

“Finishing the Task”

Nehemiah 6

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(Lord’s Day Service, Thursday November 9, 2017)

Conspiracy Against Nehemiah

6 Now when Sanballat and Tobiah and Geshem the Arab and the rest of our enemies heard that I had built the wall and that there was no breach left in it (although up to that time I had not set up the doors in the gates), ² Sanballat and Geshem sent to me, saying, “Come and let us meet together at Hakkephirim in the plain of Ono.” But they intended to do me harm. ³ And I sent messengers to them, saying, “I am doing a great work and I cannot come down. Why should the work stop while I leave it and come down to you?” ⁴ And they sent to me four times in this way, and I answered them in the same manner. ⁵ In the same way Sanballat for the fifth time sent his servant to me with an open letter in his hand. ⁶ In it was written, “It is reported among the nations, and Geshem^[a] also says it, that you and the Jews intend to rebel; that is why you are building the wall. And according to these reports you wish to become their king. ⁷ And you have also set up prophets to proclaim concerning you in Jerusalem, ‘There is a king in Judah.’ And now the king will hear of these reports. So now come and let us take counsel together.” ⁸ Then I sent to him, saying, “No such things as you say have been done, for you are inventing them out of your own mind.” ⁹ For they all wanted to frighten us, thinking, “Their hands will drop from the work, and it will not be done.” But now, O God,^[b] strengthen my hands.

¹⁰ Now when I went into the house of Shemaiah the son of Delaiah, son of Mehetabel, who was confined to his home, he said, “Let us meet together in the house of God, within the temple. Let us close the doors of the temple, for they are coming to kill you. They are coming to kill you by night.” ¹¹ But I said, “Should such a man as I run away? And what man such as I could go into the temple and live?^[c] I will not go in.” ¹² And I understood and saw that God had not sent him, but he had pronounced the prophecy against me because Tobiah and Sanballat had hired him. ¹³ For this purpose he was hired, that I should be afraid and act in this way and sin, and so they could give me a bad name in order to taunt me. ¹⁴ Remember Tobiah and Sanballat, O my God, according to these things that they did, and also the prophetess Noadiah and the rest of the prophets who wanted to make me afraid.

The Wall is Finished

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. ¹⁷ Moreover, in those days the nobles of Judah sent many letters to Tobiah, and Tobiah's letters came to them. ¹⁸ For many in Judah were bound by oath to him, because he was the son-in-law of Shecaniah the son of Arah: and his son Jehohanan had taken the daughter of Meshullam the son of Berechiah as his wife. ¹⁹ Also they spoke of his good deeds in my presence and reported my words to him. And Tobiah sent letters to make me afraid.

Introduction

What are some things that distract you when you need to do something, or in your spiritual lives? This passage will teach us how to finish what we are supposed to finish. In this context of Nehemiah, it's the task of building a wall, symbolizing building a city and a nation. We have been dealing with opposition that Nehemiah and the Israelites faced in chapters 4 and 5. Now in chapter 6 we see a conspiracy against Nehemiah since the wall is about to be finished. The enemies are attempting to scare him into ceasing the work, but he is not deterred. Sanballat and his friends had failed miserably in their attempts to stop the people from working. Now they decided to concentrate their attack on the leader, Nehemiah. And They attack through people.

We can see this in spiritual battle in Matthew 16:3 in the life of Jesus who is expanding the city of God through the church. He speaks to the disciples, "who do you say that I am?" and Peter says, "You are Christ, Son of the living God." After this incredible confession of Peter's, Jesus talks about the cross. Out of love, Peter tells Jesus not to go to the cross and die, because he didn't fully understand how the kingdom would be established. Jesus said directly to Peter, who had just had this incredible confession / spiritual high, "get thee behind me Satan." I don't think Peter was possessed, but he still didn't want Jesus to die.

Satan's attack on Jesus came through a close person. Whenever you hinder someone from the calling, as Peter hindered Jesus from going to the cross, the calling of all callings, that is against what is God is saying. "For you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but the things of man." Notice that even we as believers can be used by Satan when we have worldly things on our mind, hindering people from loving God. The opposite is also true in our lives. Sometimes close people will come to us and say things that are the mind of man, not the mind of God, and that can hinder us spiritually.

