

Rebuilding the Wall

Summary and Goal

The Book of Nehemiah is the story of God restoring His people in the promised land and their reorganization as His covenant people. As we continue Nehemiah's story, we see that God's people are faced with conflict from the outside and inside. However, because they persevere in repentance and faith, they accomplish God's will in spite of their circumstances. From Nehemiah we learn that God calls us to do the right thing in the right way and then give Him glory for success. We also learn that God is glorified not only in our fulfillment of a task but also in the way we fulfill that task.

Main Passages

Nehemiah 4:7-14; 5:1-13; 6:15-16

Session Outline

1. God's people act wisely in the face of conflict (Neh. 4:7-14).
2. God's people address social injustice (Neh. 5:1-13).
3. God's people give glory to God for success (Neh. 6:15-16).

Theological Theme

God is glorified not only in our fulfillment of a task but also in the way we fulfill that task.

Christ Connection

In Nehemiah's day, the people joined together to rebuild the wall around Jerusalem and protect the city from their enemies. Jesus later prophesied the destruction of Jerusalem, but through His death and resurrection, He made a way for His people to be protected from the enemies of sin and death.

Missional Application

God calls us to do the right thing in the right way and then give Him glory for success.

Session Plan

Rebuilding the Wall

Session 10

Introduction Option

In the week prior to the group meeting, send the link below to your group members for them to watch the video “The Kingdom of God” with Russell Moore on their own time.

www.ministrygrid.com/web/guest/training-viewer/-/training/the-kingdom-of-god

As you begin this session, open with the question “What is the kingdom of God?” It’s a phrase we often use but rarely define. Let group members summarize Moore’s overview of the Bible’s teaching about the kingdom. Then transition to the Introduction material about the conflict between God’s kingdom and the kingdoms of this world.

? For Further Discussion

When have you acted foolishly after hearing bad news?

How would God’s wisdom direct you to respond differently now?

Introduction

Bring up the contradiction between God’s kingdom and the kingdoms of this world (leader p. 130). State that this section of Nehemiah reminds us of the priority of prayer and the responsibility of wise action (leader p. 130; PSG p. 101).

- ? How do you determine what course of action is wisest when you are faced with a difficult choice?

Summarize this session on how God restores His people in the land and accomplishes His will through them in spite of their circumstances (leader p. 130; PSG p. 101).

1. God’s people act wisely in the face of conflict (Neh. 4:7-14).

Recall King Artaxerxes’ endorsement of Nehemiah’s initial request (leader p. 131). Then read Nehemiah 4:7-14. Discuss the intentions of Sanballat and his associates and what that says about human nature. Stress how God’s people stood confident in the face of conflict by arming themselves with prayer (leader pp. 131-132; PSG pp. 102-103).

- ? What examples of wisdom do you see in the response of Nehemiah to the opposition he faced?
- ? What would have been an unwise response?

With reference to the quote on **Pack Item 8: God Is Sovereign**, note Nehemiah’s confidence in God’s protection and provision and how that would speak to God’s people facing threats of daily attack. Connect their opposition with the opposition that Jesus faced (leader p. 133; PSG pp. 103-104).

- ? Fear is a strong force that often keeps us from fulfilling God’s will for our lives. What are some specific ways that we, the people of God, can fight fear with faith?

2. God's people address social injustice (Neh. 5:1-13).

Read Nehemiah 5:1-13. Point out how the people's focus on the wall led them to neglect other things, which eventually resulted in their selling children into debt-slavery and neglecting the poor (leader pp. 134-135; PSG pp. 104-105).

- Why is it important that we keep a close watch on our own lives as we seek to be obedient to the will and commands of God?

Acknowledge Nehemiah's righteous anger about the situation. State that ignoring God's law in our lives can have serious implications against the task set before us. Likewise, explain the gospel's relevance for ongoing sanctification, not only for our initial salvation (leader p. 135; PSG p. 106).

- When we are confronted with our own shortfalls and sins, there are two responses: to repent and obey or to resist God's conviction. How does the gospel empower our repentance and our response of obedience?

3. God's people give glory to God for success (Neh. 6:15-16).

Show how God was with the Jews and accomplished this work (leader p. 136). Then ask a volunteer to read Nehemiah 6:15-16 (leader p. 136; PSG p. 107).

- When have you seen God do something so amazing that upon reflection you realized only God could have done it? What were the circumstances?

