



BUILDING THROUGH OPPOSITION

Nehemiah | 10.26.25

Libin Abraham

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Libin Abraham 0:00

Well here eventually, we've been in the series for the last four weeks now, through the book of Nehemiah. And today we've come to the point where Nehemiah has arrived in Jerusalem. He has gathered a people together. He has inspired them with a vision to rebuild Jerusalem, especially the wall of Jerusalem, which had been in ruins for 141 years. That's a long time. By now, people had given up hope that their city that they loved could ever be rebuilt and they would have a chance to gather and worship God with one true God. It was hopeless until one person felt the heartbeat of God and embraced his vision for his people and for his city. But now that we're Nehemiah four, there is this incredible moment. But it's not an incredible moment as you're imagining. It is a moment of opposition and ridicule. Nehemiah and his people in chapter four face an onslaught of opposition, the kind of opposition that should have sent them back home packing, that should have stopped the rebuilding of a city they love. They should have called it quits, but instead, this moment of resistance became the fuel they needed to trust God more and to keep on building the city of Jerusalem. What should have stopped the mission of God actually encouraged and sharpened the mission. It gave them power to keep enduring through opposition. I know that in a room like this and online, there are many of you who face the onslaught of discouragement, maybe it's ridicule, maybe some form of opposition, maybe from people you don't know, or from people you love. And it's not because you walked away from God or are disobedient, it's because you have been obedient, and you walking faithfully with Jesus. You felt his burden, and you've joined him in his kingdom work, perhaps in the world or in your family, and you've given your life to build something that honors God, and as you're walking with Him, you feel ridicule, you feel mockery, you feel opposition. And if that's you, I just want to tell you you're in the good company of people all across scripture, including Jesus Himself, who was mocked and ridiculed and oppose for doing what was right and godly. It's often been the case of the church. In fact, I would say we should all be living our life and building our life in a way that invites the opposition of Satan himself. Because, as the surgeon once said it, it is a good thing to have Satan as your enemy, because that means you have God as your friend. Amen, it is a good thing to have Satan oppose you, because it means you have God as your friend. So today, if you're going through opposition, discouragement, some frustration, as you walk with God and you're on his journey, I believe Nehemiah four will encourage you. What we're going to do is look at the certain kind of attacks that Nehemiah faced, and how they responded, and how we should respond in the face of discouragement and even opposition. Here's the first attack Nehemiah and his people felt, public ridicule, mockery and verbal ridicule against God's work through their life. Look at verse one of Nehemiah four. When Sanballat heard that we were rebuilding the wall, he became furious, not just upset, but furious. Sanballat is the mayor or the governor of Samaria, which was the city right above Jerusalem, and the deal was, as long as Jerusalem laid in ruins, Sanballat gets to rule and reign over the people of Jerusalem, because they were not a city. They were not autonomous. So he was getting tax payments for the people of Jerusalem. So the reason he is furious is because if the city of Jerusalem gets rebuilt, he loses influence, he loses control, he loses money, so he is now furious. And so what does he do? He mocked the Jews before his colleagues and the powerful men of Samaria. He doesn't privately go to Nehemiah and say, Hey, I got a few questions. What's your plan? Do you think we can work out a deal? He publicly ridicules and mocks the people of God. It's like someone who may have something to say to you, they don't come to you. No no. They'll blast you on social media. They write articles about you for everybody else to see you're like, why couldn't we have just had a conversation? No, no, they took the route of public ridicule, and this is what sanballi does. He publicly ridicules the people of God, and He does it through a series of five questions. The first one is a question of identity. And he said, What are these pathetic Jews doing? Some of your translations may say, what are these feeble Jews doing? Me, the truth is, the Jews felt pathetic. They felt feeble. They've been in exile for decades. Their city has been in ruins for a long time, for over a century. But the enemy has a way of triggering your most deep insecurity, like Sam ballot. He says, Look, it's not just you were feeble