We can see Satan working in the life of Eve who speaks to Adam, tempting him to sin as well, even though Adam was responsible for his sin. Sometimes we can be a hindrance from God and other people can hinder us. And we certainly see that in this context as Nehemiah was serving God. We can see how the task of God was being hindered, how the people were tempted to be distracted, and how they focused and finished the task. We will learn how to finish the task.

I. Do not be distracted - Be focused [1-4]

A. Do not be distracted [1-2]

With the wall almost complete, Sanballat, Tobiah, and others resort to trickery, knowing they cannot defeat the Jews by direct assault. The enemies were surrounding them in all directions. To the north: Sanballat and the Samaritans. To the east: Tobiah and the Ammonites. To the south: Geshem and the Arabs. To the west: the Ashdodites and probably what the "rest of the enemies" is referring to. We see Sanballat and Geshem send to Nehemiah in verse 2 "Come and let us meet together at the plain of Ono." This unknown place is presumably near the town of Ono, North of

Jerusalem, possibly serving as a neutral ground. Be careful of neutral ground. People ask if it's "okay" to do this or go there. If we're not going towards sin, sometimes Satan wants to meet us at neutral ground because once we are accustomed to it, it becomes much easier to sin.

Notice in this chapter the enemy uses subtle deception and plausible-sounding appeals. Often it sounds so logical according to our selfish desires and the world, but not logical according to the Bible, since it intends to hinder us. They also repeat. It says they asked him four times in this way. Just because you resist Satan once, don't think he is done. He will keep hitting you with the same temptations to wear you down. The enemies of God are persistent. Delilah tempted Samson, and after three times he gave up. Sometimes temptation comes from the closest people, and it's most difficult to overcome that. Potiphar's wife went every day to Joseph to tempt him in his workplace. Satan tempted Jesus three times in three different ways. And we know Peter denied Jesus three times through three different people. There is a persistence of temptation in our lives and is very difficult to overcome. He tempts us through persistence. That's why Paul taught Timothy something with similar ramifications.

2 Timothy 2:3 - *"Share in suffering as a good soldier of Christ Jesus."*

Remember you are a soldier of Jesus in the army of God. It says "no soldier gets tangled in civilian pursuits." There's nothing wrong with a soldier thinking about shopping, baseball, etc. except that you cannot have civilian pursuits because you are in danger and you are protecting your nation. As you are called on the task of being a soldier, you cannot have a pursuit of civilian affairs. "His aim is to please the one who enlisted him." He is orchestrating everything so that we can be victorious in Christ. Focus because we are soldiers in Jesus Christ.

B. Be focused [3-4]

If we are not to be distracted, then the positive command is to be focused. Nehemiah gave a sharp reply in verse 3: *"I am doing a great work and I cannot come down. Why should I stop the work while I leave it and down to you?"* It may seem like a haughty response to a reasonable invitation, but he correctly discerned the insincerities of his enemies and refused to be distracted by matters that would divert his energy and strength away from things that would distract him from rebuilding Jerusalem's wall.

For us to focus like that we must know how and when to say "No" and how to say "Yes". The more you are in a position of being a leader, there is pressure. Leaders often get blames for things they didn't do and criticized for the things they tried to do. They are misunderstood and rarely given the opportunity to set the record straight. If they act quickly, they are reckless. If they act slowly, they are cowardly. But there is a difference between living as a servant of God and living to win the approval of man.

1. *We must know how to say "No"*

We say "No" when it hinders the work of God or calling. You must know what you are supposed to be doing. We should say "No" to other people when their desires are not the best for the glory of God. We must listen to what they are saying, not how they say it. Whether they are close people or enemies. But some people just can't seem to say no, particularly if the request is repeated. Nehemiah said "No" four times. This is difficult as parents. One of the main jobs as a parent is to learn to say "No" to your kids. Because if they like something they will do it. But they are evil and selfish. They'll do what they want to do, but you must be able to make them do what they don't want to do, and not do the things that they want to do that will harm them.

