

Kingdom success means unity - a unity that is rooted in the simplicity of the gospel and empowered by Spirit-filled living. Church is not about building buildings, better programs, or better entertainment. The church of Jesus Christ is about changing lives, restoring souls, healing minds, and redeeming sinners. From that model of ministry comes abundant living, free flowing grace, and the fruit of the Spirit that this world needs. So, we need the church. Our children need the church. As we stand "next to" others in unity, abundant living is released.

Nehemiah is a type and shadow of the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament. Nehemiah is our example of the Holy Spirit who would come...

- His life and ministry was a shadow of the greater Holy Spirit who would come.
- Nehemiah's name means "Comfort". The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Comfort.
- Nehemiah came alongside the downtrodden Jews. The Holy Spirit's ministry is to "come alongside."
- Nehemiah encouraged the people. The Holy Spirit is our encourager.
- Nehemiah instructed the people what to do. The Holy Spirit is our teacher.
- On and on, we see that Nehemiah was a shadow or reflection of the Holy Spirit.

Here are some other types and shadows in Nehemiah:

Nehemiah 2:19 *But when Sanballat the Horonite and Tobiah the Ammonite official, and Geshem the Arab heard about it, they mocked us and despised us, and said, "What is this thing that you are doing? Are you rebelling against the king?"* **4:1** *Now it came about that when Sanballat heard that we were rebuilding the wall, he became furious and very angry, and he mocked the Jews.* **4:7** *Now when Sanballat, Tobiah, the Arabs, the Ammonites, and the Ashdodites heard that the repair of the walls of Jerusalem went on, and that the breaches began to be closed, they were very angry.* These territorial leaders did not want community and when God began to move, they got angry. It is the same today. God wants to protect us, speak truth to us, and keep us united. These leaders were instruments of satan and a type of satan in the Old Testament. Let's learn a little more about this enemy...

The history and fall of satan: **Ezekiel 28:13-15 NKJ. Ezekiel 28:17. Ezekiel 28:18** His name means and his work is to accuse people.

Isaiah 14:12-1 *How you have fallen from heaven, You star of the morning, son of the dawn! You have been cut down to the earth, You who defeated the nations! But you said in your heart, 'I will ascend to heaven; I will raise my throne above the stars of God, And I will sit on the mount of assembly in the recesses of the north. I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High.'* He was not thrown from Heaven but absolutely and completely cast from God's government - stripped of his place of authority. **Luke 10:18** *And He said to them, "I watched Satan fall from heaven like lightning.* He became so impressed with his own beauty, wisdom, and position that he demanded the same position as God. His pride destroyed him.

How does he attack us? With his words, as he is called "the accuser of the brethren."

- He tempted Jesus with his carefully constructed words of temptation.
- He used Peter to try to stop Jesus - with words.
- Jesus called him the father of lies - words.
- Paul called him a "roaring lion."
- He deceived Eve with his words.

What we see in Nehemiah is the common battle that Christians face daily - the lying, mocking, deceiving, angry, accusing, enemy who knows too well that the battle is in our minds.

Our comforter refutes the lies with truth - with Jesus' words - Jesus is both the Word and the Truth.

Do you see the battle between the voice of the Holy Spirit and the voice of satan? If you are to rebuild the walls and rehang the gates of your life, you've got to make a decision and it is this - who are you going to listen to?

The Bible says that He is a dragon, a roaring lion, an accuser, a slanderer, the deceiver, and brings fear. The main weapon is his voice and too many people listen. His goal is to talk us out of believing the voice and the promises of God. He moves slowly and methodically. He is patient. It is our commissioning from the Lord to overcome his advances. **2 Corinthians 10:4-5** *For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses. We are destroying arguments and all arrogance raised against the knowledge of God, and we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ.* The stronghold is an area that we are in bondage to. This is war. It is not some kind of dark fairy tale. So many people have broken down walls yet are convinced they cannot do anything about it. But that is a lie!!

Romans 12:2 *And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.* How do you defeat the lies and counterattack the enemy? The Word! **John 8:31-32** *So Jesus was saying to those Jews who had believed Him, "If you continue in My word, then you are truly My disciples; and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."* It is the Word that will overcome. Jesus said in **Mark 4:24** *And He was saying to them, "Take care what you listen to. By your standard of measure it will be measured to you; and more will be given you besides.* How much we put into the Word will be how much we will get out it. Dig into His Word!

Proverbs 23:7 *For as he thinks within himself, so he is...* If you think fleshly, wrong, negative thoughts, we will never hear the voice of the Spirit. We become what we think in our minds. Arise and build! How do you defeat the lies? Use the weapons of the Word - preaching, teaching, Bible study, devotions. The Word will overcome the lies of the enemy.

What are the common lies of the enemy? He attacks our character, our worship, our self-worth, reminding us of our sins. Just like Sanballat, Tobiah, and Geshem, the devil and his droves fight against us.

Nehemiah 6:1-2 *Now when it was reported to Sanballat, Tobiah, Geshem the Arab, and to the rest of our enemies that I had rebuilt the wall, and that no breach was left in it, although at that time I had not installed the doors in the gates. Sanballat and Geshem sent a message to me, saying, "Come, let's meet together at Chephirim in the plain of Ono." But they were plotting to harm me.* There will come a day when you will see the progress of the Holy Spirit in your life if you listen and obey. It is at that point that the enemy will try to negotiate a truce of sorts. Do not negotiate with the enemy. Heed the words of **Nehemiah 6:3** *I sent messengers to them, saying, "I am doing a great work and am unable to come down. Why should the work stop while I leave it and come down to you?"* Listen to these words and use these words to the devil. How do we get started?

- Refute the lies with God's Word.
- Repent and take responsibility - no excuses.
- Re-engage the Holy Spirit at the first point of truth - Jesus loves me, this I know. For the Bible tells me so.

You cannot have a positive life and a negative mind. Begin today. Begin now with heartfelt prayer and worship.

What new thing did you learn about the enemy?

How have you experienced using God's Word to refute the lies?

What are some keys to recognizing God's voice over satan's lies?