or you were pathetic. You are feeble and you are pathetic. He questions your identity and makes your previous condition your permanent reality. So you may say things like, you're never going to build that family because you didn't have it growing up. You're never going to be successful in that entrepreneur and adventure. You are, feeble and pathetic. He questions our identity. And then Sanballat asks a series of questions, not just questioning their identity, but questioning their ability. Can they restore it by themselves? Will they offer sacrifices? Will they ever finish it? Will they ever finish? Can they bring these burnt stones back to life from the mounds of rubble, one by one, through this public ridicule, he is sowing seeds of doubt and fear into the people of God. And then there's a second guy. There's always a wing man, there's always a second guy. And we got a guy named Tobiah. And here's what it says about Tobiah in verse three, then Tobiah the ammonite. Tobiah is also a leader in the Ammonite community who is also about to lose influence and power because of the rebuilding of Jerusalem. And isn't it funny, the people who are opposing Nehemiah are actually doing it out of the insecurity of losing influence and control. It's a weird triangulation out of their insecurity, they become angry to trigger fear in the people of God. Sometimes, when you have fear, you might actually be responding to somebody else's insecurity that's led them to anger and frustration. Okay, so Tobiah joins along. Now, what's interesting about Tobiah is, later on, we read he married into the family of a Jewish noble. So he's actually related to the Jewish people. So he's not just an ammonite, somebody on the outside, he's a part of this community. Tobiah represents not just opposition from strangers, but opposition from family members. Some of you have had those not just opposition from people who are distant and far from you, because that's easier to handle they don't know you, but it's much more difficult when it comes from your own friend circle. When it comes from friends, questions of doubt and insecurity arise from those closest to you. That's Tobiah, and notice his question. Tobiah, who was beside him, said, Indeed, even a fox, even if a fox climbed up what they are building, he would break down their stone wall. He said, a fox can't even bear up under the weight of the can't even stand on the wall you're building. What's amazing is ancient excavations have found that this wall that Nehemiah was building was nine feet thick. That's a pretty strong wall. A fox is not going to be able to knock it down, but Tobiah uses exaggeration. See, the wall is incomplete, but it's not weak. He's using a half truth to exaggerate a whole story. It's like someone says, You always do this. You never those two words you should never say in marriage, right? Tobiah employs exaggeration to make the people of God thinking man this wall would come down if a fox climbed on it. What's happening with Sanballat and Tobiah is psychological warfare. It's not physical. They're not throwing arms or knuckles. They're just verbally ridiculing, verbal attack, psychological in nature, using half truths to paint a false reality, using past experiences to draw out a permanent future, telling you, convincing you that what you see isn't here to last, what you're doing doesn't matter, sowing seeds of doubt all throughout the story. It's psychological warfare.

Libin Abraham 9:21

Now we know on this side of the New Testament that Nehemiah's enemies aren't actually Sanballat and Tobiah, the enemy to the people of God aren't actually even the people who heard us. There is only one enemy. His name is Satan, and he uses people to give voice to his agenda. He uses individuals to give voice to his plan. And it's important that we recognize the Sanballats and the Tobias in our life are not the actual enemy. There is one adversary named Satan. There is one slanderer. The word Satan literally means adversary. The word devil literally. Means slanderer and Revelation 12:10, describes Satan as the great accuser of our brothers and our sisters. That's who Satan is. He accuses he slanders because he's been defeated by Jesus. All he can do is spew lies. And it's important that we don't confuse Sanballat and Tobiah as the enemy, but that we realize what Paul said in Ephesians six, that our struggle is not against flesh and blood. Ephesians 6:12, our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against rulers, against the authorities, against cosmic powers of this darkness against evil spiritual forces in the heavens. That's where the battle is. The reason the enemy wanted to hinder the work of God in Nehemiah's day is not just because a wall was being built, but this is what happens at the end of the story, where once Jerusalem is restored. Worship happens in the temple. The words of God are read out aloud, causing people to turn from their sins and to turn to God. There is genuine repentance happening. They're offering sacrifices of worship and praise to God. Lives are being transformed, and that is what the enemy has always wanted to stop and hinder both then and now. So when you see the ridicule of people, don't take the battle to them. Identify the real enemy, the great accuser of the brethren, the brothers and sisters, who wants to see the work of God hindered then and now. Nehemiah hadn't read Ephesians six he existed one time ago, but he knew that the battle wasn't just horizontal with Sanballat and Tobias. How do I know that? Because of the way he responded. His response to this public ridicule was contending prayer. He prayed. Look at verse four and verse five. Listen our God. Not listen Sanballat or listen to Tobiah, who did he direct a prayer to our God. Listen our God, for we are despised. Make their insults return on their own heads. This is how you knew Nehemiah probably had a pass. Okay, make their insults return on their own heads and let them be taken as plunder to the land of captivity. Do not cover their guilt or let their sin be erased from your sight because they have angered the builders. He's got a little bit of

