

Saying Oh No, to Ono

I. Slide1 Announce:

- A. Slide2 Dinners start again next Wed night: chicken breast/gravy/mashed potatoes/green beans \$5.50/\$3.50
- B. Slide3 Aspire Conf Fri Night:
- C. Slide4 Dead Sea Scrolls Exhibit in LA

I. Slide5 Intro:

- A. *When God's people are sinning against each other then this allows Satan to take a vacation.*
 1. Last chapter Nehemiah was able to convince the Jews **not** to charge their brethren usury(interest). **So Satan** has to go back to work.
 2. He then must choose to come back as a **serpent** that **deceives**, **or** a **lion** that **devours**, **or** an **angel of light** that **lights the path of wickedness** for any who will follow.
 - a) **eg:** Once in awhile I'll take a flashlight & shine it on the floor & watch our little black cocker Sully **go crazy chasing it**...It's like he falls into a **trance**...& **you can lead him wherever you want him to go.**
 - (1) Many people are like little Sully easily led around by a *false angel of light.*

B. Slide6 Title: *Saying Oh No, to Ono*

1. **Outline:** A 1/2 Dozen Calculated Strikes. A Dozen Counter Attacks.

II. Slide7 **A ½ DOZEN CALCULATED STRIKES**

- A. This sounds like the exact same attacks Satan throws at the church today: *Distractions; Nipping at the heels; Rumors; Fear; Death Threats; & Conspiracy.*
- B. (1) Great attacks after great victories.
 1. **Frequent tactic of enemy:** *Oppose the work, threaten the workers, attack the leader.*
- C. Slide8a **DISTRACTIONS** (2)
 1. **ONO** – *ohhh-nooo* was probably his 1st clue this was a bad area. **ha!**
 2. **How about meeting us ½ way?**
 - a) It's a town about 7m. S/E of Joppa, about 30 miles north-west of Jerusalem.
 - b) So **Ono** was located ½ way in between Jerusalem & Samaria.
 - c) *"Regarding the sins in which we would **fear to tread**...Satan seems to be kind enough to offer to meet us ½ way."*

3. **Contrast** Eve's folly in discussing the question raised by the serpent.
has God indeed said... Gen.3:1-5.

a) Do you ever **negotiate** questions that should never be allowed consideration?

4. What things or people distract **you** from doing the Lords work?

5. How can you have a **heads up** on these distractions?

D. **Slide8b ANKLE BITTERS** (4)

1. The enemy's motto: *If at 1st you don't succeed...try, try, again.*

a) They actually try to get him to meet **4 times**, to try to harm him.

b) Our enemy try's to just get a **foot** in...or even a **toe**.

E. **Slide8c RUMORS** (6,7)

1. (5) An **official letter** was rolled up & had on it an **official seal** from its bearer.

a) But this *open letter* meant it either wasn't official (seal was broken) **or**, they were spreading its contents *for all to see*.

2. (6) Rumor Mill said you're doing this, **that you may be their King** - He tries to drive a wedge between Nehemiah & Artaxerxes.

3. (7) Then ends letter with the *childish tattletale technique* of, *I'm telling*.

a) I don't know how many times over the years that I heard, when someone didn't like our church policies, some one say, *I'm telling Chuck*.

4. **Here is slander at its finest.**

a) Immanuel Kant, *"Have **patience** awhile; **slanders** are not long-lived.*

***Truth** is the child of time; ere long she shall appear to vindicate thee."*

b) An old Hebrew proverb says, ***Slander slays three persons: the speaker, the spoken to, and the spoken of.***

5. **So, what battle tactic do you use against rumors against you?**

a) It is a **clear conscience** that keeps you from **fear & stopping your work**.

b) This was Paul's course, **so, I myself always strive to have a conscience without offense toward God and men.** Acts 24:16

F. **Slide8d FEAR** (9)

1. Identify **fear** tactics.

G. **Slide8e DEATH THREATS** (10)

1. **Shemaiah** - If you lived back in Nehemiah's day you'd see posters around town, *Prophet for hire*, w/Shemaiah's picture on it.

2. *Watch for deceivers who invite you into their house for a cup of fake hospitality*

a) **Watch for whisperers.** **Watch for** those who bring **fears**.

H. Slide8f CONSPIRACY (17-19)

1. Slide8g Someone has defined **gossip** as... *“News you have to hurry & tell somebody else, before you find out it isn’t true!”*
2. (19) Nehemiah was constantly compelled to listen to their stories concerning how great **Tobiah** was.
 - a) Adolph Hitler wrote, *“Mental confusion, contradiction of feeling, indecisiveness, panic; these are our weapons.”*

I. What do we learn about the *persistence* of our enemy?

1. Satan isn’t a quitter. He stays on the field even after he loses the battle.
2. *“Many a careless Christian has won the war but afterward lost the victory.”*¹
[His goal? He seeks to turn the **victors** into **victims**]

J. Why is it so hard to remember that behind our *earthly conflicts* is the reality of *true spiritual warfare*?

K. What type of **opposition** are you facing right now?

L. Let’s dig in to **HOW** Nehemiah responded to all of these attacks.

1. The key: **Detect** the enemy’s strategy & **Defeat** it.
2. Let’s learn *How to respond to Opposition?*

III. Slide9 **A DOZEN COUNTER ATTACKS**

A. Slide10a **DON’T BE DISTRACTED** (3)

1. Beware when the enemy seeks to **embrace you**.
2. Say **no** to invitations that *compromise your witness*.
3. **Leaders**, you are called to be a **guidepost** not a **weather vane**. (ask meaning?)
4. Nehemiah recognized he was doing a **great work** for the Lord.
 - a) What **great work** does He have you doing?
 - (1) You might think... *“I’m not doing anything great”*. But isn’t **any work** that He asks you to do a **great work**?