Say that Christian history is full of examples of God's people triumphing despite inability and circumstance, and cite some of these examples (*consider asking for more examples from the group*). Explain that there are no random acts that come from the hand of the sovereign God. He has a purpose in all that He does (leader p. 136; PSG p. 107).

- What is the danger of failing to give God glory for success?

Conclusion

Show how the story of rebuilding the Jerusalem wall serves as a picture of what is to come. Point out that rebuilding "the house of God" included restoring the city and its people. Say that God is giving us a picture of the New Jerusalem, the holy city that will come down out of heaven from God (leader p. 137; PSG p. 108). *Apply the truths of this session with "His Mission, Your Mission"* (PSG p. 109).

Point 2 Option

Prior to the group meeting, enlist a Christian from your church or community who is involved with social justice ministry or employment (e.g., homeless mission, legal or social work, crisis pregnancy centers) to share with the group. Allow this person a few minutes to speak about what drew him or her to this type of ministry or work and how a biblical worldview is relevant to social justice involvement.

Point the group to the "Essential Christian Doctrine" *Social Concern* for their personal reflection, and encourage the group to view social ministry as a gospel opportunity.

Christ Connection: In Nehemiah's day, the people joined together to rebuild the wall around Jerusalem and protect the city from their enemies. Jesus later prophesied the destruction of Jerusalem, but through His death and resurrection, He made a way for His people to be protected from the enemies of sin and death.

Missional Application: God calls us to do the right thing in the right way and then give Him glory for success.

Rebuilding the Wall

Session 9

Voices from the Church

“Wisdom is the power to see, and the inclination to choose, the best and highest goal, together with the surest means of attaining it.”¹

—J. I. Packer

Introduction

One of the things we see in the biblical story is that God’s kingdom agenda is almost always contradictory to that of the kingdoms of this world.

It’s true that there are certain instances when the ways of this world align with God’s agenda. We call that “common grace.” But most of the time, God’s agenda is in stark contrast to the patterns and demands of the culture we find ourselves in. Remember the words of Jesus: “My kingdom is not of this world” (John 18:36).

How should Christians respond when they find themselves in situations that call for acts of faith that seem impossible in light of their circumstances? This section of Nehemiah reminds us of the priority of prayer and the responsibility of wise action.

Throughout the Bible, wise action is based on the foundation of the fear of the Lord. Fear of the Lord means being aligned with God’s intentions and is the foundation of all knowledge (Ex. 20:20; Prov. 1:7; 9:10). This is exactly what Nehemiah called God’s people to in the face of opposition (Neh. 4:14; 5:9).



How do you determine what course of action is wisest when you are faced with a difficult choice?

Session Summary

The Book of Nehemiah is the story of God restoring His people in the promised land and their reorganization as His covenant people. As we continue Nehemiah’s story, we see that God’s people are faced with conflict from the outside and inside. However, because they persevere in repentance and faith, they accomplish God’s will in spite of their circumstances. From Nehemiah we learn that God calls us to do the right thing in the right way and then give Him glory for success. We also learn that God is glorified not only in our fulfillment of a task but also in the way we fulfill that task.

1. God's people act wisely in the face of conflict (Neh. 4:7-14).

King Artaxerxes endorsed Nehemiah's initial request to rebuild the city, and he provided support for this endeavor with his protection and patronage (Neh. 2:7-10). But the question remained—would the Jews achieve the end of their ambitious plan? In this section of Scripture, the likelihood of achieving their goal becomes small, the outlook grim, at least by human standards.



⁷ But when Sanballat and Tobiah and the Arabs and the Ammonites and the Ashdodites heard that the repairing of the walls of Jerusalem was going forward and that the breaches were beginning to be closed, they were very angry. ⁸ And they all plotted together to come and fight against Jerusalem and to cause confusion in it. ⁹ And

we prayed to our God and set a guard as a protection against them day and night.

¹⁰ In Judah it was said, "The strength of those who bear the burdens is failing. There is too much rubble. By ourselves we will not be able to rebuild the wall." ¹¹ And our enemies said, "They will not know or see till we come among them and kill them and stop the work." ¹² At that time the Jews who lived near them came from all directions and said to us ten times, "You must return to us." ¹³ So in the lowest parts of the space behind the wall, in open places, I stationed the people by their clans, with their swords, their spears, and their bows. ¹⁴ And I looked and arose and said to the nobles and to the officials and to the rest of the people, "Do not be afraid of them. Remember the Lord, who is great and awesome, and fight for your brothers, your sons, your daughters, your wives, and your homes."

