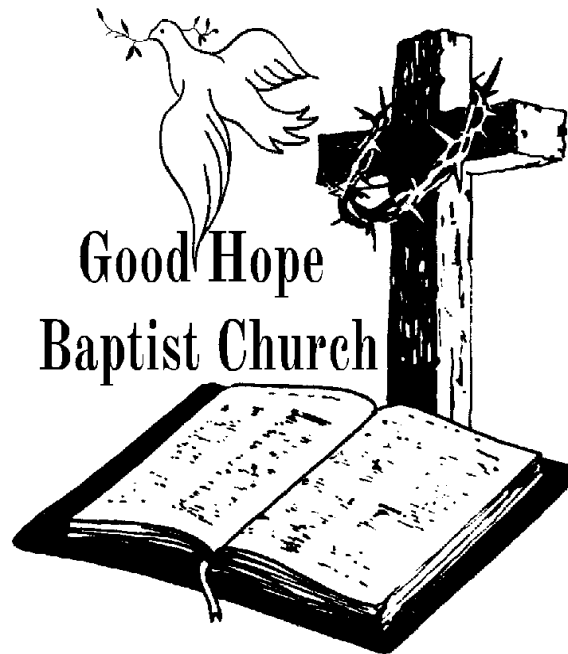


# Be Working Warriors Not Workless Worriers

Nehemiah 4:10-12



Living Together In The Love Of God

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**FOCAL Read Together** Nehemiah 4:10-12 <sup>(KJV)</sup> And Judah said, The strength of the bearers of burdens is decayed, and there is much rubbish; so that we are not able to build the wall. 11 And our adversaries said, They shall not know, neither see, till we come in the midst among them, and slay them, and cause the work to cease. 12 And it came to pass, that when the Jews which dwelt by them came, they said unto us ten times, From all places whence ye shall return unto us they will be upon you.

When Babylon came upon Jerusalem that mighty nation destroyed the Temple, destroyed that capital city, and destroyed the walls that encompassed the city. To the outside eye it looked as if the world had destroyed the people of God. Seventy years later Babylon itself was destroyed and Persia ruled in its place. God positioned a man named Nehemiah in the Palace of the King of Persia. Nehemiah was the cup bearer of the King, and a believer in the God of the Bible. And Beloved, God was still in control. When Nehemiah went to the King and asked that he lead a team to the devastation that was Israel in order to rebuild it, God was in control.

**Psalms 115:3 <sup>(HCSB)</sup> Our God is in heaven and does whatever He pleases.**

When Nehemiah asked for supplies to accomplish this seemingly impossible mission, God was in control. When he and his crew got to Jerusalem and examined the rubbish and the rubble that used to be *the city of David*, God was in control. When Nehemiah gave out assignments and the people began to build, God was in

control. The Bible tells us that, working together,  
**Nehemiah and his people**

**Context** Nehemiah 4:6 <sup>(KJV)</sup> ... **built we the wall; and all the wall was joined together unto the half thereof: for the people had a mind to work.**

The wall had reached half its height - but there was still work to do. Until the wall was built, the Temple could not be finished. Until the wall was built, commerce could not be established. Until the wall was built, families would be endangered, and anarchy would rule. Why? Because the wall around the city represented *protection from those who would do evil, and security for those who dwelt in the city*. With the wall down thieves and ne'er do wells could come into the city at will. The walls needed to be rebuilt before the city could ever prosper and, as the capital city, the walls had to be rebuilt before Israel would be a stable nation.

But there are those who do not want the walls rebuilt. Who would be for that? Why, those thieves for one. A thief doesn't want a lock put on the door, or a guard posted over the valuables. The enemies of God's people certainly don't want the walls rebuilt. The Bible tells us:

**Ephesians 6:12** <sup>(HCSB)</sup> **For our battle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the world powers of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavens.**

The Bible tells us that there is a Devil, Satan, also known as Lucifer, and that this old bitter and evil angel leads a

force of fallen angels in doing evil. Satan wants to stop the work of God and will do anything he can to accomplish this. When God's people rise up to do a work for the Lord the forces of darkness also rise up to do whatever they can to stop that work. We see this in our context.