an edge on him. Yep. This is not a prayer we would pray in the New Covenant, because we know Jesus came to forgive the sins of all, even his own enemies. We pray for our enemies, not ask them to be taken into plunder. But what Nehemiah does one he's honest about how he feels, and that's a good thing, and he is pleading with God to remove those who would hinder the work of God. He is praying. He's asking God, God, would you bless our work and protect our work and remove the destruction, remove the opposition? He's asking for God's justice among his people. This is not a cute, cuddly, warm, fuzzy kind of prayer. This is not the now, I lay me down to sleep. I pray the Lord my soul to keep kind of prayer. Because when you face opposition and ridicule, you do the greatest warfare on your knees. This is the kind of prayer where you war in prayer, you contend in prayer, you travail in prayer. There is weeping and lamenting, knocking on the doors of heaven, asking God to intervene. Because, you know, if he doesn't do anything, there is no hope. It's that kind of travailing, fervent prayer that Nehemiah prays. I think it's instructive for us that Nehemiah doesn't waste his time speaking the sand ballad and Tobiah. Where does he go to God? Because I met a lot of Christians who spent a lot of their prayers speaking to the devil. You don't need to yes, you have authority. Yes, you have dominion. But if you can speak to God, why would you speak to the devil, if you have direct access to the King of kings, who has already defeated Satan at the at the Cross made him, as Paul said, a public spectacle. You don't need to go to the devil. You go to Jesus and you ask him to silence your accuser. You go to the great I Am to intervene on your behalf. You go to the God of armies who fights your battle. Satan is a lion that prowls, but he's a lion on a leash, and you have a greater lion called the Lion of Judah, who fights for you, who speaks for you. So don't go to the devil. Go to the King of kings, who has defeated the enemy. Amen. What we learned from Nehemiah is when he faced problem. So the first thing he did was what pray and often when we face problem. The first thing we do is post. The first thing we do is do a group chat and tell everybody about so and so. Form Alliance, Alliance of people to join us in our misery. But Nehemiah, I prayed and can I just tell you, it is more effective to have sore knees because of praying than to have sore thumbs because of posting. That's all you got from me today. That's all you need. Okay, it's better for you to get sore knees from going to God than sore thumbs from speaking about people online, from doing anything else, because that's where the greatest war is won, in your mind, in your heart, as you beseech the throne of grace and God goes to battle for you. So don't go to anybody else. Before you go to him, you run to the access you have, which is to approach the throne of grace boldly and confidently, this is what Nehemiah does. He goes straight to God. Listen our God contending. Prayer is the first response when you face the opposition of the real enemy. Second of all, the response is perseverance. He didn't just pray. He persevered. I love verse six, sambala and Tobiah are talking trash. He prays, and the next verse literally is so we rebuilt the wall as if nothing hindered. We just kept building. We didn't waste our time, but the negative naysayers, we just built the wall until the entire wall was joined together up to half its height for the people had the will to keep working. We've highlight that verse, The people had the will. They had the mind to keep on working. Sometimes in prayer, we want an outcome, but sometimes in prayer, God doesn't give you an outcome. He gives you grace to keep on working. Sometimes in prayer, it doesn't lead to a sudden miracle, but it leads to a heart that perseveres and endures. Nehemiah didn't wake up from his prayer or open his eyes after prayer, and boom, the wall is beautifully, magically built. The wall is just as broken, the rubble is just the same. But I think what happened through prayer was that the people had the mind to keep working. They had a heart to persevere in prayer. Prayer feels perseverance, and some of you are here, and you've turned away from God's call in your life, you've given up the work of justice or righteousness, the work to build, the work to lead, whether in your home or family, whether at the workplace, in your neighborhood, and perhaps just public ridicule and opposition and resistance. I just want to encourage you, keep praying and keep persevering, keep building unless God told you to stop building. Don't stop leadership is easy when things are going well, but leadership is most needed under pressure. It's most needed under resistance. And the paradox of the faith we often live through is that the very resistance we ask God to remove from us is a resistance he uses to grow us and to shape us and to strengthen us and to do His work through us when it makes no sense. So if you feel like quitting under opposition and under pressure and under ridicule, I just want to encourage you, keep going. Keep persevering. There's something worth building. So you pray and you persevere, you go to God and you keep building.

