Having Victory in the Christian Life

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[0:00] Take your Bibles, if you would, and turn to Nehemiah chapter 4. This book of Nehemiah is so interesting because it has such a strong parallel with what's going on in our world today.

The city of Jerusalem is the center of God's work on the planet. It is, it has been, it was at one time, like the center of the world.

Everybody looked at Jerusalem. They looked at David, the great king. They looked at Solomon and all the wisdom and all the things that were going on in Jerusalem. But somewhere along the way, God's people decided not to honor God.

And this place where wise people from all over the world migrated just to hear about our great God was no longer that place. All of a sudden, the place of God was being mocked.

Its walls had been broken down, the temple had been destroyed, everything about the city had been overcome by the enemy. And then along comes a guy named Nehemiah who says, I want to build that again.

And Ezra and Nehemiah go back to the city to build the temple and to build the wall and to get the work of God going again. And Nehemiah so desperately wants people to love his God.

He so desperately wants God to be magnified. There was a time in our history when the church of Jesus Christ had big position.

And people knew, buddy, those are the people that love God. Those are the people that do right. Those are the people that affect the community. And folks were very, you know, the church, the pastor.

There was a time when a pastor walked in a room and it meant something that he was a pastor. But we let the enemy beat us up too. We let our walls be torn down.

We let our big ministry be destroyed. And so now we have popular Christianity, but not Bible Christianity. We've lost what we had. Today, when you're introducing yourself, about the last thing you want to say is, yeah, I'm a pastor.

You know, you just say, I work at a church. You don't even want to say that. You don't want to use the word church anymore. It's been defeated. It's been defeated. It's been beaten up. Today, when the world thinks about the church, it's ignored.

We don't care about the church. Things go on without the church. The only time they pay attention to us is when we do something stupid again and get everybody to laugh at us. And they get to make fun.

They want to know why in the world, if churches are supposed to be so special, are there so many scandals in churches? If God is so powerful and so good, then why do your churches look and act like they do?

Why do your people sin so much? Why is there so much wickedness? In the book of Samuel, they lost the ark. In 1 Samuel 4, 21, it says, she named the child Ichabod, and that meant the glory is departed.

And the idea was that Israel, who had once been great, was now defeated, and the glory was gone. But as a church, we ought to want to bring glory to Jesus. Amen?

[3:06] We ought to want our community and the people around us to know how great he is. And in this passage of Scripture that we're looking at, Nehemiah is like, God, please let us build the wall back.

God, please let us turn the mocking the other way. God, please let us get our reputation back. God, please do a work. And so they get the wall built.

It will be built. And Jerusalem won't get that same glory back. But for a moment, under Nehemiah, they're headed towards victory.

Don't you want victory? How many of you want victory? Say amen. Wouldn't it be good if God's name was not mocked and laughed at? Wouldn't it be good that, you know, we had a, our vice president was mocked because he honored marriage.

And he had morals. And he said, I don't need out with other people's wives. I don't need out with other women. And he was mocked. Right on the tail of that, the Me Too movement started. But they didn't name him.

[4:07] They might be doing everybody else, but they're not messing with him. And we want victory. Here's some things in this chapter we're going to look at that we ought to put into effect in our life. I want to live a victorious Christian life.

I want to see our church strong. I want to see God glorified. So I want to read Nehemiah chapter 4 verse 6 for you to get started. And then we're going to have a word of prayer. And I'll give you four or five things that you can write down.

Nehemiah 4 verse 6 says, So built we the wall. And all the wall was joined together to the half thereof. For the people had a mind to work.

Father God, I ask you to give Vision Baptist Church victory. God, I ask you to give the members of Vision Baptist Church victory. I pray God that you would let us live a life that defeats sin and gives honor and glory to your name.

I pray to God that you would let us live in such a way that our children and grandchildren would know that there is something to this Jesus thing. I pray God that you would let us live in such a way that our neighbors would say, serving Jesus and honoring Jesus is obviously there's something to that.

[5:17] Look at what's happened in that life. I pray God that you would help us as a church to live and serve in such a way that people driving by would say, that's a light on a hill. That's a beacon that that church is honoring God.

