



RISE UP

Challenging men to live up to God's calling!

Rise up and build!

Nehemiah 2:11-20

Men's Breakfast

Sermon given on September 16, 2023



Pastor Rick Lancaster

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Opening Comments

- Today we continue our Men's Ministry series: **RISE UP: Challenging men to live up to God's calling!**
- Let's begin with a word of prayer.
- Turn in your Bibles to **Nehemiah 2**
- Most people know the theme of Nehemiah is the rebuilding of the wall of Jerusalem.
- Walls were important.
- They served to protect the citizens of the city from dangers from without.
- They also served to maintain unity with the city.
- The walls of manhood have fallen.
- There are many reasons for that.
- The pandemic isolated men – more men are reporting being lonely than in the past.
- Even men who are busy are feeling a sense of loneliness.
- Add to that the gender ideology mafia confusing everyone about what a man is.
- And there is the proliferation of crime, drugs, and pornography eroding the foundation of the wall of manhood.
- And the media is actively glorifying ungodly things that tempt men away from true manhood.
- And the most damaging of all is the absence of fathers in the home.
- Men are struggling!
- They may be successful in life, work, or other things, but they are struggling spiritually.
- The basic theme of the book of Nehemiah is that he hears the wall of Jerusalem is broken down and its gates are burned.
- That is not new news!
- The Babylonians destroyed Jerusalem in about 586 BC.
- Nehemiah arrives in Jerusalem about 445 BC.

- That is about 140 years later.
- **Nehemiah 2:1-3**
- So, why was this such a burden for Nehemiah?
- Why hadn't someone else been burdened by this before Nehemiah?
- There is no way to answer those questions.
- Maybe God had caused others to feel the same way as Nehemiah, they just didn't act upon those feelings.
- Maybe this is just when God sovereignly decided to do it.
- Maybe this has happened to you – God reveals something to you that seems so obvious, and you wonder why you didn't see it years, or even decades earlier.
- Maybe you weren't paying attention before, or maybe this is the time God chose for you to get it.
- The question is, what will you do once you are aware of it?
- Nehemiah chose to act - the wall was down – he needed to go to Jerusalem and rebuild it.
- **Nehemiah 2:11-16**
- Nehemiah surveyed the project.
- Before work could begin, you need to understand the extent of the project.
- It was a mess, and it was going to be a big project.
- Too often when guys examine the walls of their own life, they underestimate what needs to be done.
- Nehemiah knew it was going to take more than some spackle and a coat of paint.
- And he knew it was not something he could do on his own.
- **Nehemiah 2:17-18**
- To do what Nehemiah believed God wanted him to do was going to require everyone to rise up and build.
- It wasn't easy or free from conflict.
- Israel's enemies conspired to stop or hinder the work.
- But Nehemiah was resolute in his desire to remove the shame of the broken-down walls and gates.
- Jump down to **Nehemiah 6:15**.

- **Nehemiah 6:15**

- For 140 years, the broken-down walls were a reproach to the people of God.
- It was a continual reminder of their own rebellion against God.
- In fifty-two days, they did what should have been done decades earlier.
- Guys, what is the condition of your spiritual wall?
- How solid are the gates into your life.
- Your walls are comprised of four things: your faith, your knowledge of God and His Word, your obedience, and your Christlikeness.
- You also have four gates: two eyes and two ears.
- Your walls are all connected – faith is dependent upon knowing God and His Word.
- Nehemiah had people working on different sections of the wall until all the gaps were filled in and the wall reached the desired height.
- We too must work on each section of our spiritual wall and fill in any gaps in our faith, knowledge, obedience, and Christlikeness.
- And we must guard the gates. Be very careful what you allow into your spiritual life by being careful what you watch or listen to.
- Babylon was overthrown in one night because the gates were unguarded.
- How did the walls of Jerusalem get rebuilt?
- One man responded to the call of God and encouraged others to help him do it.
- In fifty-two days, they ended 140 years of reproach.
- It is amazing what God can do with a man who will just say yes to Him.
- There is a term we use in the church to describe building or rebuilding spiritual walls in a believer's life – discipleship.
- It is part of the mission of the church. **Matthew 28:18-20**
And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. ¹⁹ Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen.
- 'make disciples' is in the form of a command.

- That means God expects the church to be busy making disciples.
- There is something implied in that for all who are believers – God wants every believer to become disciples.
- All disciples are believers but not all believers are disciples.
- A disciple is actively building their spiritual wall to defend themselves from the attacks of the enemy.
- And as men, if our spiritual walls are not strong, we will be ill-prepared to help those we called to lead.
- A disciple is disciplining themselves to guard the gates of their spiritual life to make sure only what is good and spiritually profitable may enter.
- A believer is more passive in their faith.
- They believe enough to be saved and are heaven-bound, but their spiritual wall is weak or nonexistent.
- They are vulnerable to the attacks of the enemy, and they have very little to protect them from the temptations to sin.
- So, how do we do it? How do we build our spiritual walls?
- If you have been around this ministry for any length of time, then you know what I am about to tell you.
- But, knowing is not doing!
- Nehemiah knew what needed to be done.
- But that meant nothing until he started doing what needed to be done.
- Biblical manhood is under a steady assault, and many men's walls are developing gaps, and some are even falling down.
- A man whose walls are down starts looking more and more like the culture around him and He looks less like Jesus.
- And sometimes we don't know there is a gap in our wall until an enemy has gotten in.
- I had a personal experience with that this week.
- Someone did something, doesn't matter what, and I wanted to react.
- I wanted to say something to this person, but every time I thought of something to say I sensed the Holy Spirit asking me if that were what Jesus would say.

- It kept me awake until after 1 am, trying to come up with something that sounded like Jesus.
- I did eventually sense the Holy Spirit telling me that it would be best if I didn't say anything.
- My wall that was weak was/is Christlikeness.
- If I was more like Christ, the spiritual battle would have been much shorter.
- All of us might have gaps in our walls that we aren't aware of.
- There are four types of relationships that will help us identify and repair the walls of our faith.
- First – **The Holy Spirit**
- As believers we are indwelt with God, the Holy Spirit.
- That is not meant to be a passive relationship.
- He is in us to make us holy, like God is holy – to make us like Christ.
- We interact with Him through prayer – actively speaking to God and listening for His response.
- Second – **Paul**
- A Paul in your life is spiritually more mature than you are.
- For this to be useful, it must be a real relationship.
- It is not about knowing someone more spiritual than you, it is about engaging with them about spiritual things.
- David and I try to meet every week.
- Third – **Barnabus**
- Barnabus was a spiritual equal to Paul.
- We need friends who are where we are spiritually.
- But again, for this to be useful, the relationship must be more than merely acquaintances.
- Fourth – **Timothy**
- Eventually every disciple of Christ should play their part in the ministry of the church and 'make disciples'.
- No matter how long you have been walking with the Lord, there are people who need someone to help them build up their spiritual walls.
- Guys, these kinds of relationships don't just happen.

- If building up your spiritual walls is important to you, which it should be, you need to proactively work to develop these relationships with other spiritual men.
- Nehemiah knew what needed to be done and he rose up and got to work.
- Men, I believe the Spirit would say to each of us – Rise up and build!
- **Let's pray!**