

Building the Walls

by Duncan Campbell

We are called to do a great work for God and must be faithful in the little things in order to be commissioned to do something greater.

Duration: 49:16

Scripture: Nehemiah 2:17, Matthew 28:19, Acts 26:18

Topics: "Prayer Life"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of proclaiming the word of God and fulfilling the commission given by God. He uses the story of Nehemiah as an example of someone who obeyed God's call and faced opposition in building the wall. Despite the opposition, Nehemiah remained focused on his mission and refused to be distracted. The preacher encourages the audience to have a similar determination and to trust in God's power to complete the work.

Transcript

Nehemiah chapter 6 verses 1 to 5 or rather verses 1 to 4. Now it came to pass when Sam Ballat and Tobiah the Gesham and the Arabian and the rest of our enemies heard that I had builited the wall and that there was no breach left therein. So at that time I had not set up the doors upon the gates. That Sam Ballat and Gesham sent unto me saying come let us meet together in some one of the villages in the plain of Ono.

But they thought to do me mischief and I sent messengers unto them saying I am doing a great work so that I cannot come down. Why should the work cease whilst I leave it and come down to you? Yet they sent unto me four times after this sort and I answered them after the same manner. I want to direct your attention especially to the words I am doing a great work I cannot come down.

This evening I want to draw your attention to this Old Testament story. You have read it and I am sure you are familiar with it. You have had I am sure many sermons preached from the passage of scripture that I have just read.

It is the record of the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem. This man of God Nehemiah was called upon to do a great work rebuild the walls and that work he did but not without opposition. There were those there who were against him.

In that connection I would say this to the man who is out to do the will of God today. The man who is called to rebuild the walls that are broken will very soon discover that there is no easy way to victory. We are living in an age when it has become increasingly difficult to proclaim the full gospel of God or get men and women to listen to God's truth.

These are the days in which we live. There are forces arrayed against us today forces that are out to defy every known Christian principle but as men and women who love the Savior who have been called and commissioned by God to be his builders in the world we dare not run from the opposition nor must we ever succumb to it. The message of the gospel was spoken against is spoken against and will be spoken against by the enemies of God.

And we dare not, we must not expect anything else. The work of God is still a sign spoken against. But here we have a man who obeyed God and obeyed God rather than man.

God had commissioned him God had called him and in spite of all opposition in spite of misrepresentation and misunderstanding he went on quietly and definitely and with purpose to fulfill God's commission and the wall was built. Oh how challenging are his words should such a man as I flee. Yes they were doing their utmost to get him to leave the wall doing their very best to get him to come down in other words to lower his standard to worldly conformity.

But should a man like I like me run away or as we have it in our Gaelic bible the revised person will a man like me run from it. You see it was a man who fought through because he was convinced that he was called and chosen and because he was convinced that he was called and chosen by God to do something he must be faithful. Chapter 2 and verse 12 clearly indicates that he had a heart experience of God and that makes all the difference.

Oh to have a heart experience to know in my heart God's commission to know in my heart God's purpose to hear at the ear of my heart God's call. Then I believe with that call ringing at the ear of the soul I shall go through in spite of all the opposition the enemy may throw against me. God in my heart that I was to build the walls of Jerusalem.

Now there are three thoughts to which I want to direct your attention in this connection and the first is that we have here a man called of God commissioned by God to do a great work. He was called upon to build that which was broken. Called to build that which was broken.

There are few pictures in Old Testament stories so vivid so arresting as that picture of Nehemiah during the midnight hour riding round the walls of Jerusalem. Oh what desolation met his eyes. Jerusalem once the pride of the whole earth now prostrate and broken.

That was the vision that met his eye as during midnight he surveyed the situation. Yes I say desolation, broken walls, everything that was discouraging and depressing to a man with God's call ringing in his soul and God's vision before him. But here was a man who looked beyond the broken walls and arising in front of him he saw another vision breaking upon his spirit.

He saw a new city. He saw a new Jerusalem. He saw a temple in the center of the city and walls built around it and God in the midst of his people again.

That was the vision that inspired him. That was the vision that moved him. That was the vision the vision that got him into action and gave to his life purpose and direction.

