

Trusting God When Critics Mock You

Nehemiah 4:1-20

Outline

Introduction: What should a Christian do when his faith and morals are attacked? Today's message in our *Faith Under Fire* sermon series focuses on the life of Nehemiah, who survived his critics and finished a God-given challenge. We can learn how to face our own critics and challenges by looking at his life.

Four typical ways of handling critics and their criticism:

1. Let it get you down and become depressed, defeated and silent.
2. Compromise in hopes that they will accept you and your Christian worldview and values.
3. Get mad and get even with counter-criticisms and personal attacks.
4. Stand up and face your critics and their views with courageous faith and a bold defense of the truth.

Where are the critics of Christian values?

Nehemiah is an example of how you can stand up courageously in the face of ungodly criticism. *Nehemiah 4:1-20*

A critic's typical strategy - vss. 1-3

1. Critics use rage and anger to stir people up against you and your Christian values. ***Vs. 1, "He became angry and was greatly incensed."***
2. Critics subject you to public ridicule. ***Vs. 2, "He ridiculed the Jews."***
3. Critics gather a wider circle of easily-influenced people to adopt their evil views and ungodly ways. ***Vs. 2, "...in the presence of his associates and the army of Samaria."***

A critic's typical methodology - vss. 2-3

1. Label you and dismiss your beliefs and values – ***"What are those feeble Jews doing?"***
2. Mock your values as worthless – ***"Will they restore their wall? Will they offer sacrifices?"***
3. Ridicule your goals and unattainable – ***"Will they finish in a day?"***

4. Impede your progress – ***“Can they bring the stones back to life from those heaps of rubble—burned as they are?”***

Nehemiah’s victory plan to confront and defeat his critics - vss. 4-20

1. Pray for your critics and against their plans. **Vs. 4-5**
2. Restate your values, fire up your passion, and keep moving toward godly goals. **Vs. 6**
3. Stand guard over godly views and values in your own family. **Vss. 7-8, 13**
4. Keep building Christian values into the fabric of the culture around you. **Vss. 16-18**
5. Trust God, because the battle belongs to the Lord. **Vss. 19-20**

Conclusion: 2 Chronicles 7:14, *“If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land.”*