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# ARISE AND BUILD – BEWARE THE POWER OF DISTRACTION

Ps Brian Houston | Sunday 16.05.2021

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## Introduction:

Distraction is one of the enemy's biggest strategies to make us stray from our purpose, especially when it comes to rescuing, restoring and rebuilding.

There are many forms of distractions: problems, attacks, challenges, comparison.

## Message details:

In the story of Nehemiah in the Old Testament [*you can start at [Nehemiah Chapter 2](#)*], God asked him to restore and rebuild the walls of Jerusalem, while he was still in captivity. Nehemiah had a great task ahead of him and also had enemies who were full of threats, intimidation, accusation, allegations, and had constantly tried to distract him from building the wall.

Likewise, we have to beware of being distracted from what God has for us in life.



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This is how Nehemiah stayed on the right track:

- 1. HE PRAYED.**
- 2. HE REMINDED HIMSELF OF THE PURPOSES AND PROMISES OF GOD.**
- 3. HE REPENTED. HE DID HIS HEART WORK.**
- 4. HE BELIEVED GOD AND TRUSTED GOD FOR SUCCESS.**
- 5. HE GOT LETTERS OF AUTHORITY FROM THE KING FOR THE REBUILDING OF THE WALL. HE HAD AUTHORITY.**
- 6. HE INSPECTED THE RUINS. SO THAT HE COULD COUNT THE COST AND KNOW WHAT WAS NEEDED AHEAD.**
- 7. HE GATHERED A WHOLE LOT OF OTHERS AROUND HIM. HE HAD A LIKE-MINDED COMMUNITY.**
- 8. HE WAS COURAGEOUS.**
- 9. HE FOCUSED ON BUILDING. HE REFUSED TO BE DISTRACTED.**

Proverbs 4:25 (NKJV)

*Let your eyes look straight ahead, And your eyelids look right before you. Ponder the path of your feet, And let all your ways be established. Do not turn to the right or the left; Remove your foot from evil.*

2 Kings 22:2 (NKJV)

*And he did what was right in the sight of the Lord, and walked in all the ways of his father David; he did not turn aside to the right hand or to the left.*

So the word for Nehemiah is the same as it is for us:

- Focus on building.
- Don't get distracted.
- Don't turn to the left or to the right.



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## **BEWARE OF DISTRACTION**

### Nehemiah 6:2 (NKJV)

*[...] Sanballat and Geshem sent to me, saying, "Come, let us meet together among the villages in the plain of Ono." But they thought to do me harm. So I sent messengers to them, saying, "I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down. Why should the work cease while I leave it and go down to you?" But they sent me this message four times, and I answered them in the same manner.*

Nehemiah's enemies tried many times to get him off the vision. But he was resilient and remained focused on the work that needed to be carried out.

- If we are not protecting the work, it's vulnerable and open to attack.
- If we are not protecting our vision, our relationship with Jesus, the things that God has in store for us, then our focus may stray.
- When we lose focus, rather than being proactive, we can become reactionary, and that leads to discouragement.

### 1 Peter 5:8 (NKJV)

*Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.*

The enemy, like a roaring lion, looks for ways to devour our dreams, our vision, what God's put in our spirit;

## **COMPARISON IS A DISTRACTION**

### 2 Corinthians 10:12-13a (NKJV)

*For we dare not class ourselves or compare ourselves with those who commend themselves. But they, measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise. We, however, will not boast beyond measure, but within the limits of the sphere which God appointed us.*

Even the disciples used to argue about who was the greatest amongst them. Comparison just occupies our attention unnecessarily and takes our eyes off what is important.



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## **PROBLEMS CAN BE A DISTRACTION**

- It's critical that we keep our eyes on Jesus.
- Problems come with the territory of building.
- Having problems is not the problem, it's what we do with those problems.
- The more impact you're having, the greater the challenges.

### Psalm 4:8 (NKJV)

*I will both lie down in peace, and sleep; For You alone, O Lord, make me dwell in safety.*

David had problems both before and after he was King. And yet, he wrote this psalm as a faith statement.

## **STAY BOLD IN YOUR FAITH AND HOLD ONTO GOD**

### Mark 4:35-38 (MSG)

*Late that day he said to them, "Let's go across to the other side." They took him in the boat as he was. Other boats came along. A huge storm came up. Waves poured into the boat, threatening to sink it. And Jesus was in the stern, head on a pillow, sleeping! They roused him, saying, "Teacher, is it nothing to you that we're going down?"*

### Mark 4:40 (MSG)

*Jesus reprimanded the disciples: "Why are you such cowards? Don't you have any faith at all?"*

- We are not called to be cowards. We have the power of God on us.
- We have got our eye on the promise and purpose of God.
- We won't quit.

### 1 John 4:4 (NKJV)

*You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world.*



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**Personal reflection:**

- *What is the One Thing that stood out to you from today's message?  
Write it down and come back to it throughout the week.*
- *Who can you share your "One Thing" with? A friend? A family member?  
Someone in your Community Group?*
- *Are there any distractions in your life that keep you from doing what God  
has called you to do? What can you do to help you keep you focused? Who  
is around you who can help you?*
- *As you read over these message notes and scriptures again, ask God for  
revelation and wisdom on how to stay the course and to recognise what is a  
distraction.*
- *Father, help us stay focused and stay the course, just as it says in  
Proverbs 4:25.*