

RESPONDING TO THE CHALLENGES

Nehemiah 4
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March 17, 2024

INTRO:

Unmasking criticism

A. ANTICIPATE CRITICISM

1. Criticism **attacks** vision (v 2:10)
2. Criticism **attracts** other criticism (v. 2:19)
3. Criticism **asserts** their way all the time (v. 6:1-4)

B. ANATOMY OF A CRITICISM

1. It begins with a serious **concern** (2:10)
2. It is followed by **cynicism** (v. 2:19)
3. It continuous with an attack to our **character** (v. 4:2-3)
4. It divides and causes **conflict** with one another (v. 7-8)
5. It takes away our **confidence** (v. 10-12,14)

C. ADDRESSING CRITICISM

1. **Pray** against your critiques (v. 4-5, 9)
2. **Continue** to work with all your heart (v. 6)
3. **Build** and defend each other (v. 13,15, 21-23)
4. **Remember** God's faithfulness (v. 14)
5. **Finish** what you have started (v. 6:14-5)

CONCLUSION

Nehemiah 6:14-15 "So the wall was completed on the twenty-fifth of Elul, in fifty-two days. When all our enemies heard about this, all the surrounding nations were afraid and lost their self-confidence, because they realized that this work had been done with the help of our God.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Icebreaker. Who is your greatest critic and share the upside and downside of that experience?
2. Nehemiah 4 provides insights into perseverance, leadership, and trusting in God despite opposition. Read Nehemiah 4:1 What was the primary goal of Nehemiah and the people of Jerusalem during this time? Who were the adversaries mentioned and why were they opposed to rebuilding the wall?
3. Read Nehemiah 4:2-6. How did Nehemiah and the people react when they heard about the ridicule and opposition from Sanballat, Tobiah and others? What emotions might Nehemiah have experienced when facing such opposition, and how did he handle them? How did Nehemiah's prayer demonstrate his trust in God amidst adversity?
4. Read Nehemiah 4:13-18. How did Nehemiah strategically organize the people to continue the work on the wall while being prepared for potential attacks? What leadership qualities did Nehemiah display in response to the threats they faced?
5. Read again verse 14 and study carefully the text. How did Nehemiah encourage the people to continue their work despite the threats? Why was it essential for the people to support one another during this challenging time?
6. Read Nehemiah 4:9,13-23. What measures did Nehemiah take to ensure the safety of the workers while they continue to rebuild the wall? How does Nehemiah's approach to security reflect wisdom and practicality?
7. Read Nehemiah 4:20. How did the people acknowledge God's role in their protection and the progress of the work? What can we learn about trusting God's provision and protection from Nehemiah's example?
8. How do you respond to the opposition or ridicule when pursuing God-given goals in your life?
9. Like Nehemiah, close the Life Group meeting with a prayer of dedication God to the task God has given us.