

Nails

by Kent Hovind

Kent Hovind's sermon illustrates the significance of nails as a metaphor for preparation, commitment, and God's purpose in our lives.

Duration: 37:33

Scripture: 2 Timothy 2:3

Topics: "Spiritual Growth", "Faithfulness"

Description

This sermon by Kent Hovind uses the analogy of nails to teach important life lessons. Just as nails need to be prepared, expected to do their job, and driven by a blow to the head, we too need to be prepared by God, stay committed to our tasks, and be willing to endure hardships. The sermon emphasizes the importance of being where God places us, being willing to move when He directs, and being flexible and gentle in our actions.

Transcript

Thank you for joining us. My name is Kent Hovind. I taught high school science for 15 years.

And now I travel and speak on creation, evolution, and dinosaurs primarily. But I also am interested in lots of other topics. One topic that has interested me, being raised in a home of my dad who did a lot of building.

He was an electrical engineer. And then we were always doing building projects. One thing I've been interested in most of my life is nails.

Now I'll talk to you about nails here today. This is a chapel message that I've shared many times at different high schools and ought to be something that will influence your life if you'll let it. I remember as a child, my dad said, son, I've got some friends that work at Keystone Steel and Wire Company in Bartonville, Illinois, right across the river from where we lived.

And they would like to let us come over and take a tour. I said, oh, sure, dad. We went over and toured the steel company.

They would take this massive block of steel, probably about the size of one of these eight foot tables. It was like two feet by two feet by eight feet long, weighed lots and lots and lots of weight. But they took this thing and they heated it up in an oven until it was cherry red hot.

And they ran it down this conveyor belt between two rollers, like the old fashioned washing machine rollers, you know, to squeeze the clothes out? It went between these rollers and squished it down. When it squeezed this big block of steel down, it made it longer, lots longer. Then it went down the conveyor some more, came to two more rollers, and squeezed the sides.

And it made it much longer. Every time they squeezed this thing on the top or on the sides, it kept getting longer and longer and longer till it ended up as a wire, probably a mile long, just by squeezing this block of steel. Ended up getting to the end.

It gets on this machine that coils it up on a big, huge spool. And they clip it off and take it over to the next factory or to the next building. We walked over in the next building.

And I said, what do they do here? He said, this is where we make nails. They feed this wire into this machine, starts pulling it off of this spool, goes around a bunch of wheels and does whatever it does, and ends up at this wire making, at this nail making machine. It would feed the wire in, chop it off, smash the head on, smash the point on the nail, smash grippers on the side.

We'll talk about that in a minute. These little lines, these serrations, those are special grippers on there. It would smash those in, smash the head, smash the point, and fling it out into a box.

And it would fill an entire box of nails about every six seconds. It was much faster than a machine gun coming out of there as the nails came flying out into the box. I was yea verily impressed as a little kid at how they make the nails.

Got to actually watch the factory where they made these things. We're going to talk about some different kinds of nails here today. Bible really has a lot to say about nails.

Jesus grew up in a carpenter's home. They said in Matthew chapter 13, is not this the carpenter's son? Grew up in the home of a carpenter. First one to find this verse, if you'd stand and read it.

Mark chapter 6, verse number 3. Mark 6, 3. Who's got that verse? That's not the carpenter's son. Ah, that was a tie, so the boys win. OK.

Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary? We're talking about Jesus, of course. And it mentions his brothers and sisters, you know, here. So Jesus himself was considered a carpenter.

OK, first one to find this verse, if you would stand and read it. Mark chapter 6, and verse 4. Mark 6, 4. Boys again, here we go. Keep going.

Jesus was without honor, of course, in his own country, in his own house. They didn't recognize who he really was. He was the God of the universe.

But he was raised in the home of a carpenter, and he himself was considered a carpenter. Interesting. Bible says because of this, he was not recognized there.

He could do no mighty work there. He didn't do much in his own town. They just wouldn't listen to him.

In the book of Judges, there's an interesting story. In Judges chapter 4, in the Old Testament, you've got Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Joshua, and Judges. Judges chapter 4. Jael, Heber's wife, took a nail of the tent and went softly unto him, and smote the nail into his temples.

That's the side of his head. She nailed this guy to the ground. What a way to die.