It was this two-fold consciousness that God had called him and that a work could and would be accomplished because of God's call. I believe that today God is building something greater, something grander than he has ever fashioned. The temple of redeemed humanity.

Yes we see much to discourage. We see much to depress. The opposition is there.

The enemies are in the field and again and again we seem to find ourselves outmaneuvered by the strategy of hell. Yet I believe in the midst of it all that God is working and that God is calling out a people and that God is placing stones in the temple that will yet appear as finished, wonderful and beautiful. The temple of redeemed humanity, the bride of Christ.

Now I believe that. Here you have it. The temple that God is building was the temple that John saw.

Oh I love that passage. I saw a new Jerusalem coming down out of heaven as a bride adorned. I believe dear people that that holy city is seen in miniature in every soul born again of the spirit of God.

That is a temple, a miniature temple that speaks of the greater temple that will yet be completed when God will have gathered his redeemed. The new Jerusalem coming down out of God from heaven. Was it not Chias Wayne who said a number of years ago, I remember listening to him, as he spoke over the air, you can build a new Jerusalem in any community providing you insist upon the regeneration of the individual.

And I somehow believe, I was saying that to the pilgrims today, I believe that stones are going to be lifted out of this community. I believe that workers on the wall will handle stones and place them in the wall. Broken yes, just not.

But stones placed not only in the wall but in the temple that God is building. I sometimes think of precious souls redeemed by the blood of Christ lifted from the ways of sin and from the gutter of the devil. Yet lifted by God to sparklers diamonds in the coronet of Christ's eternal glory.

Oh what a commission, what a privilege, what a calling to be entrusted as builders in this great enterprise. Paul sets it in clear light in his testimony before Agrippa, we read it in that passage. And listen my dear people, this concerns us all.

It's not something that has to do with preachers, not something that has to do with ministers or pilgrims. I send thee to open their eyes and to turn them from darkness to light and from the power of Satan unto God, that they might receive forgiveness of sin. And I believe that there are multitudes today, yes in this very community, conscious of their desperate need.

No they will not acknowledge to you, they will not acknowledge to me, but I believe deep down in the human heart crushed by the tempter, that there are feelings and aspirations after something different. And I believe with all my heart that if we could but touch them just there, there would be in our day and generation a response from those who are seeking after reality. I believe that today men are positively tired of dead formality in the realm of religion.

They have tried this and they have endeavored in that field and they have come back from it all baffled and frustrated. And I believe that we are commissioned to proclaim the unsearchable riches of Christ and declare to such that there is a savior from all sin, that there is pardon for all our offenses and power in the precious blood of Jesus to expel the venom of sin from our lives. That's our commission my dear people,

that's our commission.

To that I believe, oh to that we are called. Oh who tonight, who profess to have entered into saving relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ, I say that is our commission. To tell, to proclaim, to declare what God has done for our souls and what he's prepared to do for the souls of men who today are held bondage by sin and the devil, in bondage by the God of this world, that is our commission.

Yes, here is a man who heard the call, here is a man commissioned by God, here is a man who went through and dared to believe that the God who commissioned him would be the God who would equip him and the God who would enable him to complete the task given to him today. Oh I wonder if that is your vision tonight. I believe that we are met tonight at the beginning of this mission in the will and purpose of God.

I cannot but believe that. God has ordained, God has given commission to his ambassador and I believe with all my heart that it is the purpose of God to build a wall that is broken, to restore the years that the locals have eaten, to cause the waste places to bloom again and the wilderness to blossom as the garden of the Lord. Oh can it be possible in this community, in this environment where things are so hard and so difficult, well that was the vision that Nehemiah had.

Broken walls, a picture of desolation, a wilderness indeed but in the midst of it God built his temple, in the midst of it God built his walls, God commissioned, God equipped and God fulfilled his purpose. I want to ask at this moment here I go any further, is that your vision for this community? Is that your vision for this town, this city? Do you believe that God could and that God will and that God can so move in our midst that men and women will be made to feel the impact of God? It's not going to come through preaching, it's not going to come through organization, no, it's going to come through an awareness of God. Here is a man aware of God.

No because I'm aware of God, because I'm conscious of God, because this consciousness of God within my own personality has created within me a great confidence in the God that is real to me. Then helping me I will go through and fulfill his purpose in my life and in the community. My dear people is that our vision? Is that our vision? For lack of it scripture tells me that the people perish.

