

Introduction: When external opposition fails to thwart God’s work, you can almost predict an “attack from within.”

- It happened to Christ
- It happened to the apostles
- It will happen to us

***STRIFE—** ⁽¹⁾ Angry or bitter disagreement over fundamental issues; ⁽²⁾ vigorous or bitter conflict, discord, quarrels, struggle, competition or rivalry.

Lessons from Nehemiah 5

Internal strife occurs...

... when the “me” principle overrides the “us” principle.

Nehemiah 5:1-5

- The problem: _____

- The opportunist: _____
- The negative impact: _____

Nehemiah shows us how to deal with strife.

Nehemiah 5:6-13

➤ His emotional response – _____

Ephesians 4:26

➤ His appropriate action – _____

Matthew 18:15-17

➤ His follow-through – _____

1Timothy 5:19

Resolving internal conflicts takes more than “know how” and skill.

Nehemiah 5:14-19

Why was Nehemiah so effective?

- _____ - he walked his talk.
- _____ - he cared enough to confront.
- _____ - the people mattered to him.
- _____ - he feared God.

Summary:

The leverage of your _____, is what gives weight to your _____.

Why unity matters so much!

²⁰"My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in Me through their message, ²¹that all of them may be one, Father, just as You are in Me and I am in You. May they also be in Us so that the world may believe that You have sent Me."

John 17:20-21
Jesus' last recorded prayer on Earth

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."				

Application / Discussion Questions:

1. Why do you think internal strife is so devastating in a family, church, or work place?
2. What is at the root of most internal strife?
3. What specifically did you learn about how to deal with internal strife?
4. Which aspect of Nehemiah's example is most difficult for you to follow? Why?
5. Is there a situation where God wants you to be a "change agent" where internal strife is occurring? What might that look like? Who can help you confront this situation wisely? When will you do it?