

Introduction: Why must I “Keep Pressing Ahead”?

Adversity is an uninvited, unwanted friend in the hands of an all-knowing God whose purpose is to wean us of our self-dependency and pride, usher us into deeper intimacy with Jesus, and redirect our paths to insure our greatest good and His greatest glory.

Review: Stop believing the lies about adversity

- It's _____. John 16:33, 2 Timothy 3:12
- It's _____. 1 Peter 4:12
- It's _____. Romans 5:1-5
- It's _____. 1 Peter 5:10
- It's _____. 2 Corinthians 4:16-18

My response:

“I can’t, He never said I could; He can, He always said He would.”

God’s promise for you:

*“For you have **need of endurance** so that when you have done the will of God, you may receive what was promised.”*

Hebrews 10:36

Our Model - Nehemiah

Chapter	4	5	6	7	8
Cause of Adversity	Obedience	Disobedience	Personal Attack	Circumstances	God's Discipline
N.T. Parallel	1 Peter 4:12-19	Galatians 6:7-8	Ephesians 6:10-12	Luke 13:1-5	Hebrews 12:5-11
Typical Response	Give up	Conform	Fear	Lose Heart	Ignore
Nehemiah's Response	Pray/Prepare	Confront	Fight	Look for Plan B	Submit
God's Deliverance	Enemies Thwarted	Repentance & Unity	Protection	A New Game-plan	Revival
Timeless Truth	"I can do all things through Christ who gives me strength." Philippians 4:13				
Motto	"I can't, He never said I could; He can, He always said He would."				

Lessons from Nehemiah Chapter 4 – “Facing Discouragement”

1. God ordained steps of faith are almost always followed by significant _____ and adversity. Nehemiah 4:1-3

Attack #1: Nehemiah 4:2-3

Words that cause us to question our _____, our work, and our probability of _____.

➤ **Nehemiah's Response: Our example** Nehemiah 4:4-6

- He _____!
- He _____!

2. The most formidable enemy every Christ-follower faces in fulfilling God's will for their lives is _____. Nehemiah 4:7-12

Attack #2: 4 causes of discouragement

1. Loss of _____.
2. Loss of _____.
3. Loss of _____.
4. Loss of _____.

➤ **Nehemiah's response – our example**

Nehemiah 4:13-23

Four resources to overcome discouragement:

1. Be _____ James 2:17
2. Remember _____ is for _____ Luke 1:37
3. Fight! _____! _____! 2 Timothy 4:7-8
4. Never fight _____! Hebrews 3:13

"In a mysterious way, our troubles allow us to discover and develop reservoirs of strength and perseverance that most of us don't realize we have. When we lean on the Lord, He actually uses our struggles to expand our ability to deal with them. It's a process that leads us to greater hope and a deeper faith."

Getting Back Up When Life Knocks You Down
by Jeremy Kingsley

“Every great work, every big accomplishment, has been brought into manifestation through holding to the vision, and often just before the big achievement, comes apparent failure and discouragement.

- Florence Scovel Shinn

“The Christian life is not a constant high. I have my moments of deep discouragement. I have to go to God in prayer with tears in my eyes, and say, ‘O God, forgive me,’ or ‘Help me.’”

- Billy Graham

“Permanence, perseverance and persistence in spite of all obstacles, discouragements, and impossibilities: It is this, that in all things distinguishes the strong soul from the weak”

- Thomas Carlyle

Application / Discussion Questions:

1. “God’s work is always carried out in a hostile environment.” How does remembering this phrase encourage you?
2. In what ways are you experiencing discouragement with regard to living out God’s agenda in your life and relationships?
3. Which of Nehemiah’s examples of facing discouragement were most helpful to you? Why?
4. What specific application do you need to use to deal with the discouragement you may be facing in your life? Who could help you?