He was a bad guy, and he was running from the battle. And he came to her tent and said, oh, help, would you please rescue me? And she gave him some milk and said, here, drink this and take a rest. You've been running a lot.

So he drank the milk, fell sound asleep. While he's asleep, she takes this big old tent nail, sneaks over there, puts it next to his temple, gets the hammer, and bam, pounded his head all the way to the ground. Nailed him.

Literally, right? Bible has quite a bit to say about nails. First, we're going to find this verse, if you would stand and read it. First Chronicles 22.3. First Chronicles 22.3. There we go.

First Chronicles 22.3. And David prepared iron in abundance for the nails. You know, I taught earth science for 15 years. I've done a lot of digging in the dirt looking for things, finding lots of fossils and things like that.

Nobody has ever gone out digging in the dirt and found a seam of iron, iron ore. And as they dig into the iron ore, they find out it's not really just all iron there. It's actually made in the nails.

Nails are never found, unless they've already been made by somebody else. But nature doesn't make any nails. Nails have to be prepared.

And one of the things you have to realize that if you're going to have, if God's going to use you in any way, he's going to have to prepare you. There'll be things you have to do. The nail, in order to become a nail, has to be found in the ground, has to be extracted, has to be melted down, has to be shaped, has to be formed, has to be hardened to be ready to be a nail.

And God's going to have to prepare you. Nails don't just happen. They are prepared.

Interesting thought to consider. You need to say, God, would you please prepare me? Someday, you're going to be the mom, or the dad, or the grandma, or the grandpa, or the boss. Are you getting prepared? You need to let God prepare you.

Philippians chapter 1 says, he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it. If you just let God work in you, he will do something great with your life. But you have to allow him to prepare you in some way.

First, we're going to find this verse, if you would stand and read it. Isaiah 41.7. Boys are ahead three to nothing. Isaiah 41.7. There we go.

Isaiah 41.7 says, he fastened it with nails. Why did he fasten it with nails? So it wouldn't move. That's why you nail anything down, so it doesn't move.

One important quality nails have, or should have, the carpenter decides where they go. And then their job is to not move. Just stay there.

Don't move. And God may put you someplace in life, whether you want to be there or not. I guess it doesn't matter.

God decides where you're going to go. And your job is, don't move. Stay there.

You might say, oh, it's uncomfortable here. I don't like it here. Oh, well, OK.

You stay where God puts you. He'll take care of that kind of stuff. First, we're going to find this verse, if you would stand and read it.

Boys are ahead, what, five to nothing now. No, three to one. Jeremiah 10, verse four.

Jeremiah chapter 10 and verse number four. They fasten it with nails and hammers that it move not. We'll call that one a tie, so it's four to two.

We're not prejudiced here. We're just always right. Fasten it with nails that it won't move.

Nails, number one, have to be prepared. And if God's going to use you in any way, he's got to prepare you. He's going to have to do some working on you.

Secondly, and same with me, secondly, nails are expected to do their job. Put them there and hope they stay. What would happen if all the nails in the room that are in this room right now quit? They just all decided, hey, let's get out here.

We're leaving. I'm quitting. Aren't you glad they're all doing their job? I bet there are some nails up in this ceiling right here that are probably under a lot of strain.

They've been under a lot of strain all their life, haven't they? Pressure's on them constantly. But they don't quit, do they? And you're probably going to go someplace in life where there's going to be pressure on you. You just, you don't quit.

That's where God wants me. Hey, OK, I'll just do it. First, I'm going to find this verse.

Fan and read it. Ecclesiastes, Ecclesiastes 12.11. Ecclesiastes 12.11. There we go. Four to three.

Girls are catching up. The words of the wise are as goads and as nails fastened by the master of assemblies. You know, the master decides where they go.

Suppose I'm a carpenter. I'm building a house. I reach in my apron.

I pick out a nail. I'm getting ready to smack it, and the nail says, no, no, I don't want to go here. Tough.

You're going to go where I tell you. Bam, right? You don't have a choice. I decide where you go.

And God, the master of assemblies, decides where you go. You just have to get it settled in your mind. I'm going to go where God tells me and stay where he puts me.