**1** **As God's people working together for the Lord, remember this is the Lord's work, not our own opinion. Attacks will always come when you work for the Lord. No dog ever chases a car that sitting still!**

**a** **Believers should expect to be mocked and opposed, for Satan will always raise up a Sanballet or a Tobiah to try and keep the work of God from going forward. We read:**

**Context** Nehemiah 4:1-2 <sup>(KJV)</sup> **But it came to pass, that when Sanballat heard that we builded the wall, he was wroth, and took great indignation, and mocked the Jews. 2 And he spake before his brethren and the army of Samaria, and said, What do these feeble Jews? will they fortify themselves? will they sacrifice? will they make an end in a day? will they revive the stones out of the heaps of the rubbish which are burned?**

One of the hardest things to endure is mocking, belittling, and making fun, and Sanballet knew just how to do it. Sanballet **mocked the Jews** and called them **feeble, and did it before a large audience, his brothers and the Army of Samaria**. When people of God are mocked it's never done in a whisper. The mockery is

broadcast over the public airwaves. You'll hear no one attack Mohammed or Allah and broadcast it, but Jesus Christ and His people .... we're fair game.

**Sanballat and other unbelievers representing the powers of darkness will mock and attack God's people, and will do it in such a way that it is broadcast throughout the land. Satan knows that to defeat the work is to halt the Gospel.**

There's a reason for this, though. You see, **Satan didn't want Jerusalem rebuilt in the Old Testament because this City of David would one day be visited by Jesus Christ.** Satan didn't want the walls restored to the City of God because then the Temple would never be rebuilt, nor would the synagogues be restored. If **Jerusalem stayed destroyed, then Nazareth would also remain in ruin.** Jesus Christ would have never walked into the synagogues of Israel, nor would He walk into the Synagogue of Nazareth and read from Isaiah 42:

**Luke 4:18-21 (HCSB) The Spirit of the Lord is on Me, because He has anointed Me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent Me to proclaim freedom to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set free the oppressed, 19 to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor. .... Today as you listen, this Scripture has been fulfilled.**

If Jerusalem stayed destroyed, **Bethlehem would lay in ruin,** and the Angel of God would have never said:

**Luke 2:10-11 (KJV) .... Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. 11 For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord.**

**b** Believers, God is with those who trust in Him and Him alone. Sanballat mocked "those feeble Jews" and today the world says "those feeble minded Christians". The Scripture says:

**1 Corinthians 1:18 (HCSB) For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but it is God's power to us who are being saved.**

The Christian relies wholly upon Jesus Christ for salvation *daily*. We are "**being saved**". When Satan says "**David, you're feeble**", my reply must be "**Guilty as charged - but MY GOD is not!**"

God has always used the useless to do the useful. He has always used the broken to bring the greatest blessing. The Lord told Israel in **Deuteronomy 7:7-8 "I did not choose you because you were the larger nation, for you were the least. I did this because I loved you and I kept the promise I made to your forefathers."** In a similar manner we read in the New Testament of the Christian ....

**1 Corinthians 1:26-31 (HCSB) .... consider your calling: Not many are wise from a human perspective, not many powerful, not many of noble birth. 27 Instead, God has chosen what is foolish in the world to shame**

the wise, and God has chosen what is weak in the world to shame the strong. 28 God has chosen what is insignificant and despised in the world — what is viewed as nothing — to bring to nothing what is viewed as something, 29 so that no one can boast in His presence. 30 But it is from Him that you are in Christ Jesus, who became God-given wisdom for us — our righteousness, sanctification, and redemption, 31 in order that, as it is written: **The one who boasts must boast in the Lord.**

God chooses the broken - for the broken and weak are more liable to reach for the Gospel promises. No one is saved because they are good or because they are strong. We are only saved when we realize **we are feeble - and we need the salvation that God offers in Christ.** WE **boast in the Lord, not in our own abilities.** Look again at the text:

**Context** Nehemiah 4:3-5 <sup>(KJV)</sup> ... Tobiah the Ammonite [was] by him, and he said, Even that which they build, if a fox go up, he shall even break down their stone wall. 4 **Hear, O our God; for we are despised: and turn their reproach upon their own head, and give them for a prey in the land of captivity: 5 And cover not their iniquity, and let not their sin be blotted out from before thee: for they have provoked [thee] to anger before the builders.**

Despised and mocked Nehemiah did not even answer the charges leveled at Israel, but went directly to God in prayer.

**C** Dear friends, if you are *not* being mocked or ridiculed - ever - then *re-examine your faith.* No Christian should look exactly like the world. We should look like Jesus. We should be like Jesus. People ought to see Jesus when they see us. If **the preaching of the Cross is to them that perish foolishness (1 Corinthians 1:18)** then we should expect some resistance. When the Apostles preached about Jesus they were *beaten with a whip* they didn't cry about it, but ...

Acts 5:41-42 <sup>(KJV)</sup> ... they departed from the presence of the council, **rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name. 42 And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ.**

**The world demands that we be inclusive in our faith - and say there are many ways to God. The Lord said "I am the Way" and the early Church stood firm on "Jesus the Way, the Truth, and the Life, no man comes to God BUT BY HIM!"**

Jesus was mocked and ridiculed. Before He brought a young girl back to life the Bible says in **Mark 5:39** "they laughed Him to scorn". In **Luke 22:63-65** the Bible tells us that the soldiers **mocked Jesus and beat Him with their fists. They blindfolded the Savior, slapped Him, and spit on Him saying "OK Prophet, tell us who it was that just did that?"** In **Luke 23:35-37** as Jesus Christ hung in terrible agony on the Cross of Calvary - bearing the weight of your sins and mine - the

rulers made fun of Him. "If He's the Savior, let Him save Himself!" The soldiers jammed a bloody, vinegar soaked sponge in His wounded mouth, **mocking Him saying "Come on King of the Jews, save Yourself!"**

Jesus was mocked, and we will be mocked. Do what the Scripture says:

**Psalms 37:3-5 (KJV)** Trust in the LORD, and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed. 4 Delight thyself also in the LORD; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart. 5 Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass.

Remember what the great preacher **W.A. Criswell** once said: "**A bulldog can whip a skunk, but it's just not worth it**". Do not lower yourself to the level of the forces of darkness. **Trust in the Lord and do good, and YOU WILL dwell in the land!**

**2** Yes, there is much rubbish, but our God will overcome it all and use us for His glory. The attacks of the forces of darkness began to worry Judah, who said:

**FOCAL** Nehemiah 4:10-12 (KJV) ... The strength of the bearers of burdens is decayed, and there is much rubbish; so that we are not able to build the wall. 11 And our adversaries said, They shall not know, neither see, till we come in the midst among them, and slay them, and cause the work to cease. 12 And it

came to pass, that when the Jews which dwelt by them came, they said unto us ten times, From all places whence ye shall return unto us they will be upon you.

Judah is significant because **this was the leadership of Israel**. Judah was the tribe that **King David** came from, and also the line from which **Jesus Christ the Messiah** would come. When the devil comes to discourage, he always starts at the leadership.

If the Devil can get a pastor, a deacon, a Sunday School teacher, a Committee Chairman, or a Person of Influence to do the wrong thing, then he can corrupt the whole work.

Judah said "**There's so much rubbish that we can't finish this wall. Not only that, but Sanballet and Tobiah are sneaking around, and they're going to infiltrate us. Everybody's been saying - and I've heard it ten times if I've heard it once - they're already attacking our outposts!**" What a bleak picture! How did Nehemiah approach the situation?

**a** Nehemiah personalized the attacks. We read ...

**Context** Nehemiah 4:13 (KJV) Therefore set I in the lower places behind the wall, [and] on the higher places, I even set the people after their families with their swords, their spears, and their bows.