But he is not only called to do a great work, we have here reference to a great effort by him. You see here was a man who put everything into it, everything. I am doing, doing as distinct from dreaming, doing as distinct from thinking or meditating.

Oh there are so many of us and we dream about revival and we think about an awakening and we talk about the need to do something definite for God but somehow little is being done. Well you have evidence of that in what you see in the prayer meeting. If the prayer meeting is the barometer of any church, if the prayer meeting is the barometer of any mission hall, then may I ask what about the temperature? If that is the barometer of my spirituality and the spirituality of my congregation or mission, then what have I to say about the atmosphere and the spirituality and the effort that I represent? I could bring you to a church in London where on a Sabbath you may have anything between two and three thousand listening to the preacher.

But I have this on authority that if you go to the Wednesday prayer meeting you're fortunate if you get thirty. Tell me this, is Sunday morning or Sunday evening the indication as to the spirituality of that congregation? No. What you see in the prayer meeting on Wednesday indicates the depth of spirituality.

Now we want to think of that. Oh we want to think of that. Here is a man who did something.

Oh no he didn't dream about it. He didn't talk about it. He put everything that he had into it and left God.

Who was it said and said wisely? Work as though everything depended upon you and pray as though everything depended upon God. But I maintain my dear people that that is exactly what this man did. There was effort.

There was endeavor. Yes there was a measure of organization. But I believe that behind it all there was also fervent prayer and waiting upon God behold behind all his outward service here was a man who set time apart to consult God.

Oh how arresting and how illuminating are the words I sat down and wept. Chapter 1 verse 4. I sat down and wept. I mourned certain days.

I fasted and prayed before the God of heaven. Oh how little we see today of the sitting down attitude. How little we see today of weeping.

How little we see today of mourning in the presence of God or fasting. I mean by fasting, waiting in the presence of God. Be that long or be it short, be it hours or be it days.

I believe that it was what came to that man of God as he fasted, as he prayed, as he mourned. I believe it was what came to him then that moved him into action. That sense of responsibility.

God has called me. God has set me here. Because God has called me and God has set me here.

I must recognize my responsibility. Oh tell me dear people do we realize our responsibility? Do I realize my responsibility in face of the desperate situation that confronts me today? In face of the appalling state of the Christian church and the masses out with the church that are moving heedless and careless to their doom? Tell me is there any sense of responsibility? I think of this dear man and you see this sense of responsibility gripping him very early in life. It began in the king's household.

You recall that his witness there was a very restricted witness, a very restricted one. It was just in the king's household and between four walls. As the king's carbera he was a man who realized that his position was an opportunity for furthering the cause of God.

He was the custodian of God's interest there. And I believe because he was faithful in the little, because he was faithful in the home and in the family, in the king's household, God commissioned him to do something greater. Surely that is a secret of success.

In the life of every Christian worker I remember being blessed and stirred in my soul through reading a verse in Psalm 68, God saideth the solitary in family. Terrific word. God saideth the solitary.

I'm alone there, but I'm commissioned there. I'm called to do something there and I must be faithful there even though I'm solitary and alone. He was a man alone, but he was faithful.

He was a man in the midst of paganism, but he was faithful. He was a man among those who failed to understand him, but he was faithful. And the moment came when even the king was made to recognize his sincerity and his honesty.

Oh that God may cause us to be faithful. God setting us where we are in order that we may serve him and fulfill his purpose through us in that place and for that hour. No one lives unto himself.

You cannot live a moment unto yourself. He was a man who recognized that. I am influencing for God or influencing against God.

He was a man who was faithful. Oh the call of God was ringing in his soul. The vision of God was before him.

And I can almost hear him saying God enable me to be faithful here. Let me wait your further commission. Oh my dear people are we there.

I feel that we ought tonight just to face this question. I would like to face it in sincerity and in honesty. Believing that we are all called of God.

Called to be ambassadors. Called to proclaim the unsearchable riches of Christ. Called to bear in our body the dining of Jesus.

That the life force of Jesus might be made manifest through our mortal flesh. That's our commission and that is our call. And because he was commissioned and because he was called, God through him completed the task.