Here we see God's people confronted with additional difficulties. First, God's people were despised (4:1-4). Sanballat and his associates were set on stopping God's people from rebuilding the wall.

Further Commentary

"After Sanballat and his allies failed to discourage Nehemiah and the people, they virtually surrounded Jerusalem. Sanballat led the force from Samaria, north of Jerusalem, while Tobiah and the Ammonites were east of Jerusalem. The Arabs, probably led by Geshem (2:19), were south/southeast of Jerusalem, with the Ashdodites, from the former region of Philistia, southwest of Jerusalem. The response of those in Jerusalem reflected their trust in God as well as their understanding that faith did not preclude action but demanded it (v. 9). Nehemiah's problems were internal as well as external. Whether the slogan in this verse was an oft-repeated jingle or a song sung by the workers, it clearly reflected the discouragement and pessimism within the city. Another possible translation of the second half of the verse is, 'they said to us repeatedly from all [their] places, "You must return to us,"' suggesting that the Jewish people outside Jerusalem were encouraging the workers from their towns laboring in Jerusalem to leave before the city was attacked. Nehemiah's skill as a leader is exemplified in these verses. Although enemies surrounded him and the people were discouraged, he took action."²

—Carl R. Anderson,
HCSB Study Bible

Voices from the Church

“Discouragement is the opposite of faith. It is Satan’s device to thwart the work of God in your life.”³

—Billy Graham

Voices from Church History

“If my attitude be one of fear, not faith, about the one who has disappointed me; if I say ‘Just what I expected,’ if a fall occurs, then I know nothing of Calvary love.”⁴

—Amy Carmichael (1867-1951)



Second, the foundations of the wall were decrepit and unstable (v. 3). God’s enemies mocked the Israelites, pointing out that the wall’s foundations were rubbish and a mere fox could knock down their feeble work. By all human standards, the possibility of achieving their goal did not look good.

The primary reason that Sanballat and his associates were so adamant about stopping this work is revealed in their agenda. While Nehemiah was seeking the good of God’s people, Sanballat and his associates were seeking their own good at the expense of God’s people. Once the walls were built and God’s people could begin living under His law with one another, it would be very hard for the enemies of God to exploit His people.

The intentions of God’s enemies should be familiar to each of us, if we are honest. The natural orientation of the human heart centers on self. “What’s best for me” is the natural inclination of the human heart when faced with a decision or a circumstance. By nature, humans are more filled with self-interest than with love and concern for others. For this reason God gave us the law, which Jesus summarized, in part, in the command to love others with the same energy and attention that you would show yourself (Matt. 22:39). While it’s easy to cast the first stone at Sanballat and his associates, perhaps we should reflect on our own hearts.

The good news is that while the enemies of God’s people plotted together to stop their task (Neh. 4:8), God’s people stood confident in the face of conflict. The Jews armed themselves with prayer (vv. 4-5,9) and persevered in obedience (vv. 6,9,15-23). In the face of opposition, God’s people guarded one another and continued building the wall (vv. 6,9).

While we can understand the self-centered concern of God’s enemies in this passage, God calls us to act not in our own self-interest but according to His will. And God’s will is always for the good of His people. Not only does God call us to act against our natural inclinations, but He also empowers us to fulfill His commands.


-  What examples of wisdom do you see in the response of Nehemiah to the opposition he faced?
-  What would have been an unwise response?

As we have seen before, Nehemiah prayed in the face of an improbable situation and also took wise action (see 2:4). The danger of such action is elaborated on in verses 9-12. Not only was the task bigger than what the feeble Jews could accomplish on their own, but their enemies threatened them with the horror of deadly attacks under the cover of night. Even more, their friends and families came from the villages to plead with them to come home and quit in the face of certain danger.

However, Nehemiah was sure of God's protection and provision in this task. He called the people not to be afraid, to remember the Lord's awesome character, and to fight for sake of their families and their homes (4:14). As we see in 4:20, Nehemiah's trust was founded on his knowledge of the God who fights for His people, just as He had done in generations past (see Ex. 14:14; Deut. 1:30).

Nehemiah's exhortation not to fear but to trust and obey stands as a comforting testimony to Christians today. Nehemiah was addressing a situation where the nations had gathered against God's people and thus against their God. This reminds us of Psalm 2, in which God's enemies are said to plot in vain against the Almighty.

