

PRAYER MEETING
"PUTTING THE SAINTS IN FEAR"

Introduction

1. Here we see a good man speaking to enemies.
2. It is a common sight in the Bible.
3. You and I as Christians will have enemies.

DOCTRINE: One of the devices of the devil is to put us into a state of fear and even of panic.

1. THE EVIL MOTIVE BEHIND THOSE WHO SEEK TO MAKE GOD'S PEOPLE AFRAID

- 1) Summary of Nehemiah's service to God.
- 2) Various devices and tricks used to stop his faithful work in God's Kingdom:
 - (i) See chap. 2:10 – their hatred
 - (ii) 2:19 – their scorn
 - (iii) 4:1-3 – insults and contempt
 - (iv) 4:8 – war

OBSERVE: The element of force was escalating
- 3) Then the enemy alters his strategy: chap. 6
 - (i) 6:2: a meeting!
 - (ii) "four times" (v.4) – v.5: a letter full of lies
 - (iii) v.10: meet in the Temple
- 4) Their Motive clearly was:
 - (i) to panic the Lord's people
 - (ii) thereby to stop their work + witness

OBSERVE: Fear is harmful (observe two kinds of fear)
 It is a common tactic of God's enemies:

 - (i) Peter + other apostles
 - (ii) Early persecutions
 - (iii) Luther + others
 - (iv) In a measure – our own day.

2. THOSE WHO ARE TRUE BELIEVERS OUGHT NOT TO ALLOW CIRCUMSTANCES TO PANIC THEM IN LIFE

- 1) If fear + panic are harmful, we must be on guard against them:
 TEXT (Explain – also see v.3, 8, 9 – "Should such a man as I flee?")
APPLICATION: There is the answer to all our fears – we are God's people – all the power of heaven on our side.
- 2) To give in to fear is to doubt God's word:
 - (i) "fear not for I am with thee..." (See Isa. 43:2)
 - (ii) Christ: "I am with you...end of world"
 - (iii) "The fear of man brings a snare"
- 3) What fear has done to God's cause is very great:
 - (i) Satan uses evil men to scorn + scoff: It is to weaken our faith in what God has said.
 - (ii) Church discipline has been used to stop men's mouths:
 e.g. John 9; the Erskines.
 - (iii) The law of the land: esp. at the period before and at the Reformation – **Illustration:** "New England"
 - (iv) The pressure has been to give up some or all of what God's word teaches.
APPLICATION: It is no different today. Satan still busy.

3. IN A TIME WHEN FEAR ATTACKS US WE MUST REMIND OURSELVES OF CERTAIN THINGS

- 1) "God hath not given us a spirit of fear"... (2 Tim. 1:7)
APPLICATION: There is always a temptation to forget this.
- 2) God is always with us – in every situation:
 - (i) Abraham offering up Isaac
 - (ii) Joseph in prison
 - (iii) Job in all his loss + sorrow
 - (iv) Three friends of Daniel in the fire!
 - (v) Paul (2 Tim. 4:16)

APPLICATION: Are you + I ever going to be in worse?

- 3) Satan is the author of these attacks + we are to put on the whole armour of God.
ILLUSTRATION: Iraq + Afghan: our soldiers not always (so it is said) well-protected.
- 4) Fear of man is something to be resisted for the good of souls:
ILLUSTRATION: Knox, Welsh...
APPLICATION: Stand fast in the strength of God!
- 5) God will make all our fears liars unto us sooner or later:
ILLUSTRATION: The liars are chained!

CONCLUSION

What an example we have here in Nehemiah.
So, confront your fears by FAITH.

<p>PSALM</p> <p>34: 17 – 22</p> <p>54: 1 – 7</p> <p>56: 3 – 8</p>