So in chapter 6 and verse 15 we read so the work was finished. In verse 16 this work was wrought of our God. You see he gives the glory to God.

He doesn't speak of I finished the work. He doesn't say it was me and my associates that accomplished the work. The work of all is finished.

And here is a work of all by God. Oh I pray that at the end of this endeavor here you will leave in this community monuments to the saving grace of God. I can visualize this hall being too small.

Too small. That's our vision. Too small.

Because of so many stones being lifted from the gutter to be placed in the wall that God is building here. Finished but finished because it must be said that this work was wrought of God. Not wrought by pilgrims of the faith mission.

Oh yes Nehemiah was there. Nehemiah was commissioned and I believe that our sisters here have been commissioned by God. Perhaps we commissioned for this great effort.

But at the end at the end of the task at the end of the day angels and archangels gazing over the battlements of glory and saying to one another the walls are built and it is a work wrought of God. You see here's a work finished with the mark of God. Oh that we might see that today.

There are these are days when we say finished and to a great deal but tell me this. Has the finished article the mark of God upon it? What is the mark of God? Godliness of character. That's the mark of God.

Not shouting. No. Not singing.

No. The mark of God is righteousness and truth in the Holy Ghost. You know what we need today? A baptism of the fear of God.

A baptism of the fear of God. Why these are days when we hear little and few of the fear of God and yet I read in scripture that the fear of God is the beginning of wisdom. Oh that the fear of God may go down.

That the fear of God may cause us to tremble. That the fear of God may so come upon us that sin will become something terrible damnable and devilish. The fear of God.

Oh no. There's no easy way to victory. Nehemiah discovered that.

There's nothing light and flippant about his word. Today we are living in the midst of flippancy and whiteness in the field of evangelism but oh how dishonoring to God. Now let's face it dear people.

Let's face it. God's people are a whole people. They're holy.

God is my salvation said David in the Michaelic Bible. He says God is my help. Shaquille Mohamed.

God is my help. Where there's wholeness there's health. Where God is in operation there's reality.

Where the hand of God moves stones. Stones are placed in the wall and the wall is built day to day. When we are frequently found bringing a great deal of material to the ground.

Oh we are experts at that today. And if we adopt certain methods and secure certain personalities we can gather the crowd. But isn't it strange that in the midst of our activities the wall is not being built.

The wall is not being built. Oh for positive achievement in our work for God. Oh for men and women who will handle stones.

And in the name of heaven place them in the wall. And God looking down sees the wall being built. According to his plan his purpose and his specifications laid down in eternity.

Tell me my dear people is that our mission? I sometimes say if the men who supported Nehemiah were not lifting stones and placing them in the wall they could never be looked upon as builders. No. If I'm a builder I know my trade and I'm able to place the stones in the wall and the wall is built.

If I'm not placing stones I may be a laborer but I'm not a builder. Oh tell me my dear are we in that position where God can call us and commission us to handle stones and place them in the wall. Not just a crowd that gather stones together in a sort of a heap but nothing that indicates building.

Nothing that demonstrates the work of a builder. I'm not sure where I read but I did read it somewhere of a French physician, a French doctor who full of enthusiasm said that he had operated upon eight people in connection with some serious and complicated disorder. He had operated on eight.

When asked how many he had saved he replied not one, oh not one but you see the operations were so brilliant, the operations so brilliant but he didn't save us all. Now that would never satisfy an ordinary medical man. We must never be satisfied with brilliance.

Oh no. We must never be satisfied until we see stones being handled and walls being built and something appearing that will honor God in the community leading monuments to his saving grace. Nothing short of that will satisfy the God of heaven for the master who commissioned me.

Father, we have here a great resolve, a great work, a great effort and a great resolve. I cannot come down. Now why did Nehemiah refuse to come down? Because the work would stop the moment he

compromised.

They said to him now we want to meet you in conference, we want to discuss this matter with you, we want to consider together the new approach and the new technique, you come down. Let's discuss it together. My dear people, in this field compromise is the curse of the Christian church today.

It's a curse of the Christian church today. There seems to me to be a gradual coming down so you hear words such as accommodate and tolerance. Accommodate, oh we must try and accommodate them and in order to capture the teddy boys we must become a sort of a teddy boy.