Libin Abraham 18:50

Here's a second attack that you see, not just public ridicule, but you see the enemies of God begin to stir up confusion among the people of God. Look at Verse seven, how confusion settles. When Sanballat and Tobiah and the Arabs and the Ammonites and the ashedites heard that the repair to the walls of Jerusalem were progressing and that the gaps were being closed, they became furious. They all plotted together to come and fight against Jerusalem and throw it into what Say it with me, confusion, confusion. So chapter four began with two people who are publicly ridiculing Nehemiah and the people of God, and just seven verses in two people have become four groups of people. That's not the way you should go. What's become two people kind of complain about you now has become a little bit of a situation, and an alliance has formed

around Jerusalem. If you were to put these four groups of people on the map, you have Sennacherib leading the Assyrians from the north coming down to Jerusalem. You have Tobiah leading the Ammonites from the east. You have the Arabs from the south coming against Jerusalem, and you have the Philistines from the west coming against Jerusalem. So literally, on a map, every side of Jerusalem is surrounded by people who want to fight against them. Did you know that when you battle in prayer? This is what you want to hear, but when you battle in prayer, sometimes it gets worse before it gets better. You're wondering, I thought my prayer was going to make things better, but sometimes the enemy intensifies his attack. And it's not because your prayers were not working, it's because they have been working, and you're still standing, you're still going forward, you're still progressing, and the enemy won't fight a descending army. He only fights a descending army. And if your faith is still going you're still marching forward, you're still carrying out the plan of God, the mission of God, you're still bringing the goodness of Jesus near and far. The enemy will intensify you. Don't let it discourage you. Let it encourage you. You ought to have a target on your back because you're part of the mission of God. So these four alliances form. What's funny is that these four countries hate each other, but they have a common enemy, the Jewish people, and so they now form an alliance to fight against them. But it's interesting, the Nehemiah says they formed this alliance to throw us into confusion. So the purpose of this alliance, this intimidation by these four armies, may have not been to completely destroy and wipe out Jerusalem, but just to get them confused, get them divided, get them fighting each other, get them to quit on their own, to throw them into confusion. And sometimes confusion is really subtle, causes you to fight each other. Satan knows he cannot destroy the church, so he tries to confuse and divide the church. He knows Jesus is building his church, but if he can cause our eyes to be off the target, he can cause the church to fight within itself, then he knows that the mission won't advance. So think about it like this, how much good could the global church in the world do if it was not divided by 45,000 denominations? What good could the church in America do if we were not divided by our politics? What a prophetic witness the church in America would be if Sunday morning. At 11 O'clock was no longer the most segregated hour in the country, telling you Satan's strategy is to confuse and divide, but Jesus' strategy is to unite and to build. And that's the kind of church he's building here, and that's the kind of church he longs to build in the world. One church fueled by one Spirit, one faith, one baptism, compelled by his love, amen. So don't give in to the scheme of the enemy to cause confusion and to divide. You. Yield your heart to the love of Jesus, the power of His Spirit to keep every wall of hostility torn down and destroyed because he's building his one church, compelled by his love with clarity of mission, confusion is settling in and notice the response from Nehemiah. I love this. His response is