeral and LIE

a. I want my life to count

b. Not so they will write books about me

c. But so that they will read the book about Jesus

F. The one who came and accomplished the work that even Nehemiah ultimately failed in

1. Perfection

2. Substituting His life of perfection for my life of failure

3. By His wounds we are healed

G. I want to be on a mission that tells HIS story, not my story, a story like Nehemiah's

1. So laser focused that it demands a verdict

2. Will you join me?

3. Pick up the rubble of your life and man your position on the wall, sword in one hand and trowel in the other

4. Fighting to advance the display of a people

i. A people who have been rebuilt, restored

ii. A people who testify to the grace of God in Christ Jesus

H. A people like Nehemiah who are so dedicated they are discerning and so discerning they are faithful because they know the God for whom they exist

1. Stand amazed at the lengths Christ went to rebuild your rubble

2. Study the word, pray diligently, and look for opportunities to speak of your rubble and Christ's reconstruction so that they won't have to make your life sound interesting at your funeral

3. But instead they say something like what we read of Nehemiah's crew when they finished the wall

a. "They perceived that this work had been accomplished with the help of God"