He's the master of assembly. So number three, the carpenter decides where the nails go. And if you get that attitude of God, I'll go anyplace.

I'll do what you say. Isaiah had that. Then Isaiah heard the voice of the Lord.

He said, here am I. Send me. I'll go. Man, if you as a young person or as an adult here can get that message, just God, what do you want me to do? I'll do it.

You send me, I'll go. Another thing about nails, they have to be driven by a blow to the head. Boy, a lot of us are like that, aren't we? God has to explain to us, OK, here's what I want.

Bam. You have to beat them on the head to put them in. They just don't go in easily.

I've been that way most of my life. I just don't get the message too quick. When God wants me to do something, he has to beat me on the head.

You know the word patience means to abide under, to stay under. Sometimes when you're hitting a nail, it'll flip out of the way. That can be dangerous, can't it? Somebody standing nearby, hit him with a nail.

Nails have to learn to stay under. It's probably not fun getting beat on the head over and over and over. Bam, bam, bam.

Probably not fun, I don't know. But the nail's job is to let me beat him on the head till he gets where I told him he's supposed to go. And your job is to let God do whatever is necessary to make something out of you.

First one to find this verse, if you would read it. New Testament, James chapter 1, verse 4. James 1, 4. Oh, now three boys got that at the same time, so that would make it 7 to 3. No, OK. That was good.

Very good. Let patience have her perfect work. Patience means to abide under.

Just, if you're under pressure, hang in there, all right? The nail's job, when I put it under pressure and beat on it, a nail has one job. Stay straight. And when God puts the pressure on you, or you feel under pressure, I just can't take anymore, just stay straight.

Let God do something with you. Little serrations at the top of the nail are very interesting. One thing I noticed as they're making the nails, just about every nail you ever find will have these little lines at the top.

They're called serrations. These are the grippers. If you pound a nail in, and it doesn't quite go all the way down, and the last time you about ready to hit it, it bends over, the grippers are not into the wood now.

Eventually, that nail's going to work its way back out, because those grippers hold it in the wood. In order to be any good as a nail, you have to be fully committed all the way in. Fully committed.

I remember as a kid, we had our bedroom down in the basement in Peoria, Illinois. I had two older brothers. And we were always horsing around, you know, pillow fights, and marshmallow fights, and rubber band fights, you name it.

All, you know, our brothers are. And Dad would say, OK, boys, time to go to bed. Yes, sir.

And we'd go to bed. And as soon as Dad's gone, you know, get up and continue the fight, whatever was going on. And Dad would hear the noise downstairs, and he would come walking across the kitchen floor.

But there was one spot on the kitchen floor that squeaked. As soon as he stepped on it, we'd hear it. OK, Dad's coming.

Hit the dirt. We'd lay there. Of course, Dad comes down.

We're all sound asleep, you know. You guys up down here? Oh, no, Dad. Oh, man, Dad, shut the light off.

We're sleeping. How many know what I'm talking about? Don't look at me so innocent. Now, you know what I'm talking about, OK? And that squeak in the floor was because one of those nails was not fully

committed.

Just took one. Underlayment nails are designed that way. They're designed, you put them in, and they stay.

You pound them in, they got the little serrations on there. They go all the way in, and they stay. They're designed to be walked on.

God may put you in a place sometime where you get walked on a lot. Maybe you're going to be involved in a ministry where everybody takes advantage of you. Everybody expects you to do all the work.

They make me do the dishes all the time. They get walked on all the time. Well, some nails are designed for that.

They're made to be walked on. And God may be preparing you for a job where you get walked on. Another kind of nail is called a common nail, actually.

And there's all sorts of sizes of these. These are called common nails. And they measure different sizes.

8D, common, 12D, 16D. This is an 80D. I don't know what the D stands for, but that's what it is.

80D, that's the size. It's a big nail. It's a common nail.

It is big diameter, and it has a big head. Now, big-headed nails are designed to hold the weight. They do most of the work.

They hold the structure together. But you never see them. Look around the room.

How many nails can you see? How many nails would you guess are in this room holding it together? Thousands? But you can't see them, can you? They're out of sight. See, a nail, one of his jobs is to do his job and stay out of sight. Some people, God can't use them in a place where they'll be seen because they have a big head.