Nehemiah went along the wall and found the weak areas,

and **stationed people at these weak areas by families**. A person will fight harder when they realize that the outcome will effect their own families.

For instance, when we hear about the **vote to protect marriage as "one man one woman"** and hear that Massachusetts, Connecticut, Iowa, Vermont, Maine and most recently New Hampshire are allowing Gay marriage it seems far away. However when I tell you that on **May 8, 2012 voters in North Carolina will be given a chance to accept or reject an amendment that recognizes marriage as "one man one woman"** - suddenly it gets personal. We already normalize sexual sin on television. What happens when and if gay marriage is legalized in North Carolina? A homosexual man named **Howard Chua-Eoan** wrote an article in Time Magazine entitled *The Bittersweet Victory: Why Gay Marriage Still Isn't Marriage*:

**"Marriage without a church or temple wedding isn't the real thing. Why can some people have all the bells and whistles in the church of their choice but not me? ... some rich and influential religious institutions are not only free to continue to reject gay men and women as equal beneficiaries of all aspects of faith but will now also rally their congregants to reject politicians who are willing to abide with this extension of secular civil rights — no matter how much acceptance there is of same-sex marriage elsewhere, no matter how many wedding announcements appear in the New York Times."**

Here's the issue - the Gay Rights Movement has never

wanted just the freedom to marry one another. The Movement demands that *every Christian Church toss out what it believes* and accommodate a lifestyle that the Scripture clearly rejects. This has *always* been the case. When **Roe vs Wade** became Federal Law and abortion was legalized it wasn't long before groups like **Planned Parenthood** were getting tax dollars to perform abortions. Now with the passage of Federal Healthcare Christian Organizations like *Baptist, Methodist, Catholic, and Lutheran hospitals* are being directed to not only pass out contraceptives, but also to perform abortions or issue abortion promoting drugs.

It matters what you vote! It matters that you rebuild the wall. It matters who is elected President, and Senator, and Representative. It matters to your families, and matters to your lives.

**Illustrate** Have you ever seen these trees that are twisted into complex shapes? The trees were twisted while they were but small saplings. May I say that what you teach your children about the Lord matters. If you teach them nothing, the world will teach them, and will twist them into whatever shape it wants them to be. These children will grow up to either cherish the Lord or to ignore Him. They will value life, or devalue it. They will grow up as young men and women who love others enough to tell them about Jesus Christ and that He and He alone can grant access to God. They will either blindly accept the nonsense of the world or by faith walk in love with Jesus Christ their Lord. What we do matters to our children and our grandchildren.

## **b** Nehemiah pointed to the Sovereign Power of God.

He stood up and said:

**Nehemiah 4:14** <sup>(KJV)</sup> .... **Be not ye afraid of them: remember the Lord, [which is] great and terrible, and fight for your brethren, your sons, and your daughters, your wives, and your houses.**

Nehemiah said "**Don't be afraid of the enemy - REMEMBER the LORD**". God is bigger than the enemy. Tell me what you think of this little poem I wrote:

**On the way to town sickness said,  
When I am done a hundred will be dead.  
The sun set and five hundred lay still,  
No more to laugh, no more to will.  
I asked sickness why four hundred died,  
Why in so many homes mothers cried.  
Sickness did not kill the extra men,  
It was worry that did them in.**

We are to do as Nehemiah did. **Do not be afraid of them, but remember the Lord and fight for your family!** Our Lord Jesus said ...