precaution. Confusion is coming against his people, so he takes precaution. Verse nine, so we prayed. Always pray. We prayed to our God and stationed a guard because of them, day and night. I think this is one of the most beautiful uses of the conjunction. And we prayed, say it with me, and we stationed our guard, we prayed and we took precaution. We prayed. And do you know that prayer and precaution aren't against each other? You can pray and still take precaution. That's why you pray at night and you still lock your doors, amen. That's a good thing, just because you prayed on me and you leave your doors wide open. Nehemiah prayed and he stayed, shined to guard. It's never prayer or action. It's always prayer and action, because it's in prayer that you get discernment of what the Lord wants to do, and then you act to act without prayer. It's pride and arrogance. We're operating in our own wisdom. We're doing what we feel is right. That's why you pray. But to pray without ever acting is actually not to trust that God can use you to make a difference, to bring about change. So you pray and you act some problems in your life. You need to both pray and you need. To act. There are some issues where you need to pray and seek counseling. There are some problems you're facing, you need to pray and set some boundaries in your life. There's some people, what's required is to pray for them and to block them at the same time. That's okay. You should do both, take guard and precaution. If you pray all day that God will give you health and you don't change your diet or your exercise patterns, it's probably not going to be all that effective. You pray and you take precaution. You pray and we act. We ask God for discernment, and we take the wise steps to protect and to build what God has called on us to do. Notice how they did both of these jumping down to verse 16. From that day on, half my men did the work while the other half held spears, shields, bows and armor. The officers supported all the people of Judah who were rebuilding the wall. The laborers who carried the loads, worked with one hand and held a weapon with the other. Each of the builders had the sword strapped around his waist while he was building, and the one who sounded the trumpet was beside me. Then I said to the nobles and the officials and the rest of the people, the work is enormous and spread out, and we are separated from one another along the wall. So whenever you hear the sound of the trumpet, rally to us there. Our God will fight for us. So we continue the work. So this is what they did. They prayed and they worked. Each person had a weapon to protect what they were building, and they had a tool, on the other hand, to build a tool and a weapon, and at the same time, they had the trumpet, maybe a chauffeur, where Nehemiah says, Look, when the work seems enormous, we're going to sound the alarm and we're all going to gather and we're going to build, trusting that God will fight for us. So they had this incredible faith in God, and they took all the necessary steps to build and to protect what they were building. Sometimes, when it comes to the work of God in the

world, we say this, it's all God, and none of me sounds spiritual, sounds humble, and that is true about salvation. When God saves us, it is all him, all grace, and none of our works. But when it comes to you and I joining the work of God in the world, the mission of God, what's a better statement than this is to say it's all God and it's all of me. It's all God and all of me, meaning it's all of me, surrender to all of him. God doesn't bypass me, to work through me. No, no. He uses me. He works through me. It's all of God, using and working through all of me. He uses my past, he uses my gifts. He uses my personality. He uses even my quirkiness. He uses all of it. He takes all that you are so that he can partner with humanity to accomplish his mission in the world. So take the wise steps. Take the precaution. Recognize it's all of God working through all of you. He won't bypass who you are. He uses who you are for his work in the world. So against

