

Restoration – The Opposition

A natural law of science tells us that for every action there is an equal and opposite reaction.

Natural laws are often a reflection of spiritual laws, except that God and Satan aren't equal so when Satan opposes the work of God it is an opposite reaction but not an equal one.

Satan, being a created being far less than God cannot defeat God so he attacks the people of God. When God starts a work of restoration we can be sure that we will have opposition. Satan would want to do everything in his power to prevent us from becoming all that God want us to be.

Nehemiah 4: 1 – 23; 6: 1 – 14

- 1) Opposition comes in various forms (4: 1 – 3; 6: 1 – 5; 10)
 - Ridicule – sometimes by people who don't like us but sometimes even by people close to us (4: 1)
 - Questioning what we are doing – trying to bring doubt of what God had said. (4: 2)
 - Satan did this in the Garden of Eden
 - Try and cause us to concentrate on our weaknesses and inabilities
 - Attempt to waste our time (6: 2)
 - Can be internal – procrastination
 - External – people who are time wasters
 - Schemes to harm us (6: 2)
 - This can be physical, emotional or our reputation or dignity
 - Lies and deception (6: 5 – 7, 10)
 - ^{John 8: 44} You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father's desire. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies.

- 2) Our reaction to opposition (vs. 4 – 15; 6: 8 – 14)
 - Turn to God in prayer (4: 4)
 - Pray that God will strengthen our hands (6: 9)
 - Continue the building with all your heart (4: 6)
 - Prepare for spiritual warfare (4: 7 – 13)
 - ^{1Peter 5: 8 - 9} Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. ⁹ Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that your brothers throughout the world are undergoing the same kind of sufferings.
 - Be aware of Satan's strategies (6: 8 – 9)
 - Intimidation is not of God
 - Encourage each other to look to the Lord in times of opposition (4: 14 – 15)
 - Don't run away from what God has called you to do (6: 11)

- 3) Working for restoration with readiness for spiritual warfare (vs. 16 – 23)
- Our reaction to opposition is one of preparedness. However we need to continue the work of restoration in the state of readiness – being alert because we don't know when the opposition will actually happen. (4: 16)
 - Jesus was tempted during a time of weakness when he had been fasting for 40 days and was weak and hungry. Luke 4: 13 tells us that “when the devil had finished all this tempting, he left him until an opportune time.”
 - We don't know when the devil will consider it an opportune time and thus we ought to remain in a state of readiness knowing that he is waiting for us to let our guard down.
 - Some principles of spiritual warfare during the restoration process:
 - We protect each other (4: 16)
 - Someone once stated that the church is the only army that shoots its wounded.
 - This should NOT ever be the case
 - We all wear our spiritual army during the restoration process (4: 17 - 18)
 - The sword worn at the side is a readiness to attack
 - The Word of God is the sword of the Spirit.
 - Are we ready to use the word of God in any situation?
 - We call others to our aid when needed. (4: 19 – 20)
 - We are sometimes put into situations that we can't handle ourselves and need someone more experienced or skilled to deal with it.
 - Never let down your guard even/especially when things seem quiet i.e. when life is going well and we are just getting our life together again. (4: 21 – 23)
 - Be aware that Satan uses people in our midst to oppose God's work in our lives (6: 10 – 12)
 - Jesus rebuked Satan when Peter opposed Him going to the cross (Matthew 16: 21 – 23)

Has God started a work of restoration in your life?

Are you being opposed in that work – internally or externally?

Be alert to the fact that Satan isn't happy about God's work in your life and he is out to destroy it.

James 1:12 Blessed is the man who perseveres under trial, because when he has stood the test, he will receive the crown of life that God has promised to those who love him.