

Six Marks of Lay Leadership

Nehemiah 6:1-14

It helps to have a sense of humor.

Spurgeon would occasionally find a nasty anonymous letter lying on his pulpit when he would stand up to preach. There would be a letter but no name. One day he got to the pulpit and there was a piece of paper with one word written in large letters ... "idiot" ... So Spurgeon said, "Normally I get letters without signatures, but today I got a signature without a letter."

I hope Nehemiah possessed a sense of humor because he also received nasty, anonymous letters that he recorded for to read. If you like to read other peoples mail you are going to like Nehemiah 6.

Nehemiah was the consummate lay leader

1. He Showed concern for God's work (Nehemiah 1:1-4)
2. He Prayed for God's people (Nehemiah 1:5-11)
3. He Followed his leader (Nehemiah 2:1-8)
4. He Motivated his followers (Nehemiah 2:9-20)
5. He Organized his work (Nehemiah 3:1-32)
6. He Handled his opposition (Nehemiah 4-6)
 - A. He handled opposition from without (4) Ridicule and threats from the enemy
 - B. He handled opposition from within (5) Selfishness from believers
 - C. He handles opposition from without (6) Personal attacks from the enemy

Sanballat and the other enemies once again attack God's work but with a new strategy: Attack the Leader. "Sack the QB"; Shoot the officers; kill the snake by cutting off its head.

The enemy launches a three prong attack against the leader:

1. The Enemy Opposes the Leader with Compromise (6:1-4)

- A. The opposition comes after a great accomplishment (6:1)
- B. The opposition comes disguised as an opportunity (6:2)
 - 1) To the request to stop his great work and meet in Ono Nehemiah said, "No!."

Most leaders have "To Do" lists. I write one out every Monday.

Most leaders need to write out a “To Not To Do” list. I am not talking about a

“To Not To Do Sin” list, but a “To Not To Do Good” list.

Good can take the place of best in our lives.

2) Lee Iacocca is an example in “Good to Great” pages 131–133

3) Nehemiah kept saying “No!” in 6:4.

2. The Enemy Opposes the Leader with Rumors (6:5–9)

Someone defined gossip as “news you have to hurry and tell somebody else

before you find out it isn’t true.”

A. The source of rumors is usually unknown.

B. The content of rumors is wrong.

C. The result of rumors is hurt. The intent of this slander was to hinder Nehemiah from doing God’s work.

Chuck Swindoll, “I am personally convinced that the number one enemy of

Christian unity is the tongue It’s not drink, not drugs, not poor homes, not

inflation, not TV, not even a bad church program----it is the tongue” (Hand Me

Another Brick, page 131).

God’s thinks so also. Just read Proverbs 6:16–19.

Some believers need to get a post it, write 3 of the 7 things God hates and stick it on their cell phones.

Who is ultimately hurt by rumors? The person who spreads them. God blessed

Nehemiah not Sanballat and company.

D. The response to rumors is two-fold (6:8–9)

1) Deny the rumor to the person spreading it.

2) Pray for God to give you strength. You will need it.

3. The Enemy Opposes the Leader with Peer Pressure (6:10–14)

A. Nehemiah refused to run (6:10–11)

When appeals to compromise did not work and rumors did not hinder, the

enemy reverted to threats in 6:10.

Nehemiah refused to run from his great work in 6:11.

B. Nehemiah's ratings in the polls dropped in 6:14

C. Nehemiah prayed in 6:14 and went back to work in 6:15

Warren W. Wiersbe writes that Bible teacher G. Campbell Morgan on more than one occasion was the target of savage gossip that accused him of unfaithfulness to the Christian faith. His usual reply was, "It will blow over. Meanwhile, I go quietly on with my work" (Be Determined, page 76).