We must not forget that like the Jews in the face of Sanballat, Tobiah, and the Arabs, Ammonites, and Ashdodites, God's Son faced certain opposition. In fact, the Scriptures remind us that Jesus was also despised and rejected by men (Isa. 53:3; 1 Pet. 2:23). Like Nehemiah and the Jews, Jesus remained steadfast and obedient, even through death (Phil. 2:8). And Jesus was victorious (1 Cor. 15:55-57). As we reflect on the gospel, we are reminded that God has fought for us in Christ. We are called to battle on even as we are despised and rejected, remembering our great and awe-inspiring God.

 Fear is a strong force that often keeps us from fulfilling God's will for our lives. What are some specific ways that we, the people of God, can fight fear with faith?

Further Commentary

“Sanballat's efforts aimed at discouraging the Jerusalem building project began with a derisive approach, mocking the Jews, calling them 'pathetic,' inferring that they were weak and feeble (4:1-2). Tobiah scorned the building efforts by stating the rebuilt walls were so flimsy that a fox walking on them would cause them to collapse (v. 3). When this approach did not cause the work to falter, Nehemiah's enemies formed a coalition of Samaritans, Arabs, Ammonites, and Ashdodites and determined to wage war against the Israelites (v. 7). They planned for a surprise attack, but Nehemiah's dependence on the Lord provided the stroke of military genius that foiled the enemies' plan (4:15-23). Then, in desperation, Sanballat and his cohorts tried four times to convince Nehemiah to meet privately with them. After Nehemiah's fourth refusal, Sanballat informed him of a rumor that he was guilty of plotting to become king of the Jews (6:1-9). Then, in a final move to discredit Nehemiah, Sanballat and Tobiah hired Shemaiah, a prophet, to give Nehemiah false counsel, warning him that he must hide himself in the temple lest he be assassinated. Nehemiah saw through their plot and refused to comply with their suggestion (vv. 10-14)... They ran the gamut from false, conciliatory gestures to taunts and threats. They failed miserably because they did not realize that they were opposing 'the great and awe-inspiring Lord' (4:14), the God of Israel.”⁵

—David L. Jenkins,
Biblical Illustrator

Further Commentary

"In this verse Nehemiah harps relentlessly on buying and selling, and it makes little difference to his arguments whether he is describing what he and others had done for Jewish slaves abroad or for those who fell into Gentile hands at home—except that in the latter case some of the very people now sold back by Gentiles had first been traded to them by Jews...Ever realistic, Nehemiah leaves no room for postponement or for second thoughts, and makes sure that the promises are upgraded into oaths, properly sworn in the presence of the priests. ...We may be inclined to picture the enthusiastic response in 13b as that of 'the assembly' apart from and against the guilty minority (cf. v. 7c); but the final statement speaks of a general obedience ('the people'), perhaps implying that like Nehemiah himself (v. 10), others besides the chief offenders had discovered adjustments to be made (cf. v. 10), and found joy in doing the right thing at last."⁶

—Derek Kidner

Voices from the Church

"The bad way to use wealth is to disregard others in order to gain more for oneself. The good way is to steward one's wealth and be generous to others to advance God's kingdom, as Nehemiah did."⁷

—James M. Hamilton Jr.

2. God's people address social injustice (Neh. 5:1-13).

In this section of the narrative, we are confronted with another threat to God's people fulfilling the task before them. The enemies of God were not only angry that Nehemiah had come but also at the fact that the wall was being rebuilt (Neh. 2:10; 4:1). The rebuilding of the wall was part of the plan to create a community environment for the protection of God's people and also an environment where God's laws could be enforced and His justice upheld.

¹ Now there arose a great outcry of the people and of their wives against their Jewish brothers. ² For there were those who said, "With our sons and our daughters, we are many. So let us get grain, that we may eat and keep alive." ³ There were also those who said, "We are mortgaging our fields, our vineyards, and our houses to get grain because of the famine."

⁴ And there were those who said, "We have borrowed money for the king's tax on our fields and our vineyards. ⁵ Now our flesh is as the flesh of our brothers, our children are as their children. Yet we are forcing our sons and our daughters to be slaves, and some of our daughters have already been enslaved, but it is not in our power to help it, for other men have our fields and our vineyards."