2. *We must know how to say "Yes"*

Then we must learn how to say "Yes". Nehemiah had both the discernment on when to say no and the determination to say yes. Many things in life will distract us. When you're in high school, there's too many schools. When you're in college, there's too many majors to pick. When you graduate, there's too many potential spouses. When you're an adult, there's too many jobs and places to live. With this many choices to make for the future, we forget to be faithful in the present. Learn to wisely make choices and to be faithful in the present. The problem with making choices is that many of us are looking for our maximum happiness rather than the maximum glory of God. The real danger of worldliness is not necessarily that it will cause you to sin and fall, but that it makes you mediocre, less effective for the Kingdom of God because you cannot be faithful in the present. Divide hearts and unfocused lives lead to powerless lives. Learn to be faithful. Mundane things in your life are not mundane. They are great works if you have been called into them.

If you can't shine where you are, you can't shine anywhere. Though you may not have problems, everything might be too "okay". You might be living the American Dream, relatively successful. But sometimes the fulfillment of the American Dream is a Heavenly Nightmare. Always think about the Kingdom of God. Life brings bad, okay, and good things, and we choose based on which is the better option. But bad, okay, and good are all enemies of the best. Always choose the best: God. We complicate life, but we need to make life simple. Not simple in terms of doing less things, but as you multi-task in your life, make sure there is a simple motive, simple heart. Seek first His Kingdom and righteousness and all these things will be added unto you.

II. Do not be deceived - be discerning and wise [5-9]

A. *Do not be deceived [5-7]*

In verse 5, for the fifth time, Sanballat comes with an open letter with slanderous, false rumors against Nehemiah, intending to discredit him. In the letter, Sanballat takes up the old allegations of rebellion against Persia, which is what the enemy already tried with the Israelites in Ezra 4:12-13. The charge against Nehemiah was also that "you wish to become their king." If this charge

was true, it would certainly inflame the Persians, but Nehemiah had a relationship with King Artaxerxes. He was loyal to the human king and to the divine king, the God of Israel.

This was to deceive Nehemiah, the King, and Israel. Satan always does this: he lies and accuses to divide God and His people. We hear what he says in Job 1, 2, and 3. He accuses Job before God. And Satan does the opposite as well, accusing God before Eve. He wants to divide God and us so that God will not be glorified. Satan's work in the Bible is mainly through deception because contrary to secular belief, Satan cannot make human beings do anything. He can stimulate human beings to do things as they wish. His tactic is to tempt us to do it. He deceives so that we live according to lies. Know the truth and the Scripture so that we can be faithful to the things we are doing before God.

These are some of the lies I discovered as I counsel people. Some believe "You are nothing," and are discouraged. On the other hand, some believe "You are something, great, awesome," so you don't depend on the Lord. Others include "It's just one night, he will leave you if you don't", "it's just an image, it's not a real person. It won't hurt anyone. It won't affect your marriage in the future", or "Just one more time and then I'll repent and quit" (which should be, "I'll quit even if it takes one more time; God help me"), "Nobody cares about me, not even God". These are the lies and deceptions contrary to what God is saying in the Word of God that will help you to overcome. Satan will plant in you lies to discourage and deceive you, that you would not want to get closer to God. Be discerning and be wise.

B. Be discerning and be wise [8-9]

In verse 8 it says *"No such thing as you say has been done. Now God strengthen my hands."* The first thing Nehemiah does to resist the enemy's deception is with truth and prayer. Nehemiah flatly denies Sanballat's accusation, remaining the loyal servant of Artaxerxes.

For us, when should we remain quiet and when should we speak out against false accusation and lies? Spurgeon in *Lectures to my Students* gave some practical suggestions, speaking to rumors against pastors: "In most cases pastors should let such rumours die a natural death. Falsehood usually carry their own reputation somewhere about them and sting themselves to death. Some lies especially have a peculiar smell which betrays their rottenness to every honest nose. Your blameless life will be your best defense."

Spurgeon's saying to have integrity. But he also adds, "Yet there are exceptions to this general rule. When distinct, definite public charges are made against a man, he is bound to answer them, and answer them in the clearest and most open manner. To decline all investigation is in such a case practically to plead guilty. And the general public ordinarily regards a refusal to reply as a proof of guilt."

Since this open letter was a serious public accusation against him, Nehemiah speaks out. He does three things against these lies and accusations.

1. *Trustworthiness*

One thing is that he has already lived out a trustworthy life of integrity and character. We need to live out a life worthy of Christ so that people would give us credit.

2. *Truth telling*

He speaks out, proclaiming the accusations are lies. It is not to defend himself for his namesake, but to love others. If people misunderstand, they could sin against God. Nehemiah's motive was to love others for the glory of God, and not lead them to sin. There's also love for the accusers. Because if they lie and others are affected by them, it is also more of their sins so that perhaps they can repent. Have sharp eyes for the truth.

