

The Path To Victory  
Discussion Notes- January 25, 2026

1. Who is someone you admire for their perseverance or follow-through? What stands out about them?

This sermon walked us through The Path to Victory using three declarations: *I Can, I Do, and I Will*. David's story reminded us that faith begins with believing God can deliver us, even when the odds feel impossible, and that perseverance often means stepping forward afraid, alone, or uncertain. Through Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus, we were challenged to live with integrity by following through on our commitments and refusing to waste our lives with passivity. Nehemiah showed us that lasting victory requires determination—staying on the wall, eliminating distractions, and refusing to abandon the work God has given us. Ultimately, the message called us to action: trusting the Spirit's power, getting back up when we fall, and choosing obedience now rather than living with regret later.

**Read 1 Samuel 17:36-37**

"Your servant has struck down both lions and bears, and this uncircumcised Philistine shall be like one of them, for he has defied the armies of the living God." 37 And David said, "The Lord who delivered me from the paw of the lion and from the paw of the bear will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine." And Saul said to David, "Go, and the Lord be with you!"

In 1 Samuel 17:36–37, David points to his faithfulness in the unseen responsibilities of tending sheep, where God trained and shaped him long before the battlefield. By taking responsibility seriously and trusting God in small, ordinary moments, David gained confidence that the same God would be faithful again.

2. How did David's past faithfulness shape his confidence for the present battle?

**Read 1 Corinthians 15:54-58**

*"When the perishable puts on the imperishable, and the mortal puts on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory." "O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?" The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain."*

In this passage, Paul reminds us that victory ultimately belongs to the Lord—death is defeated, and our confidence comes from what Christ has already done. Because the victory is secure, we are called to live it out now: standing firm in faith (I Can), faithfully doing the work God has given us (I Do), and refusing to quit when it gets hard (I Will). Knowing our labor in the Lord is not in vain empowers us to stay on the wall, remove distractions, and get up one more time.

3. In what ways does this scripture challenge the temptation to quit, slow down, or get distracted from the work God has given you?

**Read Hebrews 10:35-39**

*“Therefore do not throw away your confidence, which has a great reward. For you have need of endurance, so that when you have done the will of God you may receive what is promised. For, “Yet a little while, and the coming one will come and will not delay; but my righteous one shall live by faith, and if he shrinks back, my soul has no pleasure in him.” But we are not of those who shrink back and are destroyed, but of those who have faith and preserve their souls.”*

Even when obedience becomes costly or difficult we are reminded not to throw away our confidence. The passage makes it clear that endurance is required because following God often involves waiting, pressure, and resistance before we see the promise fulfilled. This leads us to consider what it truly looks like to live by faith instead of shrinking back when fear or discomfort shows up.

4. What does it look like practically to “live by faith” instead of shrinking back when pressure or fear shows up?

**Read Deuteronomy 5:32-33**

*“You shall be careful therefore to do as the Lord your God has commanded you. You shall not turn aside to the right hand or to the left. You shall walk in all the way that the Lord your God has commanded you, that you may live, and that it may go well with you, and that you may live long in the land that you shall possess.”*

This week we’ve seen that victory comes when we step forward in faith, faithfully do the work God has placed before us, and persevere no matter the obstacles. Like David, Joseph, Nicodemus, and Nehemiah, God shapes us through responsibility, past faithfulness, and daily obedience so we are ready for the moments He calls us to. The challenge for each of us is simple but profound: say I can, take the next step to I do, and resolve I will, trusting God to work through us and finish what He has begun.

5. Is there something God has already asked you to do that you’ve delayed or avoided? What’s one step of obedience you could take this week?

**Prayer Points/Closing:**

- Pray for courage to step into what God is asking, even when it feels scary or uncertain.
- Pray for faithfulness to follow through and do what God has called you to, without delay or distraction.
- Pray for perseverance to rise again after setbacks and trust God to complete the work He started.

### **Deeper Dive: Nehemiah – Perseverance and Obedience**

Nehemiah was a cupbearer to King Artaxerxes of Persia, a trusted servant who lived during the mid-5th century BC. He received news that the walls of Jerusalem were broken down and the city gates burned, leaving the people vulnerable and ashamed. Deeply burdened, Nehemiah prayed and sought God's guidance before asking the king for permission to rebuild Jerusalem's walls. His story is one of faith, strategic leadership, and perseverance under opposition, showing how God equips ordinary people to do extraordinary work when they respond in obedience.