**Matthew 6:31-33** <sup>(HCSB)</sup> So **don't worry**, saying, 'What will we eat?' or 'What will we drink?' or 'What will we wear?' **32 For the idolaters eagerly seek all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. 33 But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things will be provided for you.**

Put God first, and work for Him. Do what He says - make Him preeminent. When you put God first, loving Him above all else, He will take care of you. The Lord says:

**Isaiah 49:15-16** <sup>(HCSB)</sup> **Can a woman forget her nursing child, or lack compassion for the child of her womb? Even if these forget, yet I will not forget you. 16 Look, I have inscribed you on the palms of My hands; your walls are continually before Me.**

**Illustrate** Will the Lord pay so much for you on Calvary and abandon you? Will the Blood run down His precious arms from holes made by hideous nails - and He forget? When Jesus Christ looks at the scars on His hands He says "**There is My Beloved! There is My Bride! The agony was nothing but a moment. Oh how I love you, oh how I love you. My Blood for your life, I love you forever my Bride.**"

We who are born by faith in Christ work for Him. We work not to be saved, but because we love Him so. No believer should ever be a workless worriers. **We are graven on the palms of His hands, and our hands - and hearts - belong to Jesus.**

## **C** Nehemiah's people worked together on the wall.

We read:

**Nehemiah 4:16-20** <sup>(KJV)</sup> **And it came to pass from that time forth, [that] the half of my servants wrought in the work, and the other half of them held both the**

spears, the shields, and the bows, and the habergeons; and the rulers [were] behind all the house of Judah. 17 They which builded on the wall, and they that bare burdens, with those that laded, [every one] with one of his hands wrought in the work, and with the other [hand] held a weapon. 18 For the builders, every one had his sword girded by his side, and [so] builded. And he that sounded the trumpet [was] by me. 19 And I said unto the nobles, and to the rulers, and to the rest of the people, The work [is] great and large, and we are separated upon the wall, one far from another. 20 In what place [therefore] ye hear the sound of the trumpet, resort ye thither unto us: our God shall fight for us.

What a beautiful picture of unity we see here! Some worked while others stood guard. **The sword and the trowel** worked together, and Nehemiah kept careful watch. He said "If the enemy comes we'll blow the horn, and where you hear the call, rally to it and there protect your brothers and sisters from darkness".

It is wonderful to be in the Church of the Lord! Those who love the Lord Jesus Christ will triumph in the end. **God's Word and His Gospel will not return to Him void (Isaiah 55:11). The work He has begun in us, He will continue till the day of His coming (Philippians 1:6; 2:13; 1 Thessalonians 2:13).**

May God touch your hearts with His Word!



**FOCAL** Nehemiah 4:10-12 <sup>(KJV)</sup> And Judah said, The strength of the bearers of burdens is decayed, and there is much rubbish; so that we are not able to build the wall. 11 And our adversaries said, They shall not know, neither see, till we come in the midst among them, and slay them, and cause the work to cease. 12 And it came to pass, that when the Jews which dwelt by them came, they said unto us ten times, From all places whence ye shall return unto us they will be upon you.

Psalms 115:3; Nehemiah 4:6; Ephesians 6:12

**1** As God's people working together for the Lord,

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**a** Believers should expect to be \_\_\_\_\_, for Satan will always raise up a Sanballet or a Tobiah to try and keep the work of God from going forward. Nehemiah 4:1-2; Luke 4:18-21; Luke 2:10-11

**b** Believers, God is with those who trust \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ 1 Corinthians 1:18; Deuteronomy 7:7-8; 1 Corinthians 1:26-31; Nehemiah 4:3-5

**C** Dear friends, if you are *not* being mocked or ridiculed - ever - then \_\_\_\_\_  
1 Corinthians 1:18; Acts 5:41-42; Mark 5:39; Luke 22:63-65; Luke 23:35-37; Psalms 37:3-5

**2** Yes, there is much rubbish, but our God will

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Nehemiah 4:10-12

**a** Nehemiah \_\_\_\_\_  
Nehemiah 4:13

**b** Nehemiah \_\_\_\_\_ to the Sovereign Power of God. Nehemiah 4:14; Matthew 6:31-33; Isaiah 49:15-16

**C** Nehemiah's \_\_\_\_\_ worked together on the wall. Nehemiah 4:16-20; Isaiah 55:11; Philippians 1:6; 2:13; 1 Thessalonians 2:13

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I asked sickness why four hundred died,  
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Sickness did not kill the extra men,  
It was worry that did them in.