They've just got that attitude. I don't want everybody to notice me. I want to get up and sing a special in front of the church.

Nothing wrong with singing specials. But you've all seen people that they have got that attitude, you know, I'm cool, nobody else is. And they've got a big head.

God's not going to put them in a place where they're going to be seen. He just, a good carpenter will do the job and when he's all done, you can't find the nails. When I worked at the cabinet shop, we built some real fancy cabinets, real expensive cabinets.

They used them in Gaifers and Saks Fifth Avenue. Our job was to put this cabinet together and when we got done, you couldn't find the nails. That's just the way a good cabinet's built.

You look at any fine furniture, you probably can't find how it was put together. Can't find the nails. And God is a good carpenter.

And he's building a work. And he's not looking for, he needs some folks with a big head to do some jobs, but they're probably not going to be in a place where they can be seen. Another type of nail is called a

finish nail.

Finish nails have a very small head. That's the last thing you use, it comes from the word finish. When you're going to finish the product, that's the last one you put in.

Finish nails, small head. Maybe God's preparing you for a job where you're going to be the last one to do the job and you don't need a big head. Going to put you someplace.

First one to find this verse, if you would stand and read it. Matthew chapter 6 and verse 1. Matthew 6, 1. Tie again. Okay, that's close now.

Boys are ahead 12 to 7. Matthew chapter 6 and verse number 1. Take heed that you do not your alms in order to be seen of men. Boy, a lot of people do things just so they can be seen, don't they? Wow, look at me. I'm giving \$500 in the offering.

Well, they get their reward, the Bible says. They did it to be seen of men. Okay, first one to find this verse.

Matthew 23, 5. Matthew 23, 5. The boys again. 17 to 4. You're catching up though, girls. All their works they do to be seen of men.

That's why they do them. Hey, why do you do what's right? See, God's going to test everyone's motives. Why did you do what you did? Not only did you do it, but why did you do it? Why do you read your Bible? So other people will see you.

It's not a good reason. Why do you pray? Why do you bring people to church? Why do you do the things that you do? Are you doing things to be seen of men? It's not a good motive. Interesting nail here.

Probably some of you have never seen one of these. This is a double-headed nail. How many have ever seen one of these before? It's got two heads on it.

About a third of you have. Two heads. Why on earth would you put two heads on a nail? This nail is designed for an interesting job.

You're going to pound it in. It's going to hold something for a while, and then you're going to pull it back out. It's designed to be removed.

Interesting. A lot of these, when they do concrete forming, you nail the stakes and the forms together. When you're all done, you want to take the boards off.

You don't want to leave the boards there on your concrete, so you have a double-headed nail. God may be preparing you for a job where you're going to do the job for a while, and then he's going to move you somewhere else. Sometimes it is God's will to move.

First one to find this verse, if you would stand and read it. 1 Kings 17.7. 1 Kings 17.7. Oh, two girls got that one at once. Come on, fellas.

1 Kings 17.7. And it came to pass after a while that the brook dried up because there had been no rain in the land, and the word of the Lord came unto him, saying, Arise, get thee to Zarephath, which belongeth to Zidon. And he got up and went to Zarephath. God told him to go one place.

He went there for a while, and God said, Okay, now it's time to move. Many churches have been ruined because I think a pastor stayed too long. I hear these preachers who say, Bless God, I'm here, and I'm here for a life.

I just don't hardly ever say that. People say, Berlehoven, what are you going to do when you grow up? I don't know if I even want to grow up. And I would never tell anybody, I'm going to be an evangelist the rest of my life.

I might decide to be a carpenter next week or a mechanic or just a bum. I don't know what God wants for the rest of my life. I'll be 48 in a couple days, and I'm willing to do anything.

I drove a church bus for 17 years, taught junior church, taught Sunday school for years and years and years. I've taught regular school. I'm willing to be a carpenter.

Doesn't matter. God, you want me to preach? Fine. You need to keep an attitude that, God, I'm willing to go wherever you want.

And some of you, God may put you someplace, and then after a while, he'll say, I'm going to move you someplace else. And I'm sure pulling the nail out kind of hurts the nail. And when you have to leave a place you love, I know it hurts.