⁶ I was very angry when I heard their outcry and these words.

⁷ I took counsel with myself, and I brought charges against the nobles and the officials. I said to them, "You are exacting interest, each from his brother." And I held a great assembly against them ⁸ and said to them, "We, as far as we are able, have bought back our Jewish brothers who have been sold to the nations, but you even sell your brothers that they may be sold to us!" They were silent and could not find a word to say. ⁹ So I said, "The thing that you are doing is not good. Ought you not to walk in the fear of our God to prevent the taunts of the nations our enemies? ¹⁰ Moreover, I and my brothers and my servants are lending them money and grain. Let us abandon this exacting of interest.

¹¹ Return to them this very day their fields, their vineyards, their olive orchards, and their houses, and the percentage of money, grain, wine, and oil that you have been exacting from them." ¹² Then they said, "We will restore these and require nothing from them. We will do as you say." And I called the priests and made them swear to do as they had promised. ¹³ I also shook out the fold of my garment and said, "So may God shake out every man from his house and from his labor who does not keep this promise. So may he be shaken out and emptied." And all the assembly said "Amen" and praised the LORD. And the people did as they had promised.

While God's people focused on the work of the wall, it seems that they had neglected their fields (5:2). In light of this neglect, they hired others to work their fields in exchange for grain (v. 3). Moreover, while there was famine because of the neglect, the king did not suspend the taxes they owed (v. 4). Because of this situation, God's people were selling their vulnerable children into debt-slavery (v. 5). As a result, God's people neglected the poor and compromised their ability to provide for themselves.

? Why is it important that we keep a close watch on our own lives as we seek to be obedient to the will and commands of God?

Nehemiah became angry, and rightly so. Not only had they placed their children and the poor in a terrible position, they were also charging interest against one another (5:6-8). Jews charging other Jews interest was strictly forbidden in the law of Moses (Ex. 22:12-27; Lev. 25:35-54; Deut. 23:19-20). So Nehemiah pleaded with the people to open their eyes and see what they had done: "The thing that you are doing is not good. Ought you not to walk in the fear of our God to prevent the taunts of the nations our enemies?" (Neh. 5:9).

One of the things that God's people often fail to recognize is that threats to God's work do not always come from the outside; they often arise from the inside. In this passage we are reminded that ignoring God's commands in our lives can have serious implications against the task that is set before us.

We, like the Jews in this passage, can never fully live up to God's law. Even though the Jews were fully focused on accomplishing God's will in building the wall, they compromised in other areas. As they compromised in other areas, the entire work of building the wall was compromised. The good news is when Nehemiah confronted their sin, they repented and sought to right their wrongs (vv. 12-13).

In the same way, we must remember that the good news of the gospel is not just for our initial salvation but for our ongoing sanctification. The gospel rescues me from me—all of me. This is why repentance is central to the Christian life. Just as the Jews declared "Amen" to Nehemiah's convicting call (v. 13), so should we when confronted with the searching Word of God. We should also praise the Lord when abiding sin is revealed in our own lives because God's grace awakens us to it so we can repent and obey.

? When we are confronted with our own shortfalls and sins, there are two responses: to repent and obey *or* to resist God's conviction. How does the gospel empower our repentance and our response of obedience?

99 Essential Christian Doctrines

90. Social Concern

All Christians are under obligation to seek to make the will of Christ supreme in our own lives and in human society. Means and methods used for the improvement of society and the establishment of righteousness among men can be truly and permanently helpful only when they are rooted in the regeneration of the individual by the saving grace of God in Jesus Christ. In the Spirit of Christ, Christians should oppose racism, every form of greed, selfishness, vice, and all forms of sexual immorality, including adultery, homosexuality, and pornography. We should work to provide for the orphaned, the needy, the abused, the aged, the helpless, and the sick. We should speak on behalf of the unborn and contend for the sanctity of all human life from conception to natural death. Every Christian should seek to bring industry, government, and society as a whole under the sway of the principles of righteousness, truth, and brotherly love. In order to promote these ends, Christians should be ready to work with all men of good will in any good cause, always being careful to act in the spirit of love without compromising their loyalty to Christ and His truth (Mic. 6:8; Eph. 6:5-9; 1 Thess. 3:12).