And God, I pray today that you would take this passage of Scripture and apply it to our lives. And I'll give you great praise for it all. In Jesus' name, amen. First thing you can write down somewhere is they were determined to work.

They were determined to work. Look at Nehemiah chapter 4 and verse 6. The Bible says, So built we the wall. And the wall was joined together into the half-throw, for the people had a mind to work.

So the way they're going to get victory here is they're building a wall. He knew exactly who he was. He knew exactly what his job was. He knew exactly what he was there for.

And he's got to get a wall built around the city of Jerusalem. And he has to get all these people together and get them all motivated that they would understand what their purpose is. And they get to work with it. And the first thing that happens is, he states in chapter 4 and verse 6, Ben, the wall was joined together.

We're halfway done. We're well on our way. God is doing a great work. But the reason was the people had a mind to work. Would you underline that in your Bible?

You, the regular church people, you, the people that are going to help build the wall, along with Nehemiah, they had a mind to work, and they got the job done. Here's what it says about them.

In Nehemiah chapter 3 and verse 2, they worked side by side. Everybody got in. Everybody's doing a different job. But we went through Nehemiah chapter 3 a little bit. We saw some of that.

And so this family's working next to this family, and these people are working next to these people. And there's two and a half miles of fence. And all around that place, everybody's working side by side.

They're not all doing the same job. They're not all the same people. They're not all even working the same way. But they decided that we would stand shoulder to shoulder and get the job done God's called us to do.

[7:17] The second thing we see is that just because they, just because they were working together, they had a mind to work, doesn't mean everybody was. Look at chapter 3 and verse 5. And next unto them the Tochoites repaired.

But their nobles put not their necks to the work of the Lord. Now here's an interesting thing. Sometimes when we read this verse, it says they had a mind to work. We're like, man, that's great. For once, everybody was working.

And he goes, nope, they weren't. They weren't. You know, that's probably one of the most discouraging things. You're like, well, they're not working. Should I have to work? But we just got to make up our mind.

I got to do what God wants me to do. There were some rich people in the community. There were some nobles, some big shots. They were politicians maybe. They had a position and they didn't want to work.

That was no excuse. The people still had a mind to work. Amen? The majority of the people said, we're going to get in and we're going to do our job. Some of them were working closer to home and others were working farther away.

[8:18] Because some of us may end up being missionaries and some of us may stop close to home. But in Nehemiah chapter 3 and verse 10, he worked over against his house. That's the first place I ought to be working on.

If we really want a church to be strong, we got to have strong families. Amen? Before you ever come and minister to anybody else at the church, you need to minister in your home.

You need to make sure you're sharing the gospel. You need to make sure your family knows Jesus. You need to make sure you're living at home what you're teaching and preaching at home. Nehemiah chapter 3 and verse 20.

This is one of my favorite verses in that chapter. Some people work harder than others. There's always that guy. There's always that guy. Look at Nehemiah chapter 3 and verse 20. And after him, Baruch, the son of Zabi, or however you say that guy's name, earnestly repaired.

Well, I checked that out. I looked up those words. I was like, earnestly? Man, what in the world? Everybody's working. But there's one guy over here, for every time anybody else hits one liquid hammer, that guy's giving two.

[9:20] Every time somebody shovels one shovel load, this guy is busting it really hard. He is hard at it. I want to be that guy. I want to get up.

I want to read my Bible. I want to pray. I want to share the gospel. I want to do something for Jesus. I want my life to count. Why don't you put a circle around that earnestly? Why don't you put a circle around that earnestly repaired?

Put a star to the side. Write a little note to yourself and say, I want that to be me. When they looked around, when Nehemiah's going around, he's going, man, y'all are working hard. Man, y'all are working hard. Whoa, cool off, buddy.

You are really busting it. You're working harder than everybody. This guy is going crazy. Here's an interesting thing on the run through here. The Tekoites, they don't live there.

Those other people work close to home. The Tekoites have traveled to work. By the way, they're working all over the place. All the work they were doing had dignity. I think that is probably one of my favorite things.

[10:20] Look at chapter 3 and verse 14. You know, sometimes you're like, well, I just sing in the choir, or I just clean the bathrooms, or I just work in the nursery. And what I do for God is not really important.

But in the Holy Scriptures, he wrote down, they repaired the dung gate. They repaired the dung gate. And I've told you all the story about when I was learning Spanish, and the guy was there.