I've done that several times, had to move on someplace else. But sometimes it's God's will for you to move. See, my transmission has four gears.

First gear is necessary to get the car moving. But you don't want to drive down the interstate at 65 or 70 miles an hour in first gear. This is not good.

That's why you have second gear and third gear and fourth gear. Also, you don't want to start off in fourth gear. That's not good.

Fourth gear doesn't have any power. It can't get it moving. It can take a car that's already moving and keep it going, but it can't get one started.

Not in fourth gear. And some people are first-gear Christians. God's prepared them to get in, start a church from scratch, get people saved, get a church going, and then they better clear out or they're going to destroy the church.

They better let a second-gear pastor take over. There are a few people that are automatics. They can shift gears.

As the church grows, they grow. Some people can handle starting a church and growing it to 10,000 people. Some people can't.

Some people are fourth gear. They could never start a church, but they can get one that's already going and keep it going. So you better check and see what kind you are and say, God, I don't want to overstay my welcome.

If you want me to be a double-headed nail, I'm willing to move. Psalms 30, the psalmist said, And in my prosperity, I said, I shall never be moved. I don't think you ought to get that attitude.

I shall never be moved? No, Lord, I'm willing to move. Okay? First we're going to find this verse and then read it. Isaiah 22, 23.

Isaiah 22, 23. Boys again. What does this show you, girls? Doesn't it show you something you've been hearing all your life, right? How many boys understand the importance of what we're showing here, right? Boys are actually smarter.

We know that, right? I'm just kidding, of course. He said, He shall fasten him as a nail in a sure place. And I think our job ought to be, God, wherever you put me, I'm going to stay until I'm sure you want me to move.

Fasten him in a sure place. Underlayment nails are interesting. When my wife and I were dating, she wasn't my wife then, when my girlfriend and I were dating, she later became my wife, my dad was building a house, and so we would go over and help build the house.

By the way, fellas, most of my dating life was work. I mean, we would go work together. I wanted to find out what kind of worker she was.

I see these guys, they want to go out and spend all kinds of money on the girls, date after date after date. They don't ever learn, you know, does she know how to work? Or girls never learn, does he know how to work? I see these girls come all the time, they say, oh, Brother Hovind, you should see my boyfriend, he's so handsome. I'll say, well, does he know how to work? Oh, I don't know about that, but wow, is he handsome.

Well, listen, honey, I don't want to burst your bubble, but he's going to be pot-bellied and bald-headed one of these days. You might want to get one that knows how to work, okay? Can he get up in the morning? No. Well, then you don't want him, okay? And so my wife and I did a lot of our dating life, we'd go work on my dad's house.

And my wife is a worker, still is today. One of the hardest-working women I've ever met in my life is my wife. She works long hours and loves it and gets a lot done.

So we would go build my dad's house. And here we are putting down underlayment nails. Now, they're pretty hard to dry.

Underlayment nails have these little rings all the way up the shaft. As you pound them in, they go in pretty hard, but then they do not come out very easily because they are really gripping into the wood. Instead of just grippers at the top, like most nails, they have grippers all the way down.

So we're putting in these underlayment nails. You put a layer of plywood down on your floor, and then you put a second layer of plywood on top. This is the way we did it on my dad's house, two layers of plywood cross-grained with tar paper in between.

The second layer has to be nailed every six inches, like a checkerboard pattern. Every six inches, there's a nail. And here we've got this massive house and thousands of these nails to dry.

So my brothers and I, we set them down. Bam! Bam! Bam! My wife comes along, you know, tap, tap, tap, tap, tap, tap, tap, tap. About 40 hits later, you know, the nail's finally halfway down.

We'd come along, whap, you know. Underlayment nails are designed to be walked on. You don't want them to squeak.

When you step on them, they just stay right there. And God might be preparing you for a job where you're going to get walked on. They don't squeak.

Just do the job. The Bible says in Philippians, do all things without murmurings and disputings. Philippians chapter 2. Another interesting type of nail.

Anybody know what this kind is right here? Ever seen one of those? It's a cut nail. This nail is extremely hard. This is a hardened nail.

This is designed for driving into concrete. You can pound these right into cement. We had, when I was building, we had a couple of Hilti guns.

