

Post Sermon Guide 3.29.20 Nehemiah 6:1-19

Satan's Strategies

Our pastor's sermon today can be summed up with his closing words, "Stay the course!" Those words are good instruction for us today with so many dealing with worry, anxiety, and fear.

You could ask your group to share their struggles/fears.

In the story of Nehemiah, we are reminded of all the relentless ways Satan attacks. Chuck covered four strategies Satan used against Nehemiah in today's sermon, all based on fear, but we are also reminded how Nehemiah responded to those fear attacks.

In the beginning of his sermon Chuck shared these words: "It behooves God's people to pray earnestly, not only for those in civil authority, but also for those in places of spiritual authority. If Satan can defeat a Christian leader, he can cripple a whole ministry and discredit the cause of Christ. The enemy's main purpose was to generate fear in the heart of Nehemiah and his workers, knowing that fear destroys faith and paralyzes life."

You may remind your group these words from last week's sermon:

"To fear the Lord means to seek to glorify God in everything we do. It means listening to his Word, honoring it, and obeying it. **Oswald Chambers: 'The remarkable thing about fearing God is that when you fear God, you fear nothing else, whereas if you do not fear God, you fear everything else.'** Because Nehemiah's life was motivated by the fear of the Lord, he did not fear what the enemy might do. The fear of the Lord moved Nehemiah to be a faithful servant of the Lord."

You may have seen this already. Try substituting the name of your B Group leader, D Group leader, and those in spiritual authority every time you read the word pastor. We aren't meeting at the church campus, of course, and we aren't shaking hands, but it still is a good reminder to pray for those who spiritually lead.

"Your pastor has never pastored a church through a pandemic before.

When he opens, people are going to say he should have closed. When he closes, people are going to say he should have opened.

When he does not shake hands, people are going to say he needs faith. When he shakes hands, people are going to say he is foolish.

He's going to make some difficult decisions to protect the flock considering everything from your spiritual growth to legal liabilities that you aren't even thinking about.

Every pastor believes that they pastor the most amazing group of people.

Remember this:

No one wants things to go well at church as much as your pastor. Your pastor needs your prayers and support right now."

Here is Pastor Chuck's outline for Nehemiah 6:1-19:

Satan's Strategies

- I. **Compromise - Neh. 6:1-4**
- II. **Lie - Neh. 6:5-9 / John 8:44**
- III. **Threaten - Neh. 6:10-14**
- IV. **Determined Effort – Neh. 6:15-19 / Jeremiah 5:30-31**

Compromise - Neh. 6:1-4

Think on this statement Chuck made and answer the questions below it.

"If their offer was wrong the first time, it would be wrong the fourth time or the fiftieth time, and there was no reason for him to reconsider. Decisions based only on *opinions* might be reconsidered, but decisions based on *convictions* must stand unless those convictions are changed."

What decisions have you made against your convictions that you wish you could go back and change? Would you be willing to share with the group?

The other thought from these verses is beware of flattery. Nehemiah saw through their scheme. It feels good to be complimented, but maybe you could discuss how to praise God while complimenting each other, such as, "God sure has given you a beautiful voice."

Look at Proverbs 27:6 and discuss its meaning in light of discernment.

Lie - Neh. 6:5-9

Chuck gave three practical insights regarding how to deal with lies.

He said, "Gossip is news you have to hurry and tell somebody else before you find out it isn't true."

A good question to ask is does this reflect my actions and character?

He also said, "Don't believe everything you hear. There is never a second when the enemy isn't slandering God's people."

You may ask if anyone has a story to share that fortifies this point.

His last point was, "Don't worry about everything you hear. If you try to chase down and refute every slanderous statement you hear about yourself, you will never get anything done in the Lord's work. Only a few warrant a response. Leave the rest to your Father/Protector. "

You could ask if this course of action would help for those dealing with an issue like this presently.

Threaten - Neh. 6:10-14

Spend some time in answering these questions our pastor asked in his sermon.

1. Is there any valid excuse for disobeying God? Any?
2. So being threatened isn't reason to back off on what God expects of us?
3. How many of you have backed off because of some real or perceived threat in your life? I have two words of advice for you. Pray & Stay the Course!

You may also ask what verses come to mind concerning God's protection.

Determined Effort - Neh. 6:15-19

Chuck begins this strategy with, "One of the reasons we must be committed to stay the course is because Satan certainly will stay his course. In spite of the profound success of Nehemiah and his brothers, these guys just would not give up. It's truly admirable how one so knowledgeable of his hopeless future can remain so vigilant in his opposition to the Lord's children, but Satan does just that. He has to know he's defeated."

He added these questions worthy of our time to ponder and answer.

1. How could these Jews turn their backs on their own heritage, their own brothers and sisters, and their own God?
2. The bonds of human connection were stronger than the bonds of spiritual affection. Which bonds are stronger for you?
3. Do we ever permit human relationships to influence our decisions so much that we deliberately disobey the Word of God"?

Take a minute to read back over Jeremiah 5:30-31. Encourage each other to stay the course of following God and not the enemy, world, and our own opinions.