

Don't Back Down

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I. Introduction.

- A. Text: Nehemiah 4.
- B. Anything that can go wrong will go wrong.

II. In response to the insults of Nehemiah's enemies, he prays.

- A. We are to pray for our enemies, so it is difficult to square with the bad things Nehemiah prays against his enemies.
- B. The exception here is explained by the fact that Nehemiah is the governor of Judea, and he faces a different problem being commissioned by God. The first task of government is justice not mercy.

III. Nehemiah also responds with preparedness.

- A. We have to know where we are under attack and post a guard at that point.
- B. We have to look to our spiritual resources available—we are not alone, because God is with us and Jesus has risen from the dead.
- C. Christians must remember both the battle and the building.

IV. Nehemiah experiences trouble from within.

- A. Usury was wrong and the Jews knew it.
- B. Christians ought to be wary of taking advantage of other Christians.
- C. The most beautiful of Christian virtues is to give freely as one has received.

V. God has always promised that He will care for those who walk with Him—Nehemiah calls upon God in prayer to honor His promise.

VI. When we face enmity we should do so with careful preparation, perseverance and prayer. When we face discord and internal stress, let us do so with justice, confrontation and a good example.

Application questions:

1. How might one explain the Old Testament practice of praying against one's enemy in contrast to the New Testament practice of loving one's enemies as himself?

2. How does one prepare against the breaches of his own spiritual walls? Explain.

3. What breaches are you facing in your spiritual walls? What can you do today to repair those breaches?