It's an actual gun. You would put a nail in it and put a .22-caliber bullet behind it, like a bullet, and pull the trigger and bam! It blows it into the concrete. Shoots it in with a .22-caliber bullet.

Ever use a Hilti gun, brother? Bam! Shoots them right. It's amazing how well they will hold. You can shoot them into steel.

You can take a block of wood and hold it up on a steel beam and bam! Shoot it and nail a piece of wood to the steel beam with a Hilti gun. Unbelievable. These things are hard.

Now, in order to get hard, they have been through the fire. They not only make this nail like they do the rest of the nails in, they give it a special treatment. They coat it with carbon and bake it in the fire.

Probably wasn't fun for the nail while it was in the fire, but it came out hard. Maybe God's preparing you for a hard job. Maybe you're going to be a missionary someplace where they don't want to hear it.

I was just in Japan for about 10 days. People work over there. Japanese missionaries in Japan will have to preach for 20 years to get 10 people to come to church.

It's a hard place to build a church. Somebody needs to be hardened for a job like that. I don't know if I could do that or not.

Just stick by the stuff. I'll show you a verse on that one. Stand and read it when you find it.

Isaiah chapter 50, verse 7. Isaiah 50, verse 7. I have set my face like a flint. I'm just, I'm hard. That's what Isaiah said.

Set my face like a flint. First one to find this one. See, the girls got that one, didn't they? So that makes it 19 to 6. They're catching up.

All right, 2 Timothy 2, 3. 2 Timothy 2, 3. Girls again. All right, 19 to 5. Thou therefore endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. One of our jobs is to say, God, you put me in a hard spot, I'm staying right here.

I kind of feel that way sometimes. God puts me in a spot where I've got to go to universities and debate against the guys who believe in evolution. I have gotten to where I really enjoy it, brother.

I guess I'm hard or something, you know, but I have so much fun making fun of somebody who believes we came from a rock. I mean, it's just, I enjoy it. I probably shouldn't enjoy it, but I do.

The problem with hardened nails, they don't bend, but they snap. They just won't bend very well, but all of a sudden, they snap in half. There's advantages and disadvantages to every type of nail, and one of the advantages of a hardened nail, it'll go into a hard place.

The disadvantage is it's likely to snap on you. Just snap right off. And some people get prepared for hard places, and they snap easily.

Just have to watch that doesn't happen to you. A couple more here, and we'll quit. This nail has been galvanized.

They take a special coating, and they put it over the nail. When you build something that's going to be outside, you should use galvanized nails, because otherwise, what's going to happen to them? They're going to rust. If you built a nice deck around your patio out of all regular nails, it'll look beautiful for a couple years, and then it's going to fall apart, because all the nails are going to rust.

You better use galvanized. Now, galvanized cost more, but they're designed to handle the weather. It rains on them, it snows on them, they freeze, doesn't bother them.

They're just going to stay right there, do their job. God might be preparing you for a job where you're going to have to face the elements. They do cost more, but it's worth it.

Maybe God will prepare you for a job where you have to face some hostile conditions. First one to find this verse, if you would read it, please. And boys, please find it first.

I'll give you a hint, guys. It's in Joshua. Okay, Joshua 4.13. Joshua 4.13. That was a tie.

Ties always go to the guys, okay? So, I think you beat him on that one. Joshua 4.13 said, About 40,000 prepared for war. It's neat.

Nails just have to be prepared. You have to get them ready, coat them, do something. Very interesting nail I've got here.

Does anybody have a clue what this nail is used for? Big old plastic cap on it. Yes, sir? Roofing. This is used to hold down the tar paper.

When you first build the house, you put the plywood down and then you put a row of tar paper and then you put the shingles. But you don't want your tar paper to blow off. Roofing, or actually tar paper nails, are designed to gently hold in position.

If it just had a hard head on it, when the wind comes, it'll rip right off. The head is designed to be a little flexible. It'll give a little bit.

And sometimes, you're going to have to be in a position where you have to be a little flexible, have to have a little give, and have to be able to just gently do your job. Believe it or not, this is a gentle nail. And some people have to be in positions where you have to just be gentle.

You've got to do your job. Okay, stay there, but be gentle about it. And God may put you in a spot where you have to be like that.

