



‘Opposition Rises’

1. What kind of opposition do Christians often face today? To what extent are our attitudes responsible for this opposition? How far should we be prepared to cooperate with people whose world view or theology and understanding we might disagree with?
2. Read Ezra 4. If the people mentioned in verse 1 were the enemies of the people of Judah and Benjamin, why did they offer to help? How did the people in the land attempt to stop the building of the temple?
3. Was the promise made by these people who were attempting to ensnare them believable? How could they know whether it was true or not? Are there any principles we can use to distinguish which things are opportunities and which are temptations?
4. Opposition to the work of God is nearly always with us. Sometimes the opposition is not direct and outward but occurs in subtle ways. In your experience have you been aware of opposition to God’s work either in your own life or the church? Describe. How did you respond?
5. Read Nehemiah 4. What kind of opposition do we find in verses 1-6? Who are those opposing the rebuild? What is implied in the accusations levelled at the Jews?
6. How did Nehemiah hear about this threat? How did Nehemiah respond to this new threat?
7. What is his prayer? What is your response to his prayer?
8. Do you find ridicule and sarcasm harder to handle than physical opposition? How do you handle such opposition?
9. Not all the opposition came from outside. The people themselves became demoralised and started complaining (v.10). However, by verse 21 we find them back working enthusiastically from dawn to dusk. What changed them from being despondent to enthusiastic?
10. What lessons can we learn from Nehemiah? About leadership? About planning? About responding to opposition?