#### **Read Nehemiah 2:11-18**

*“So I went to Jerusalem and was there three days. Then I arose in the night, I and a few men with me. And I told no one what my God had put into my heart to do for Jerusalem. There was no animal with me but the one on which I rode. I went out by night by the Valley Gate to the Dragon Spring and to the Dung Gate, and I inspected the walls of Jerusalem that were broken down and its gates that had been destroyed by fire. Then I went on to the Fountain Gate and to the King's Pool, but there was no room for the animal that was under me to pass. Then I went up in the night by the valley and inspected the wall, and I turned back and entered by the Valley Gate, and so returned. And the officials did not know where I had gone or what I was doing, and I had not yet told the Jews, the priests, the nobles, the officials, and the rest who were to do the work. Then I said to them, “You see the trouble we are in, how Jerusalem lies in ruins with its gates burned. Come, let us build the wall of Jerusalem, that we may no longer suffer derision.” And I told them of the hand of my God that had been upon me for good, and also of the words that the king had spoken to me. And they said, “Let us rise up and build.” So they strengthened their hands for the good work.”*

Nehemiah begins by assessing the problem and planning carefully. He doesn't rush in blindly but he surveys the walls in secret before revealing God's plan. Once he shares the vision, the people are motivated to take action. This section emphasizes preparation, vision, and reliance on God's guidance before taking action.

#### **Read Nehemiah 4:1-14**

*“Now when Sanballat heard that we were building the wall, he was angry and greatly enraged, and he jeered at the Jews. And he said in the presence of his brothers and of the army of Samaria, “What are these feeble Jews doing? Will they restore it for themselves? Will they sacrifice? Will they finish up in a day? Will they revive the stones out of the heaps of rubbish, and burned ones at that?” Tobiah the Ammonite was beside him, and he said, “Yes, what they are building—if a fox goes up on it he will break down their stone wall!” Hear, O our God, for we are despised. Turn back their taunt on their own heads and give them up to be plundered in a land where they are captives. Do not cover their guilt, and let not their sin be blotted out from your sight, for they have provoked you to anger in the presence of the builders. So we built the wall. And all the wall was joined together to half its height, for the people had a mind to work. But when Sanballat and Tobiah and the Arabs and the Ammonites and the Ashdodites heard that the repairing of the walls of Jerusalem was going forward and that the breaches were beginning to be closed, they were very angry. And they all plotted together to come and fight*

*against Jerusalem and to cause confusion in it. And we prayed to our God and set a guard as a protection against them day and night. In Judah it was said, "The strength of those who bear the burdens is failing. There is too much rubble. By ourselves we will not be able to rebuild the wall." And our enemies said, "They will not know or see till we come among them and kill them and stop the work." At that time the Jews who lived near them came from all directions and said to us ten times, "You must return to us." So in the lowest parts of the space behind the wall, in open places, I stationed the people by their clans, with their swords, their spears, and their bows. And I looked and arose and said to the nobles and to the officials and to the rest of the people, "Do not be afraid of them. Remember the Lord, who is great and awesome, and fight for your brothers, your sons, your daughters, your wives, and your homes."*

Nehemiah and the people face mockery, threats, and intimidation, but they do not give up. He combines prayer, practical strategy, and encouragement to keep the work moving. This section highlights that opposition is expected, but reliance on God and perseverance are key to victory.

### **Read Nehemiah 6:2-4, 8-13,15-16**

*"Sanballat and Geshem sent to me, saying, "Come and let us meet together at Hakkephirim in the plain of Ono." But they intended to do me harm. And I sent messengers to them, saying, "I am doing a great work and I cannot come down. Why should the work stop while I leave it and come down to you?" And they sent to me four times in this way, and I answered them in the same manner... Then I sent to him, saying, "No such things as you say have been done, for you are inventing them out of your own mind." For they all wanted to frighten us, thinking, "Their hands will drop from the work, and it will not be done." But now, O God, strengthen my hand. Now when I went into the house of Shemaiah the son of Delaiah, son of Mehetabel, who was confined to his home, he said, "Let us meet together in the house of God, within the temple. Let us close the doors of the temple, for they are coming to kill you. They are coming to kill you by night." But I said, "Should such a man as I run away? And what man such as I could go into the temple and live? I will not go in." And I understood and saw that God had not sent him, but he had pronounced the prophecy against me because Tobiah and Sanballat had hired him. For this purpose he was hired, that I should be afraid and act in this way and sin, and so they could give me a bad name in order to taunt me... So the wall was finished on the twenty-fifth day of the month Elul, in fifty-two days. And when all our enemies heard of it, all the nations around us were afraid and fell greatly in their own esteem, for they perceived that this work had been accomplished with the help of our God."*

Even under threats, deception, and attempts to distract him, Nehemiah remained focused on the work God gave him. He prayed for strength, discerned God's guidance, refused to be lured away, and worked with all his heart. The chapter ends in victory, showing that steadfast obedience and dependence on God lead to success even when challenges are strong and opposition is fierce.

### Discussion Questions:

1. How did Nehemiah's faithfulness in preparation and small responsibilities (surveying the wall, planning, praying) equip him for the larger work God called him to?

2. When facing opposition (mockery, threats, or false accusations), how did Nehemiah combine prayer, strategy, and encouragement, and how can we apply that in our own lives?
  
3. What distractions or fears might be trying to pull you away from the work God has placed before you, and how can you respond like Nehemiah to stay on the wall?