



City life: crowds of people, traffic congestion, asphalt and concrete, schools, government, culture, community . . . All of us know what it's like to live in a city. But did you know that God is in the process of building a city of his own right in the midst of our city? Although the story of the Bible starts in the garden (Gen. 1-2), it ends in a city (Rev. 21). And in between God invites us to join him in building his city right where we live. How do we do this? What does this look like? How do we deal with opposition? These are just some of the questions we are going to answer as we dig into the book of Nehemiah. I hope you are ready to let God use you to build his city in our city!

Discussion Questions: (Leaders please review each question and pick those that will be most beneficial for your group.)

1. Read Nehemiah 4. When it comes to building God's city, opposition is inevitable. Yet many Christ-followers think that since I'm following Jesus or since I'm serving Jesus, my life should be easy. Why can we expect opposition when we are living for Jesus Christ? If we never face opposition, what does that say about the quality/condition of our faith in Jesus Christ?
2. Like Nehemiah in order to persevere in the face of opposition, we must recognize the various forms of opposition we face. Looking at these 5 forms of opposition, how have you faced opposition for following/serving Jesus? Explain.
 - a. Anger from others, (vv.1 & 7)
 - b. Mockery/sarcasm, (vv.2-3)
 - c. Threats and intimidation, (vv.8, 11 &12)
 - d. Discouragement and exhaustion, (v.10)
 - e. Negativity, (v.12)
3. In order to persevere in the face of opposition, rather than look to ourselves or at the opposition, we must look to the Lord. When Nehemiah faced opposition to the Lord's work, he prayed and asked God to defend him against his adversaries (vv.4-5). Who is opposed to you obeying the Lord? Will you surrender them to the Lord and ask him to defend you instead of trying to defend yourself?
4. To prepare for enemy attacks, Nehemiah had them work with a sword in one hand and a trowel in the other. Then, since they were working in different locations, in the event of an attack, the trumpet would sound and everyone would come together and look to God to fight for them. Rather than go it alone, when you are under enemy attack how will you sound the trumpet and let others know so we can gather together and ask God to fight for us?
5. In Nehemiah 4:21-23 we see that in the face of opposition Nehemiah led by example. His incarnational leadership points us to the greatest servant leader ever – Jesus Christ. Read Hebrews 12:1-3. What form of opposition are you facing today as you obey Jesus? How will fixing your eyes on Jesus Christ as your leader and savior help you to persevere in the face of this opposition?