And I was outside. He was a landlord. He's the guy that was going to end up teaching me. And there was water pipes, or some kind of pipes coming out of, out of, you know, under the ground. And he was digging around working there.

And I wanted to show off the one word I'd learned, which was water. And so I said, I looked at him, I said, agua, agua. And he goes, no, no, no, no. I said, agua, agua. He said, no, no, no, no. I can't talk to him at all.

And I looked at him, because I figured I wasn't saying agua right. But the point was, it wasn't agua. It was desagua, which is sewage. And he goes, no, no, no, no, no. I said, oh, that ain't agua.

[11:23] Well, this guy's working at the dung gate. That's the gate. That's not the gate.

And it's probably a stinky gate. And just outside that gate is where all the garbage in the city is. And the worm doesn't die. And the fire is not quenched.

But they're working there. And they built it. And they repaired it. And God gave it the dignity of writing it in the scripture. And I don't know who you are or what you do at our church.

Because I don't know who's in your heart, the Holy Spirit's really touching right now. But you're like, you're like, man, all I do around here is clean up. All I do around here is knock on doors. All I do is this or that. And the God of the Bible would be saying, hey, as long as you're in the ministry, as long as you're doing your job, I need to write you down.

You're getting the job done. Even if it's around at the dung gate. I'd like to ask you this morning, how's your work going? Did you know when you come in this church, you ought to come in here with an attitude of, I'm here to serve.

[12:23] Look in your Bible at Hebrews 10, 24. Here we go, the New Testament. I just want you to see some of our work. So when you came in this morning, somebody taught you a Sunday school class. Somebody gave you a welcome at the door.

Maybe they don't realize how important that welcome is at the door. But somebody gave you a welcome at the door. Somebody even washed the glasses, washed the windows out there. So when you walked up to the building today, you didn't see all the fingerprints from all the kids.

It'll get on there between now and then the service, or now and the next service. Because they could clean them. And two seconds later, 900 kids. I know there ain't that many here, but they act like it. And they can mess it up.

And somebody cleaned that up. And so when you come to church, you know, look at what it says in Hebrews 10, 24. Would you read this with me? And let us consider one another. Could I just ask you, when you, you know, we got to need a mind to work.

We're already bearing a reproach. I'm reading the life story of George Whitfield right now. It was a great, a preacher in, three or 400 years ago.

[13:24] And he's a member at this time in his life. He's a member of the Holy Club. And the Holy Club is a spiritual group of people in a college that are trying to really live right. They're all studying the Bible, but this group decides they really want to read the Bible.

And they're despised. And nobody likes them. The professors don't like them. The students don't like them. The community doesn't like them. The church hierarchy doesn't like them. They're despised. Well, that's kind of where we live now, isn't it?

I mean, just to be blunt honest, you went to work this past week. Well, you didn't work much this past week, but you're fixing to tomorrow. You're going to go back to work. And when you, you go back to work, just being a Christian, they don't like you very much.

And they kind of mock you. And they kind of, they kind of don't treat you like you feel like you ought to be treated. But you read this verse here. You came in this morning. Here's one of your jobs. You ought to be thinking about each other. Underline the word consider there.

So you ought to walk in, you ought to walk in this morning. In fact, in just a minute, when we start shaking hands and milling around, you need to be looking around saying, I know you, I know you're serving Jesus. I know you're living for him.

[14:23] And I know the world thinks we're idiots. And I know they mock you because you tithe. And I know they mock you because you don't get drunk and don't run to the same excesses that they do. I know they mock you. I just want to think on you a little second.

I want to give you a little love. Then look at the word. It says, consider them. And it says, provoke them, provoke them, motivate them, right? The word motivate them, motivate them to love and good works. Because the truth is, when you, when you live, when you live a Christian life, and when you're trying to serve God, one person called, you're like a leaky vessel.

It's just like, you're always giving and you're always giving. So you need to be retanked up. And when you came in today, I ought to encourage you. And you ought to encourage each other. And the Sunday school teacher ought to encourage you. We ought to be saying, man, let's go do something for Jesus today.