Libin Abraham 28:21

public ridicule, they contended in prayer, against confusion, they took precaution. There's a third thing, not necessarily an attack, but what was brewing. This was an external. This was internal. This was deep internal discouragement and fear, not coming from the outside, but coming from their own soul, coming within the camp. So notice verse 10 in Judah, which is Jerusalem in Judah in within the family. It was said the strength of the laborer fails. Since there is so much trouble, we saw that only the wall was only halfway built. And some historians say that the second half was much harder to build because you got to climb higher and reach higher. So they're looking around, and they're like, man, there's so much rubble still to be built. They're exhausted, mentally, physically, they're tired, and so labor, strength of the laborer fails. Since there's so much Rubble, we will never be able to rebuild the wall, and our enemies said they're hearing all the taunting of the enemy. They won't realize it until we're among them and can kill them and stop the work. And when the Jews, people who are supposed to be on their side, when the Jews who live nearby arrived, they said to us time and time again, over and over again, this is a soundtrack they're hearing. Everywhere you turn, they attack us. Everywhere you turn, they attack us. It began with external voices, but now it has become an internal soundtrack. Maybe Sam ballet was right. Maybe Tobiah was onto something. Don't you see all these armies approaching us, no matter where we. Turn because literally, in every direction, four corners, the enemy is there. Turn north, south, west, east. They're there. We can't get away from this. We're not going to finish. It's not worth building. They're feeling what some of you are feeling. Your strength is giving out. And you see so much trouble. You've been progressing, but now you see all the stuff that's still left to do, trying to fight that addiction, fight that issue, man, I'm just never going to get over this internal discouragement and fear. But the response of Nehemiah in the face of internal disarray is to gain perspective. It's a renewal of vision, a perspective, and notice how he does so in verse 13, as this internal soundtrack is happening with the people of God. So I stationed people behind the low sections of the wall at the vulnerable areas. It's good to identify your most vulnerable areas. I stationed them by families with their swords, spears and bows. After I made an inspection, let me just pause there. So the first thing Nehemiah does is he stations people by who their families, their loved ones. Says, Husbands gather with your wives, your sons and daughters, get to the most vulnerable places on the wall and assemble with your family. Because Nehemiah knew that the people of God will be more prone to fight and defend their families than to fight and defend strangers. So he said, it, y'all go to the most vulnerable sections of the wall and gather with your families, as if to say, remember who you're fighting for. Remember who you're fighting for when you want to quit and you want to walk away, look at the place, the people in your circle, the family stationed with you and find a motivation to fight for them. Remember what you're fighting for by remembering who you're fighting for. So if you feel like quitting, remember your kiddo, remember the people closest to you that are worth fighting for. If you feel like giving into temptation and throwing your family away, remember the ones you're fighting for. If you feel like giving up integrity or to give up purity or to give up a call in the goddamn your life, remember who you're fighting for. And when you remember who you're fighting for, you realize they're worth it. The legacy is worth it. Their lives are worth it. It's not just about me, it's also about them. So the first way Nehemiah shapes their vision, assembling them in their families, to remind them who they're fighting for. But to be honest, even that's not always strong enough. That's not enough, and Nehemiah knew that. So what does he do? He stood up and said to the nobles, the officials and the rest of the people, don't be afraid of them. Remember the great and awe inspiring Lord, and fight for your countrymen, your sons and your daughters and your wives and your homes, if remembering the people closest to you isn't enough, that's not enough. Sometimes remember then the Lord who is great and awe inspiring. As the four armies are coming, the people have fixed their eyes on them. Man, they seem great, they seem powerful. They seem mighty. And now Nehemiah is saying, the God who is on your side, remember him. He is greater. He is more inspiring. He has been the Lord of Armies who fights for you. So if you can't find motivation by looking around you, lift your eyes to him. Lift your heart to Him. Remember the great I Am who fights for you. And if you see the people closest to you and you remember that they're worth fighting for, and if you still need courage, then remember who's fighting for you. He is a God who stands strong when you don't feel strength, a great and mighty God who fights for you. So remember first who you're fighting for, but ultimately, remember who's fighting for you. And I think