3. *Trusting God*

We see in verse 9 that he prays. He was rebelling from neither the human king nor the divine king. He asked God, and he persevered. If you are involved in rumors be careful. AB Simpson, the founder of a Christian Missionary Alliance Denomination (CMNA) said "I would rather play with a bolt of lightning or take in my hands living wires with a fiery current than speak a reckless word against any servant of Christ or idly repeat the slanderous darts which thousands of Christians are hurdling on others to the hurt of their own souls and bodies." Be careful in rumors and accusations, especially of spiritual leaders. It hurts the body of Christ and the glory of Christ.

Where do we get discernment and wisdom? There are two passages here. It comes through the Word. Hebrews 5:13 says *"Anyone who lives on milk is unskilled in the Word. He is a child."* But in verse 14 it says if you know the Word you are mature, trained by constant practice of the Word, using it to distinguish good and evil. Use it to discern the good, bad, and neutrals of life and you will mature, becoming a spiritual parent with your wisdom.

And it also comes through prayer. Philippians 1:9-10 says *"And it is my prayer that your love may abound more and more and with knowledge and all discernment so that you may test and approve what is excellent and pure and blameless."* I think the Word of God is to know. But you have two natures and so you get confused. Prayer helps to distinguish the fires of evil desires and with the leftover thoughts, precious and pure, and with them you can discern. You need a combination of Word and prayer.

What are some common lies in your spiritual lives that prevent you from progressing in your spiritual lives? Detect those things and fight those lies. Don't find time to read and pray as if it's something on the side. Make time to read the Word and pray. This is the most important thing to do in your life. The enemy knows that when prayer comes up, power comes down. The enemy also knows that when the Word goes in, wisdom comes out.

III. Do not be frightened - be courageous [10-14]

A. Do not be frightened [10, 12-13]

Verse 10 talks about Shemaiah who was shut-in, hired in by the enemy as a priest to prophesy against Nehemiah. Perhaps as a symbolic action to indicate when he was shut-in the temple to indicate his own life was in danger, to suggest that both Nehemiah and he must flee to the temple. Since Shemaiah had access to the temple, he may have been a priest. He was clearly a friend of Tobiah and therefore Nehemiah's enemy, but it was at least credible for Shemaiah to propose Nehemiah take refuge in the temple area at the altar of asylum, but not in the house of God, the temple building itself. Because only the priest could go into the house of God, and he was suggesting to do that.

A pagan belief (not a Jewish one) was that a person could be spared punishment from a crime by fleeing to a heathen temple and living there. Perhaps Shemaiah was using this worldly thinking. The Jews had a similar kind of command in Deuteronomy 9 and Joshua 20 called the Cities of Refuge. There were 6 cities, and people who were guilty of unintentional sin or homicide, they could run into these places for forgiveness. But there was no provision for help linked to the Jewish temple which this guy was suggesting, so it was a violation of the Law of God. In fact, King Uzziah who violated this provision had been fortunate to escape with no more than just leprosy. Since Shemaiah was not Biblical, Nehemiah could easily tell he was a false prophet.

B. Be courageous [11, 14]

In verse 12, "And I understood and saw that God had not sent him, but he had pronounced the prophecy against me because Tobiah and Sanballat had hired him." He was hired so that he would be afraid, and it would cause him to sin. This would give him a bad reputation. Then people would not listen to Nehemiah and the wall would not be built. Satan was attacking through these people. If Satan had one arrow towards the army of God, he would probably point it towards the leader. Don't believe everything you read or hear about Christian leaders. And when you do, be careful about being too critical because we don't know the whole story. Pray for them. There might be validity but there also lies mixed in. The world wants to make it big so that God would be hindered. Nothing good comes out of them. Every Christian leader has a target on his chest. If Satan can bring down a leader, he can cause extensive damage to the whole flock.

Whether you are a leader or not, the enemy uses the same scheme to try to sabotage your walk with God because you are a leader to the people in the world who do not believe in Jesus Christ. We need to be cautious, prayerful, and to care for one another. We need to be careful of rumors and gossip. Satan uses those things, especially if we participate in them as well.