Let's go do something for Jesus this week. It may be discouraging and people may have an attitude, but we're going to motivate each other to love and the good works. And in chapter 12, verse 25, he said, and exhort them, challenge them, motivate them, give them a desire.

That's what y'all ought to be doing with each other this morning. How's your work going? How hard are you working for Jesus? I think when I was young, I kept wanting this instantaneous success.

[15:33] I just wanted God to do something. And I go, Zambui, he did it. I have victory over sin. I, and everything in my life is working right. And I'm on the top of the mountain. You know, you live long if you figure out it don't work that way.

Fact is you get up and you're so excited. You can get, you can go to revival meeting. You can go to the altar and get your life right with God, but it doesn't take, you can't hardly get to the front door of the church before you're already having trouble.

So let's motivate and love and work together. Now go with me if you would to Nehemiah chapter four and verse nine. Second thing they did, they were, they were working and now they're worshiping.

In Nehemiah chapter four and verse nine, nevertheless, we made our prayer unto our God and set a watch against him day and night because of them. You know, the whole book of Nehemiah and the, what has to happen in our churches and our families and our lives is everything revolves around this.

We need God and it's all about God. It's all for God. It's all through God. It's all by God. And they're busting it. Nehemiah chapter three is the story of workers, workers, everybody, two and a half miles of them all lined up every day walking.

[16:44] Effect is they end up having two shifts. They'll work. And then some of them will leave. And some others will come there. They got a sword and they got a trial and they're all working. They're working so hard. They go to bed at night and they don't even take their clothes off except they get dirty enough to need to wash.

They're busting it. But they, it's not about what you're doing. It's about who you're worshiping. We made our prayer to God. If you would just note this, maybe if you got your Bible open there, Nehemiah has been a praying man ever since we started this book of the Bible.

In Nehemiah chapter one in verse four, he sat down and wept and mourned and fasted. And he prayed to the God of heaven. In Nehemiah chapter one in verse five, he prayed knowing God was big and worthy to be worshiped.

Nehemiah one five, he said, I beseech thee, O Lord God of heaven, the great and terrible God. Now, when he uses the word terrible there, that's not the terrible you use in 2018.

You're like, that, that, that turkey was terrible. Well, I mean, we would all be like, well, I don't want any of it. But when this word here is like, he is all powerful. He causes shock and all.

[17:54] He makes you fall on your face because he is so big and so powerful and so mighty. He's not some little idol. You sit on a table and you walk in and dust him off because a little bit of dust is there. Whereas one, one, one Mexican guy said, he said, we have to wipe the poop off of our idols because of, off of our idols when we didn't know God, because they couldn't even clean themselves off.

He's not that he's big. He is mighty. He is awesome. He is powerful. He said, I pray to the great God, the wonderful God, the powerful God, not a God who needs you to set him up and set him down and move him around.

He's a great and terrible God. When he prayed, he prayed for the forgiveness of God in Nehemiah chapter one and verse six, when he was talking to the king and the king, he said, why are you so sad?

You remember what Nehemiah did? Nehemiah didn't go, I got this. He goes, hold it a second, father, I need help. And then he asked the king. That's what the Bible says in Nehemiah chapter two and verse four.

And all through the book of Nehemiah, you know what Nehemiah knows? He knows he's doing God's work. He knows it's not him. They're busting it. Don't get me wrong. You can't really do this unless you work and, and, and suffer and pay a price.

[19:02] But all the time you're working, you know, it's God who's going to do it. We're going to build the church. That's our work, but it's not our work. It's his work. Jesus said, I will build my church.

Our job, go out and try to get people saved. So we're in the church building business. Yeah, we are, but we ain't. Cause it's really him. They're in the wall building business, but Nehemiah is like, Oh yeah, I'm in the wall building business, but it's his hand on me.

Look, if you would, at Nehemiah chapter two and verse eight, the king granted me according to the good hand of my God. When, when he goes out and says, Hey, the king is helping us. He didn't say, cause I'm charming.

Cause I do a good job. Cause I'm smart. Cause I know stuff. He said, King's going to help us with this. Cause God's with us. Nehemiah chapter, Nehemiah chapter two and verse 18. Again, he says, it's a good hand of God.

In Nehemiah chapter two and verse 12, everything about it. He says, it's God who did it. Look at Nehemiah 2 12. I rose tonight and some few men, neither told I any man what God had put in my heart.