5. Slide10b Phillips Brooks said, **Do not** pray for **easy** lives. Pray to be **stronger** men. **Do not** pray for **tasks** equal to your **powers**. Pray for **powers** equal to your **tasks**.
6. *We as God’s people often leave the great work God has for us...for lesser things. caution!*

B. Slide10c **DON’T BE DRAINED** (4)

¹ Wiersbe pg.78

1. What if they keep coming at you...what do you do?
 - a) The **right response** is always the **right response**.
 2. **But what if they just continue?**
 - a) Then you need to **tirelessly continue**. **Avoid** at all cost *conferences* with the enemy.
Give no place to the devil.
- C. **Slide10d DON'T REACT TO RUMORS** (6-8)
1. You may deny the slander against you, **but** don't stop **His work**.
 2. **How do you normally react to rumors about yourself? friends? family?**
- D. **Slide10e DON'T RAMBLE** (8)
1. **Either** respond by not responding...
 - a) Mark 15:3,4 **And the chief priests accused Him/Jesus of many things, but He answered nothing**. Then Pilate asked Him again, saying, "Do You answer nothing? See how many things they testify against You!" But Jesus **still answered nothing**, so that Pilate marveled.
 2. **Or**, when you respond to **The enemy** **or** **an enemy**, be *short, simple, & to the point*...**don't** ramble.
- E. **Slide10f DON'T GO IT ALONE** (9b)
1. Respond by...**Praying** (vs.9,14 – these are the 5th & 6th of Nehemiah's quick **Voxer prayers**) **Yet**, behind those **quick prayers** was a **life of prayer**.
 - a) Take your **rumors** to **God**.
- F. **Slide10g DON'T FLEE** (11a)
1. **Stand Firm. Stand strong. Be courageous.**
 2. When serving the Lord...**don't** leave your post.
 - a) I like the story of David being concerned about his small flock of sheep...
 - b) **So David rose early in the morning, left the sheep with a keeper, and took the things and went as Jesse had commanded him.** 1 Sam.17:20
 - c) Remember when the Pharisees tried to get Jesus to run, **On that very day some Pharisees came, saying to Him, Get out and depart from here, for Herod wants to kill You.** And He said to them, Go, tell that fox, Behold, I cast out demons and perform cures today & tomorrow, & the third day I shall be perfected. Nevertheless I must journey today, tomorrow, and the day following; for it cannot be that a prophet should perish outside of Jerusalem.
 - d) **Flee sin, flee temptation, but never flee your place of duty.**
 3. How do we quote...***If God is for us, who can be against us...*** & **then flee?**

4. How do we say, **who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? & then** allow ourselves to be **separated** from Him?
 5. Here's why we **shouldn't** listen to **all** who **dispense religious counsel**.
- G. Slide10h DON'T HIDE (11b)
1. Always be suspect of the counsel which savors of self.
 2. No man can secure his own safety by **hiding...even in the temple of God**.
- H. Slide10i DON'T WAIVER (11c)
1. **I will not go in** – Stick to your guns.
- I. Slide10j DON'T LACK DISCERNMENT (12)
1. **I perceived**. (vs.2b,9a)
- J. Slide10k DON'T FEAR (13a)
1. **Also in vs.9,14,& 19**.
- K. Slide10l DON'T REACT (13b)
1. Never **React** to the enemy, always **Act** according to the Word.
- L. Slide10m DON'T SIN (13c)
1. **Note:** to have **fear** would have been to **sin**.
- M. Slide10n (blank) (15) The work was done in a record **52 days**.
- N. (16) **They perceived that this work was done by our God. What an incredible compliment**
1. **Ever do something where even you knew it wasn't you?**
 2. **When you complete a project, how do you communicate it?**
 - a) Nehemiah chooses to share it *through the eyes of his enemies*.
 3. **God works through faithful people, but it is God who works.**
 - a) **Work out** your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who **works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure**. Phil.2:12,13
- O. **So how was this wall finished? 2 reasons:**
1. **Divine - This work was done by our God (16)**
 - a) It was **God initiated & God empowered**.
 - b) **We don't need to initiate** programs...find out what God is doing & simply join Him in His work.
 2. **Human - Total unreserved human cooperation** (this whole chapter).
- P. Notice how nehemiah's **singleness of purpose and loyalty to God** were as a **shield** about him. **What may we learn from this?**