Oh God help us. I think it was Spurgeon who said if you see a man in a bog in order to get him out you're not going into the bog with him. You'll stand on something solid and lift him.

That's just what we have before us here. He was on the wall and he must not come down. I dare not compromise in order to accommodate the world, the flesh or the devil.

We see the tendency today is to do that but I want to say dear people tolerance at the expense of conviction and righteousness is just playing into the hands of the enemy. Once a man is commissioned by God he must go through with God though all he's combined in the world is crying aloud and come down. Change your method.

I remember some years ago a minister coming to me at the close of an evening service and saying to me now that sort of preaching will never do today. I happen to be preaching that night on thou Capernaum which art exalted into heaven shall be brought down to hell. People will not listen to that sort of preaching today yet.

The church was full. In fact there were times at a communion season when we had the service outside because the church wouldn't hold it. That was up in Ballantyre.

This dear man took me aside and took me away for a walk on a Monday night and he began to tell me oh no you must change you'll never do to speak as you spoke last night. People will not listen to that and I listened to him for a little and I said something to this effect but I cannot do anything else. Tell me what is your approach? What do you preach? And he told me well I tell you now you will remember that I and several others were at a service conducted by you in your church not so very long ago.

We went to the evening service and you were 13. And I understand that you are just a little over 30 in the morning and 13 at night. And you want me to change my method of approach and preaching to your method that is emptying your church and discard the truth that is keeping the church full.

And he looked at me and said then my dear brother you have got me this time. My dear brother you've got me this time. No my dear people we dare not compromise and I believe if we are true to God and true to the message and true to the truth of the world and true to the bible God will vindicate his own cause.

The battle may be hard the mountains high but God will vindicate and God's name will be honored. I remember years ago at the Ketsse Convention hearing the lift Dr. Stuart Holden say that on the day of his ordination his mother wrote on the fly leaf of his bible this motto the will of God nothing more nothing less and nothing else. The man who will honor God dare not low his standard the will of God nothing more and nothing less.

Now how are we going to meet the attack of the enemy? Now this I will close. How are we going to meet the attack here? I ask the pilgrims how are they going to meet the attack? Is there going to be true to God? Are they going to be attacked? I wonder will the attack come from you? I wonder will the opposition come from some of you here? I have no need to come. How are we going to meet the attack? I say not by lowering our standard to worldly conformity, not by scheming or planning of the flesh, not by coming into cooperation with a cunning enemy, no but by seeking God, God's will, God's plan and God's approval and the will that is good acceptable and perfect.

May God help us all. But today you see today we have reversed the order and we have invited the enemy onto the ball. Do I tell you what is happening? We have our bishops and our moderators with desires in their heart to shake hands with the Antichrist.

But oh my dear people that could not have happened in a nearby estate. His builders held a sword as well as a trowel and no Sambalic or Tobiah could stand beside them in the building of the wall commissioned by God. They must be true, they must be faithful and they dare not come down.

Now I wonder if I'm speaking to someone and in your heart tonight you know that you've come down. You were on the wall one time. Oh you were building and storms were being placed in the wall.

But tonight you are conscious of the fact that somehow, somewhere through disobedience, through unbelief, through sin, you've come down and Tobiah and Sambalic are your companions. I want to say friends and I know this to be true. If it wasn't true I wouldn't be here this evening.

I know that the hand that was moved, that was wounded, that bled, can touch you tonight into a new sensibility, into a new consciousness and lift you where you cannot lift yourself and place you upon the wall with Sambalic and Tobiah behind you forever and the Nehemiah supporting you and standing beside you. Will you ask God tonight to make your guilt out of you? Will you ask God to take you by the hand and lift you? Bless God that this wonderful Savior can organize victory on the very ground of your deceit. He can make you again and I'm speaking to some in a community and you know that the walls are broken.

You know that the walls are down. Oh tonight will you ask God to recommission you? Will you ask God to get you to the place where he can recommission you and cause you to be again a builder of victory. Thank God he can give us back the gears of the locusts of Eden and the Naa vessel.

Oh thank God the Naa vessel can be made again. God will tonight place you as a builder in his great scheme of redemption.

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