[20:03] And Nehemiah was like, I didn't even have a mind to build this wall. He did. He did. He did. And you and I don't have in mind to see people saved. It's not us. It has that. It's God that has that. It's not us.

It wants to see a Sunday school grow. It's God. It wants to see a Sunday school grow. So it starts with our working and it continues with our worship, but we can never forget to watch.

Look, if you would, at Nehemiah chapter four and verse nine, Nehemiah chapter four and verse nine. Nevertheless, we made our prayer under our God and set a watch.

You need to underline it. Set a watch against him day and night because of them. You understand if we're in a ministry, you can never, ever relax.

And if God's doing great stuff in your ministry, you can never, ever relax. You say, my family is living for Jesus and my kids are doing right.

[21:00] And my wife's doing right. And my marriage is in good shape. Then you are a target. And the devil's out to get you. And the last thing you want to do is just relax and sit back and say, it matters not.

If I pray, it matters not. If I get right with God, you need to watch. You need to watch. What'd he tell them? He said, he told the disciples in Mark chapter 13 and verse 33, take heed, watch and pray.

I think very few families that have gone through big sin and failure and things falling apart. I think very few of them ever would have dreamed it could have happened to them. I think we hear about some family and a good family and there's a suicide in the family.

And then, and you're, you know, in your heart, they never thought that would happen. They never expected that to happen. They never thought their kid would be a drunk. They never thought, but what happens is somewhere along the way, you forget what he said.

Watch, keep your eyes open. Christians will say, well, I, you know, I would never do that. Really? The Bible says in first Corinthians 10, 12, wherefore, let him that thinks he stand, take heed.

[22:16] Lest he fall. Watch, watch. We're in a war with an invisible enemy. Evil enemy. And he hates you. He doesn't really hate you.

You're just an object in his way. He hates our God. And you know how to hurt our God? Hurt his people. Get his people to quit loving him and worshiping him.

And I don't have the time to go through it, but man, I wanted to go through Ephesians six with you again. Put on your armor. You're in a war. You're in a fight. You've got to stand. Listen, listen, when do you get to take the armor off?

It's mentioned in Ephesians six. When you get to remove the helmet of salvation, the breastplate of righteousness. When you get to take it off, you don't. You get to take it off when you die. We wear that armor because we are in a battle.

Because, hey, Satan wants to cause you to commit adultery. Satan wants to cause you to be a drunkard. Satan wants to cause you to be lifted up in pride. Satan wants to do everything he can so he can mock your God.

[23:21] Satan. We're in a war. We're in a war. Put on the whole armor. Stand strong in the Lord Jesus Christ. Don't you want victory?

Do you want victory? Then we work. We work. There is no way in the world that things get done without us just working. I appreciate the way you work. I love this church.

I brag on you all the time. I preach a couple of places sometimes outside of here. I brag on you all the time. You're here early. You don't go home. You come back early. You come to all the services. You're inviting people.

That's what it takes. We can never stop that. We got to work. But we can't just work. We got to worship. We have got to know it's all about him. This isn't about vision.

Vision is just a tag we put on how and where we worship him. It's just a tag we put on it. It's not about me. It's not about the deacons. It's not about you. It's not about. It's all about Jesus.

[24:21] So we pray. So we pray. So we worship. So when those songs are sang, we sing from our heart. And then we watch. We don't ever.

We don't ever think we made it. We don't ever think we have victory. We don't have victory until we get to heaven. I mean, I don't care.

If you just knock down one enemy, another one's on his way. And you get to relax when you get to heaven. The last thing is we need to wait. But Nehemiah chapter 4 verse 20, in what place are you hear the sound of the trumpet?

Resort you thither unto us and our God shall fight. We're to be waiting for the sound of that trumpet. We're to be waiting for the next announcement. We're to be waiting for the next job to do.

So here they were around the wall. And the wall was like two and a half miles around. So they don't have that many people and there are soldiers everywhere. There are people that hate them everywhere. There are people attacking them everywhere.

[25:26] And so they've all got to be ready to say, I'll do my work. I'll worship my God and I'll be on the lookout for the enemy. But I got to be ready to hear somebody over that side of the city give a call because I'm going to have to drop and run over there to fight and to help them get their work done.