courage and the tenacity to keep going is found in the cross section of both of those. Remember the ones that are worth fighting for, and remember the one who is worthy because he fights for you. So I don't know what you're facing today, friends, external opposition, internal discouragement, fear, public ridicule, and you may feel like just throwing in the towel and leaving the wall and. Leaving the work, but begin in prayer, seek the God who is fighting for you, find strength in him, and as you pray, how is he leading you to act? It's not prayer or action. It's both. Take the wise steps. Look around you, who is closest to you that are worth fighting for, and then look up who is fighting your battle for you. No one was ridiculed, opposed. More than Jesus. He came and those He came to save rejected him. Even his family members said he was crazy. He had Tobias too, people in his own family who said that man is crazy. He was denied by Peter three times, betrayed by Judas. His closest disciples publicly betrayed him. There he is in the Garden of Gethsemane with such heart pain, such emotional toil, suffering in a way that we can't even imagine, causing him to sweat drops of blood, all before the cross, and then he dies the most painful, gruesome death on a criminal's cross. He endured more ridicule, more opposition than we could ever imagine. But through it, death didn't defeat him. Jesus defeated death. Amen, he defeated death. And I'm saying that today because Jesus is not just your example in the face of opposition. He is your champion in the face of opposition, he is a risen King, a Lord who has conquered the grave. And if he is your champion, if he is your victorious king, the Lion of Judah roaring from within, then you don't have to quit in the face of opposition. You don't have to give in to the discouragement. You can keep going. But also says followers of Jesus can be expected, can be can be anticipating opposition, because we follow an opposed King, we're on the team of a crucified savior that instructs us on the kind of life we live through the midst of the discouragement and opposition and ridicule that comes because of our faith in Jesus, because of Christ, not anything else, but because of Jesus, we can endure because he fights our battle and he leads us to victory. Amen. Would you stand with me? I want to read as we close. I want to read the words of an African pastor who was opposed and threatened. He was told by the people of his tribe, if you don't recant Jesus, we will kill you. And they did. He was publicly martyred for his faith in Jesus. He was opposed, ridiculed and martyred. But the night before he was martyred,

Libin Abraham 38:00

he wrote the following words, which are now called the Fellowship of the Unashamed, words of a creed called The Fellowship of the Unashamed. I pray that his words would breathe Courage and boldness to you. Listen to how a martyr wrote the night before he was killed for his faith. Here's what he said, I'm part of the Fellowship of the Unashamed. I have Holy Spirit power. The die has been cast. I have stepped over the line. The decision has been made. I'm a disciple of his. I won't look back, let up, slow down, back away or be still. My past is redeemed. My present makes sense. My future is secure. I'm finished with low living sight, walking, small, planning, smooth knees, colorless. Dreams, tamed. Visions, worldly, talking, cheap, giving and dwarfed. Goals. I no longer need prominence, prosperity, position, promotions, applause or popularity. I don't have the right to be first, tops, recognized, praised, regarded or rewarded. I now live by faith. Lean on his presence, walked by his patience. Am lifted up by prayer and labor by His power. My pace is set. My gate is fast. My goal is heaven. My road is narrow, my way is rough. My Companions are few, but my guide is reliable and my mission is clear. I cannot be bought, compromised, detoured, lured away, turned back, deluded or delayed, I will not flinch in the face of sacrifice, hesitate in the presence of adversary, negotiate at the table of the enemy, ponder at the pool of popularity, or meander in the maze of mediocrity. I won't give up, shut up. Let up until I have stayed up, stored up. Prayed up, paid up and preached up for the cause of Christ. I'm a disciple of Jesus. I must go till he comes, give till I drop, preach till all have known and work till he stops me, and when he comes for his own he will have no problem recognizing me, because my banner will be clear, amen, amen. What a powerful testimony of a man who was opposed but stood So Father, send us out from this room full of courage and boldness because we're on the team of a crucified savior. But Jesus today is not just an example to follow. He is our champion. As long as you're fighting for us, we can stand firm, putting on the full armor of God, knowing that we don't just fight for victory. We fight from victory. And the end of the story is sure it's secure. You are building your church. All will know, every tribe, nation and creed will declare that Jesus is Lord until that day, strengthen your church, embolden your people, keep our mission clear, keep our unity secure in the love and blood of Jesus Christ. Holy Spirit. Do your work, causing us to pray and act. Keeping our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, Jesus our champion, go before us. We love you, we thank you, and all this in the matchless and mighty name of Jesus, we pray church, and this church sat together. Amen. Amen, come on. Can we give Jesus one more thanksgiving and praise? Amen.