

# The Christian Arsenal

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## MEET ME AT THE WALL TO FACE OPPOSITION Nehemiah: See You at the Wall

Dr. Ken Culver

Nehemiah 4:1-23

**INTRO:** There is no such thing as opportunity without opposition. One of the great tests of life is how do you handle opposition?

### I. THE TACTICS OF OPPOSITION

#### 1. FIRST TACTIC: RIDICULE

##### 2 Characteristics about Ridicule

- Ridicule is always the substitute for reason (v.1)
- Ridicule is contagious (v. 3)

#### 2. SECOND TACTIC: RESISTANCE (VS. 6-8)

The Israelites were surrounded by resistance.  
Sandballat and Samaritans – North  
Arabs – South  
Tobiah and Ammonites – East  
Men of Ashdod – West

Negative people tend to gravitate together.

#### 3. THIRD TACTIC: RUMOR (VS. 11-12)

The quickest way to spread a rumor is to feed on people's fears.

##### 2 Characteristics of Rumors

- They are always spread by those closest to the enemy (v. 12)
- They are exaggerated when they are repeated. (v. 12)

TRUTH: MATURE BELIEVERS DON'T SWALLOW RUMORS.

### II. THE EFFECT OF OPPOSITION

*“Meanwhile the people in Judah said, ‘The strength of the laborers is giving out and there is so much rubble that we cannot rebuild the wall. Also our enemy will attack.’”* v. 10,11

#### The Effect of Opposition: DISCOURAGEMENT

When does this usually occur in a project?

*“So we rebuilt the wall until all of it reached half of its height.”* v. 6

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Discouragement comes at the halfway point.

## FOUR CAUSES OF DISCOURAGEMENT

1. Fatigue – *“the strength of the laborers is giving out.”* (V. 10)
2. Frustration – *“There was so much rubble.”* (v. 10)  
Frustration is usually a matter of perception. Actually the piles are getting smaller.
3. Failure – *“we cannot rebuild the wall.”* (v. 10)  
Vince Lombardi – *“Fatigue makes cowards of all of us.”*
4. Fear – *“the enemies will attack us.”* (v. 11)

Opposition has two goals:

1. To hinder God’s work.
2. To stop God’s work.

## III. WHAT IS THE RIGHT RESPONSE TO OPPOSITION?

### 1. RELY ON GOD

*“Hear Oh God for we’re despised. Turn their insults back over their heads and give them over as plunder in the land of captivity. Do not cover their guilt or blot out their sins from your sight. They have thrown insults in the face of the builders.”* (vs. 4,5)

*“Do not answer a fool according to his folly, or you will be like him yourself.”* Prov. 26:4

TRUTH: WHEN YOU’RE RIDICULED DON’T TAKE IT OUT ON PEOPLE.  
TALK IT OUT WITH GOD.

### 2. RESPECT THE OPPOSITION.

*“But we prayed to our God and we posted a guard day and night to meet this threat.”* (v. 9)

Oliver Cromwell: *“Trust God and keep your powder dry.”*

Petition without Precaution is Presumption

Bible phrase used many times: *“Watch and pray”*

Matt. 26:41

I Peter 5:8

Col. 4:2

### 3. REINFORCE YOUR WEAK POINTS

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*“Therefore I stationed some of the people behind the lowest points of the wall at the exposed places, posting them by families with their swords, spears and bows.” (v. 13)*

TRUTH: MATURE BELIEVERS KNOW WHERE THEY ARE VULNERABLE AND THEY REINFORCE THAT AREA.

*“From that day on, half of my men did the work while the other half were equipped with spears and bows and armor. The officers posted themselves behind at the people of Judah who were building the wall. Those who carried materials did the work with one hand and held a weapon with the other. Each of the builders wore his sword at his side as he worked. But the man who sounded the trumpet stayed with me. I said to the nobles and officials, ‘The work is extensive and spread out and we are widely separated from each other along the wall. Whenever you hear the sound of the trumpet join us there and our God will fight for us.’” (vs. 16-18)*

TRUTH: MATURE BELIEVERS MUST BUILD AND BATTLE AT THE SAME TIME.

3 ALTERNATIVES:

1. Give up
2. Leave the wall and go fight
3. Build the wall and arm yourself defensively.

Principle to learn: Never fight alone. When you’re facing opposition, get some support.

## 4. REASSURE THE PEOPLE

*“After I looked things over I stood up and said to the nobles and the officials and the rest of the people, ‘Don’t be afraid! Remember the Lord is great and awesome. Fight for your brothers and your daughters and your homes.’” (v. 14)*

Principle to learn: “REMEMBER THE LORD”

If I fear God (reverential fear) then I don’t fear anyone else.

*“Don’t be afraid of people who can kill your body and then can’t do anything after that. Fear the person who can send you to Hell after your body is dead.” Luke 12*

## 5. REFUSE TO QUIT

*“When our enemies heard that we were aware of their plot and that God had frustrated it, we all returned to the wall, each to his own work.” (v. 15)*

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Calvin Coolidge: "Press on. Nothing can take the place of persistence. Talent will not. Nothing is more common than unsuccessful men with talent. Genius will not. Unrewarded genius is almost a proverb. Education will not. The world is full of educated derelicts. Persistence and determination alone are the overwhelming power."

*"So we continued to work ... with half of the men holding spears from the first light of dawn till the stars came out at night. At that time I also said to the people, 'Have every man and his helper stay in Jerusalem at night so they can serve us as guards by night and workmen by day.' Neither I nor my brothers nor any men nor the guards with me took off our clothes. Each had his weapon even when he went for water." (vs. 21-23)*

TRUTH: MATURE BELIEVERS MODEL PERSISTENCE.

A discouraged Christian is an ineffective Christian.

The secret of success is to simply outlast your critics.

An oak tree is just a little nut that refused to give his ground.