You see, what happens is the devil is mocking them. In Nehemiah chapter 2 and verse 19, he is laughing them to scorn. He is despising them.

He said, what y'all doing, boys? What y'all doing up at your little church? What y'all doing now? Sitting there with them little missionaries? Oh, y'all so cute. They're mocking us.

They're mocking us. Are you going to rebel against the king? What is y'all doing now? In Nehemiah chapter 4 and verse 2, he said, feeble Jews. Feeble Jews.

He said, what y'all going to do? Fortify yourself. Y'all take your little pitiful army spread across two and a half miles. You think you're going to do anything? What y'all going to do? Sacrifice.

You're going to do a little bit of your worship. You're going to take one of them little sheep. You think that gets anything done for you? What you going to do? You think you'll get it all done real quick in a day? What are you going to do?

Take all the rocks that were knocked down on the wall and rebuild it? What are you going to do? Then they said, we're coming after you. They tried to keep them scared all the time. They were conspiring against them.

In Nehemiah chapter 4 and verse 8, they'd come and fight against them. And they're building so fast, they're not even getting rid of all the junk around them. There's broken pieces of cement and rock and dirt and all the things, and they can't get rid of the rubbish.

In Nehemiah chapter 4 and verse 10, And the enemy's saying, we know you're tired. We're coming after you. So they needed to be ready to hear the need from another brother.

They had to be ready to listen for the trumpet. Nehemiah chapter 4 and verse 20, hear the sound of the trumpet. Hear the sound of the trumpet. Nehemiah says, guys, I need y'all to be waiting.

[27:28] I need you to be ready, because if they attack us over here, I'll sound their horn, and y'all come running to help them over here. But then he says this. I love this, and I'll be through. Nehemiah 4, verse 14. I looked and rose up and said unto the nobles and the rulers, the rest of the people, Don't y'all be afraid.

Be not afraid. Listen to this. Remember the Lord, which is great and terrible. Those little enemies are going to come with their little idol in its little cart.

They're going to be carrying a little idol. They're going to come marching in with Baal or Dagon or whatever. They're going to come marching in. He said, I don't care who they bring. You just remember the great God.

You just remember the great and terrible God, the powerful, awesome, wonderful, mighty, almighty God. And then you go fight. So we've got to be ready. But we always got to wait on God, don't we?

It's always going to be God doing the work. He's going to be doing the work and getting it done. And the beautiful thing, the last one would have been, we walk faithfully like Nehemiah. From the beginning of this book, oh, Nehemiah is just there, buddy.

[28:33] From the beginning of this book to the end of this book, Nehemiah, he's not really flashy. He's just there. He's a servant. He's not flashy. He's just giving a cup of wine to the king to drink.

He's just bringing his food to him or whatever he is. And he's not flashy, but he's faithful. He is just doing what he ought to do all the time. He's there.

You don't have to wonder if old Nehemiah is going to be there. You can mark that one down. You don't have to wonder if Nehemiah is going to be there. He's just going to be there. He might not be the flashiest guy, but he was faithful when he was standing by the king.

The king knew he was faithful. The king said, oh, I trust you. You can go because I know you. He would have never trusted anybody else, but old Nehemiah he trusted. And at the end of the book, he'll still be faithful. We're going to get it done.

Do you want victory? I want to see the name of Jesus glorified. I want to live in such a way that our church has an impact on our community and on our world. We are building a wall too.

[29:31] It's called a church. We're building a wall. We're sending the gospel message to the world. And that's going to call on us to work and to work hard and to know why we're doing it because we're worshiping the great God of heaven.

It's going to cause us as a church to always have to be waiting or watching to make sure that the devil doesn't attack us because the second a church is blessed like we're being blessed, the devil's out to get us.

But we'll wait on our God and we'll walk on faithfully. decisions and we're not saying we are greatly Partnership for free. We'll go on for WB Radio. But, for God, I think we didn't. We're not going to do anything like this. We'll do anything like this. We'll do anything like this as a church. We'll be praying with you. So this morning, we're like, all of a sudden we're going to be able to take it.

We are also for future JAWS State. In the name of the party. We are getting him to the right. We're going toég with you.