A couple of quick observations here and we'll quit. If a carpenter runs out of nails, he's got to stop working. If God is preparing to do a work, God might have you plan for a job.

What do you do if you're pounding a nail in and it bends? Throw it away, right? Get another one. Wouldn't it be awful if God's preparing you for a job and you bend and he throws you away? Just better get another one. I don't want to be thrown away.

I want to be used of God someplace. Do you? Let God do something with you. Stay straight.

Let him beat on you. Let him do something with you. The nails have to stay where they're put.

A carpenter has to stop if he runs out of nails. Got to go get some more. One nail can fail and start a chain reaction that puts a strain on the other ones.

I remember we were building my dad's office building in Groveland, Illinois, the Hovind Realty building. And we framed up this one wall. We stood the wall up.

And it's getting late. We're going to quit for the night. So we put some braces down.

Had all these braces to hold this wall up and had it nailed into place. Next morning we showed up and one nail had failed to do its job and a brace fell off. Well, that put a strain on the next two braces and guess what? They failed.

And then the next ones failed and pretty soon the whole wall went crash, fell down into the parking lot. We had a pile of slivers that morning instead of a wall and had to start over. What if God's got a job for you and you fail? Might put a strain on somebody else.

Maybe you're just one child in the family with other brothers and sisters and you are putting a strain on the other ones because you're not doing your job right. I mean, it's bad enough if you want to be a failure, but if you want to make somebody else be a failure, oh, no, that's not good. You don't have a right to make somebody else be a failure.

And you've got a responsibility to your whole family. You can't fail. That'll make it harder on everybody else.

If you don't carry your share of the load, somebody else will have to do it. One last interesting thought here about nails. Did you know I have pounded in probably two or three thousand pounds of nails? I've built nine houses, done all sorts of construction work.

I have really pounded in a lot of nails. Half of the nails that I pick up, hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of thousands of nails, have the head on the wrong end. A couple of the blondes are looking at me, huh? I've got to turn them around before I can use them.

I want it to go that way. God might have to turn you around before He can use you. Last verse.

Stand and read it when you find it. Nehemiah. Nehemiah 6.3. Nehemiah 6.3. Very good.

He said, I'm doing a great work so that I cannot come down. Why should the work cease? Hey, you should be doing a great work. Do something for God.

Let God do something with you. Isaiah said, The Lord said to Isaiah, Whom shall I send? Isaiah said, I'll go. Send me.

You need to have that attitude. God, I'll go. You want me to do something, God? I'll go.

Please send me. All you get is a little bitty dash between two dates in this lifetime. Someday there's going to be a rock with your name on it.

A little dash in between. The date you were born and the date you died. That's all you get.

What are you doing with your dash? My recommendation would be you give the whole thing to Jesus. Give Him the whole thing. Say, Lord, here's my life.

You can have it. I remember after I led my first soul to Christ. I'd only been saved a couple of months.

I was 16. Led this fellow to the Lord. He left.

I got down on my knees by that chair. I said, Lord, I'm only 16 years old. I don't know what you want with my life.

I don't have a clue what you want me to do. But, Lord, I'd like to do this the rest of my life. I want to bring people to Jesus.

How about you? Are you bringing somebody to the Lord? If you're here and you're a Christian, you're already saved. What on earth are you doing for heaven's sake? You ought to find something to do. Something to do for God.

There is somebody that you know right now that needs some encouragement. You ought to write them a letter. You ought to make a phone call.

Encourage them. You ought to say, look, I'm standing for God. I'm doing what's right.

I won't fail. I don't want to put a strain on you, Mom or Dad. I want to do what's right.

I want to carry my share of the load. Let's pray. Heavenly Father, thank you for the way you made this world full of illustrations.

You told us to consider the ant, go to the lily. You told us to look at the things that you've made in nature. And Lord, thank you for nails.

What a simple way for us to think about how you prepare us and you place us where you want us. And you expect us to stay until you're ready to move us. Lord, help us to at least be as smart as a nail.

I pray for these folks listening right now that you'll speak to their hearts. Prepare them and use them in some way in your service. In Jesus' name, amen.

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/vMKDZ8cWpeg.mp4>

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