We need to be courageous as well. In verse 14, Nehemiah responds not in retaliation but in prayer first. *"Remember Tobiah and Sanballat, O my God, according to these things that they did, and also the prophetess Noadiah and the rest of the prophets who wanted to make me afraid."*

Know, but don't focus on, the enemy. When we focus on the enemy, we get angry and retaliate. Focus on God. Do not stay in fear. Fear makes you see other things but faith makes you see God. He prays and as he does that in verse 11 you can see three things he did instead of fearing.

1. *He refused to forget who he is – who he is [11]*

First, he refused to forget who he is. *"And what man such as I could go into the temple and live?"* He knew God was using him as a political and spiritual leader but he was not a priest who could just go into the temple. He did not forget who he was but remained humble before Him. Many kings in the Bible became proud, crossed the lines of their calling, acted as priests, and received discipline for that. Always know where you are and where you're from. That when you were yet sinners God saved you. You are not great, but you are loved by the great and awesome God.

2. *He refused to forsake his calling – whose he is [11]*

Secondly, Nehemiah refused to forsake his calling. He remembered whose he was. He asks, *"Should such a man as I run away?"* Some people think he's acting all macho, insinuating that he is too strong to run away. But what he's saying is that "I am called to do this by God." To be in that position as a cupbearer close to the king, charged by God through the human king to be in this place. He's asking, "Should I run away from my calling?" He remembers he is of God and remains faithful to his calling.

3. *He refused to forbear disobedience – what he ought to do [11]*

Thirdly, he refused to forbear disobedience. "I will not go in." Our courage comes from our relationship with God. Who we are - we are in Jesus Christ, a child of God, a child of the King. Whose we are - God the Father's, who loves us in Jesus Christ, belonging in the family of God, the army of the King, called to our job, family, church, every sphere of your life. And our relationship through the Holy Spirit, to Jesus Christ. So we ought not to forget what we are to do, but we must obey. We have the power of the Holy Spirit available to us. Don't fear failures but keep on going. Obey, he will give you empowerment to keep going on.

Our courage comes from our relationship with God, so that we will refuse to forsake our call and refuse to forbear disobedience, and we will obey the Lord. Don't be a hired man like Shemaiah. Be called by God like Nehemiah. Making money is not bad, but don't let it determine your calling. Whatever job you have, wherever you live, be moved only by the calling of God. You are not man's servant, but a servant of God. Courage does not mean that you are not afraid. But it means you trust God. Your God is greater than your problems. The fear in you can be transformed into faith in Him. Keep on praying, keep on going to God's Word. The Sword of the Spirit will slash your fear, and whatever is in you will become faith.

IV. Do not stop until the task is finished - be faithful until the end [15-19]

Note that the text-wise the order is switched. Here we've been saying what to "do not" before what to "be". Here the "be" part of the passage comes earlier but we will talk about the "do not" section first, although it ends the chapter.

A. *Do not stop until the task is finished [16-19]*

The completion of the wall was an embarrassment to the enemy. But they did not give up. To give credit to Satan, he does not give up. Many careless Christians have won the war but afterwards lose the victory. If you can't see Satan working it's probably because he has gone underground. We are actually safer when we can see him at work. Open opposition is good for God's work and workers because it keeps us alert and trusting in the Lord, and we pray. But often Satan works invisibly. Do not stop until the task is finished.

In verse 17 it says, *"Moreover, in those days the nobles of Judah sent many letters to Tobiah."* Tobiah was part Jew and part Ammonite, his name in Hebrew means "God is good". In verse 18 it says *"many in Judah were bound by oath to him,"* (through marriage) so he was also a powerful being. Tobiah was also ethnically mixed, he had married a daughter of Judah, and the tribe of Judah had great influence in Israel. You can see in verse 19 these nobles were under oath to Tobiah and they spoke well of his good deeds. It's obvious that these nobles were compromising. This was seen not only by the fact that they gave their daughters to someone from the surrounding nations who didn't know God, which was forbidden (Ezra 9-10). But they were even praising Tobiah, who had been antagonistic to Israel from the beginning. Proverbs 28:4 "Those who forsake the law praise the wicked. And those who keep the law strive against them."