Further Commentary

“What a note of victory! The best answer to opposition is to keep working and fulfill God’s will; thus others will see God’s power...Why do people oppose God’s work? If they admit that it is God working, that admission implies that they recognize his power (cf. Acts 5:34-39). If they can continue to convince themselves that the gospel really is not true or that this work is not God’s work, then they can remain comfortable in their unbelief or indifference. But this self-confidence receives a blow when they understand that God has really been working in and through his people. Judah’s enemies tried to make Nehemiah and the Jews afraid; but in the end they were the ones who feared (cf. Deut. 2:25; 1 Chron. 14:17; Ps. 126:2; Mal. 1:11,14) because they realized God had done something astonishing in this community. The phrase ‘and lost their self-confidence’ is literally ‘and they fell very much in their eyes,’ an unfamiliar idiom but one suggesting their pride had suddenly vanished (cf. Prov. 16:18-19; 29:23). Though the enemies increased because of Sanballat, the result was that more people were impressed with God’s power ([Neh.] 4:1,7).”⁸

—Mervin Breneman

3. God’s people give glory to God for success (Neh. 6:15-16).

Despite the threats from the outside, despite the threats from the inside, God worked in His people to accomplish His task in only 52 days! This is a clear reminder that God’s people cannot underestimate what God can accomplish through them if they trust in Him and persevere in obedience.

Throughout this story, Nehemiah reminded the people that God was with them (2:8). He also declared that God would not only give them the ability to accomplish this task but that He would also make them prosper (2:12,20). Moreover, Nehemiah knew that God would not only frustrate their enemies but would also fight for them (4:15,20). All of these truths climax in the triumphant declaration, even by their enemies, that God had accomplished this work:

¹⁵ So the wall was finished on the twenty-fifth day of the month Elul, in fifty-two days. ¹⁶ And when all our enemies heard of it, all the nations around us were afraid and fell greatly in their own esteem, for they perceived that this work had been accomplished with the help of our God.



When have you seen God do something so amazing that upon reflection you realized only God could have done it? What were the circumstances?

Christian history is full of examples of God’s people triumphing despite their inability and the circumstances in which they found themselves (consider Moses before Pharaoh; the reformers before the Catholic Church; the growing church in communist China). The church itself is an example of God’s triumph despite the frequent failures of God’s people and the opposition from the societies and cultures that they inhabit.

If you look around your own church, you will be struck by the fact that it is only by the power of God that so many different people from different backgrounds, socioeconomic statuses, and interests can be so closely bound in love for one another (e.g., Gal. 3:28). There are no worldly explanations adequate for such things. Only God can do this!

It’s important to remember that God has a purpose in all that He does. There are no random acts that come from the hand of the sovereign God of redemptive history. During the time of Nehemiah, God was restoring His people in the promised land and reorganizing them as His covenant people. God is working just the same in our day.



What is the danger of failing to give God glory for success?

Conclusion

As we look forward, we realize that this story is meant to give us a picture of what is to come. Cyrus' decree allowed the Jews to rebuild "the house of God" (Ezra 5:13; 6:3). Rebuilding the house involved the restoration of the people, not just walls, a city, and a temple. In other words, the house of God included the entire city—with its surrounding walls and central temple and the people themselves.

It is interesting to note that when the walls of the city were "dedicated" later in Nehemiah 12:27, the same word was used for dedicating the altar in Numbers 7:10 and the dedication of the temple in the description of Psalm 30. That Nehemiah brought the Levites in to purify the walls indicates that the city as a whole as being sanctified as the house of God.

Here God is giving us a picture of the New Jerusalem, the holy city that will come down out of heaven from God (Rev. 21:2). God's people will one day be gathered within this city's walls, and in it God will make His dwelling with humanity. In that day they will be delivered from all their enemies and ruled over by King Jesus, the promised descendant from the royal Davidic line, sitting on His eternal throne.

CHRIST CONNECTION: In Nehemiah's day, the people joined together to rebuild the wall around Jerusalem and protect the city from their enemies. Jesus later prophesied the destruction of Jerusalem, but through His death and resurrection, He made a way for His people to be protected from the enemies of sin and death.



Voices from Church History

"This is the sole refuge against all enemies of the church—namely, prayer to God and the zeal of teachers, who, meditating day and night on his law, fortify the hearts of the faithful against the attacks of the devil and his soldiers by preaching, consoling and exhorting."⁹

—Bede (circa 673-735)



Voices from Church History

"Social action is a partner of evangelism... Both are expressions of unfeigned love."¹⁰

—John Stott (1921-2011)