"And Tobiah sent letters to make me afraid." And the chapter ends like that. In verse 16, it talks about what they had accomplished, but it does not have a happy ending, because this is not the end. This is only the Old Testament, and there is a New Testament period we are living in. That means the battle is not over. "So the wall was finished," and wouldn't it be great if the chapter ended like this? In 52 days. Josephus, a non-Christian, Jewish historian, writes about Nehemiah and the building of his wall, and he states it took two years and four months. This is not contradictory because Josephus is including certain additional tasks such as various strengthening to parts of the wall, embellishing, beautifying, etc. The dedication of the wall would be described later in Chapter 12 of Nehemiah.

It says in verse 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."* Even enemies perceived that it was accomplished with the help of God. And all the nations around were afraid. When the Israelites feared none but God, these nobodies caused the fear of God in many nations. When there is the presence of God there is the power of God.

I wonder if we could dare to do something this great, that only faith in God can accomplish, such that even our enemies and the people in this world will say "God had done it." Verse 19 says *"they spoke of his good deeds,"* and *"Tobiah sent letters to make me afraid."* If we had finished with the completion of the wall it would have been great, but it ends with Tobiah trying to make him afraid. Just like when Jesus had overcome temptation three times, this is a little verse, like when a scary movie ends and the monster is still alive. It is said in Luke 4:13, *"he departed from him until an opportune time."* It's not over.

How have you experienced the enemy attacking right after a victory or a spiritual high? How can we more wisely protect ourselves from this tactic? Always be watchful.

B. Be faithful until the end [15-16]

But going back to verse 15, it said the wall was finished in 52 days. Observe that the narrative does not pause for self-congratulation. After you finish one thing for God, enjoy it a little bit. Celebrate it such that you will remember the faithfulness of God, and your dependence on Him. But keep on going. As the chapter ends, it marks a new beginning, because now Nehemiah must protect. Even though this was a great accomplishment, now he must protect what he has accomplished, and how he does this is the theme of the rest of the book. The enemy will not quit. Sometimes our greatest let downs come after our greatest victories. Remember in everything you are doing in life: "I am doing a great work." Focus.

What petty things have become great in your life that are distracting you from doing the great work of God? What are great things in our lives? Is it because Nehemiah and the Israelites were lifting great bricks? Even though I've seen the Pyramids, with incredibly huge bricks lifted by hand, the greatness of God does not equate to the size of the bricks they were lifting. It's not about the size of your work but the size of the person you are doing it for. Our God is infinitely great. All work for God is great.

Colossians 3 talks about our work and it says *"whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God."* It doesn't specify the task but it emphasizes the heart and motive you are doing it for. If we have this mentality, God-centered rather than happiness-centered, this will free you from the dissatisfaction of your present status. Don't compare yourself to the person next to you. Your work is great. There are so many "Whats" in life, but there always needs to be only one "Who", that you are doing it for Jesus, in the place of your calling. We'd rather aim high and miss than aim low and hit it. No matter how successful you are in your life, you are aiming low if you are living for yourself. Aim high, although you may fail, because you are doing a great work of God. I pray that you would aspire to live for God.

You may become successful in the world, but always be a servant of God, like Jesus who lifts the towel. Your serving towel should be bigger than your ego. Know who and whose you are, and what you're supposed to be doing in your life. You want to make impact? Find your towel to serve God, and acknowledge the privilege of doing something for God. And if you're going to do

your job do it right, until the end, for the greater glory of God. Even if you are good enough, it is not good enough if it can be better. Better is not enough if it can reach the best. If there is a singularity of your whom, you are doing everything for Jesus Christ, then you are doing your best. Even if you're at rock bottom, keep getting back up. Because that rock bottom is the justification of Jesus Christ. If you keep getting up even rock bottom can become the foundation of your life. It's not about how long you live, but about how you live, that you live for Jesus.

The most difficult 10 years of my life were between my 40s and 50s. That's when I was in CFC for almost 20 years and there were so many different options. Am I supposed to be here? Still with college students at my age? Other pastors my age were all at different places getting more of what they wanted whatever that was. Not that I wanted to go anywhere else but so many options and offers started to come in. And I had to at least think about them, is this where God is leading me? I would get one option, think about it, say no, and then I'd have to go on. There were so many distractions that I had to think about. Now when I counsel girls that many guys like, I understand. Learn how to focus, to be undivided, to be faithful. He will strengthen you and empower you because when you are faithful, you are doing great things for God.