

HOLDING THE LINE

A Five-Part Men's Bible Study

Session 2 — Stand Your Post

Main Passage: Nehemiah 4:7–23

Supporting Scripture: 1 Corinthians 16:13–14; Ephesians 6:10–13; Galatians 6:9; Luke 16:10

Main Idea:

God has placed responsibilities in our hands. Faithfulness means knowing what our post is, refusing to abandon it when things get difficult, and trusting God while doing the work in front of us.

OPENING

Last session we met Elijah underneath the broom tree.

He was exhausted.

He wanted to quit.

God didn't shame him.

God fed him, gave him rest, spoke to him, corrected his perspective, and put him back on his feet.

Because restoration has a purpose.

Eventually, you have to get back up.

That brings us to a different question:

What has God given you to stand watch over?

Every man has a post.

Maybe you're a husband.

A father.

A grandfather.

An employer.

An employee.

A leader.

A friend.

A member of a church.

Someone people depend upon.

Most of us hold several posts at the same time.

And standing your post doesn't mean you control everything that happens around you.

It means you remain faithful with what God has entrusted to you.

That's an important distinction.

You are not responsible for everything.

But you are responsible for something.

And one of the great challenges of being a man is learning the difference.

1. NEHEMIAH'S MEN HAD A JOB TO DO

Read Nehemiah 4:7–9.

Jerusalem's walls had been destroyed.

Nehemiah returned with a mission to rebuild them.

The work wasn't glamorous.

It was stone.

Timber.

Rubble.

Sweat.

Long days.

And opposition.

As the wall began going up, Israel's enemies became angry.

Sanballat, Tobiah, the Arabs, Ammonites, and Ashdodites plotted against Jerusalem.

Notice Nehemiah's response:

“Nevertheless we made our prayer unto our God, and set a watch against them day and night.”

There are two pieces to that sentence.

They prayed.

And:

They posted a guard.

They trusted God.

And they took responsibility.

Those aren't opposites.

Sometimes Christians talk as though faith means waiting for God to do something we are perfectly capable of doing ourselves.

Nehemiah didn't say:

“God will protect us. Nobody needs to stand watch.”

He prayed to God and posted the watch.

That's biblical responsibility.

Trust God with what belongs to God.

Handle what He has placed in your hands.

2. KNOW YOUR POST

You can't stand your post if you don't know what it is.

A lot of men spend tremendous energy fighting battles that don't belong to them while neglecting responsibilities that do.

We worry about national politics while ignoring our marriage.

We argue with strangers online while barely talking to our children.

We spend hours worrying about things completely outside our control while putting off conversations we know need to happen inside our own homes.

We solve everybody else's problems because sometimes that's easier than dealing with our own.

So ask yourself:

What has God actually entrusted to me?

Your answer will be different from another man's.

But Scripture gives us some obvious places to start.

If you're married, your marriage is part of your post.

If you have children, fatherhood is part of your post.

If people work for you, how you lead them is part of your post.

If you work for someone else, how you conduct yourself there is part of your post.

Your integrity is part of your post.

Your relationship with God is part of your post.

Your word is part of your post.

The people God has placed directly in your life are part of your post.

You cannot faithfully guard every wall.

But you should know which section of the wall is yours.

3. EXPECT OPPOSITION

Read Nehemiah 4:10–12.

The opposition wasn't the only problem.

The men were getting tired.

Judah says:

"The strength of the bearers of burdens is decayed, and there is much rubbish; so that we are not able to build the wall."

That's a very human moment.

They're surrounded by rubble.

They're exhausted.

Their enemies are threatening them.

And now people are saying:

We can't do this.

This connects directly to Session 1.

Sometimes standing your post is difficult not because you're cowardly or unfaithful.

You're simply tired.

Sometimes you've been dealing with the same problem for years.

The same marriage struggle.

The same financial pressure.

The same difficult employee.

The same family situation.

The same temptation.

The same grief.

The same unanswered prayer.

And eventually:

"I don't know how much longer I can do this."

That's why restoration matters.

Because sometimes the battle isn't lost because the enemy defeated us.

Sometimes we simply became too exhausted to keep building.

4. DON'T LET FEAR CHOOSE YOUR POSITION

Read Nehemiah 4:13–14.

Nehemiah places men behind the lower parts of the wall.

Families stand together.

They have swords, spears, and bows.

Then Nehemiah looks at them and says:

"Be not ye afraid of them: remember the Lord, which is great and terrible..."

Then he reminds them what they're defending:

"...fight for your brethren, your sons, and your daughters, your wives, and your houses."

Nehemiah gives them something bigger than their fear.

Remember God.

And remember what you're standing for.

That's important because fear makes men forget both.

Fear makes the threat look enormous and everything else look small.

Nehemiah reverses it.

Look at God.

Then:

Look behind you.

Your brothers.

Your sons.

Your daughters.

Your wife.

Your home.

Remember why the wall matters.

Every man eventually needs an answer to this question:

What is worth standing for?

Because if nothing is worth standing for, quitting becomes very easy.

5. BUILD WITH ONE HAND. HOLD THE SWORD WITH THE OTHER.

Read Nehemiah 4:15–18.

This is one of the great pictures of responsibility in Scripture.

Some men build.

Some stand guard.
And some work with one hand while carrying a weapon with the other.
They are builders and defenders.
That's a useful picture of manhood.
A man should build things.
Build his marriage.
Build his children.
Build his faith.
Build his business or career.
Build relationships.
Build his community.
Build something that will remain after he's gone.
But he also needs to recognize what threatens those things.
Not every threat looks dramatic.
Sometimes what threatens your marriage is simply neglect.
Sometimes what threatens your relationship with your children is your phone.
Sometimes what threatens your integrity is a series of small compromises.
Sometimes what threatens your faith is allowing yourself to become so busy that God receives whatever scraps of attention remain.
Sometimes what threatens your family is your inability to say no to people outside it.
Standing your post means paying attention.
What am I building?
And:
What threatens what I'm building?

6. YOU NEED MEN BESIDE YOU

Read Nehemiah 4:19–20.
The work was spread out.
The men couldn't always see one another.
So Nehemiah established a signal.
If the trumpet sounded, everyone knew where to gather.
Then Nehemiah says:
“Our God shall fight for us.”
Notice again:
They have swords.
They have guards.
They have a warning system.
They're working long hours.
And they still know:

God fights for us.
That's biblical dependence.
Not passivity.
Dependence.
And there's another lesson here.
If one section of the wall comes under attack, the other men come running.
That's what Christian brotherhood should look like.
Every man needs someone who will come when the trumpet sounds.
And every man needs to be willing to answer someone else's trumpet.
The question from last week still matters:
Who has permission to know when you're struggling?
This week we add another:
Who can you call when your section of the wall is under attack?
And:
Who knows they can call you?

7. STANDING YOUR POST IS USUALLY BORING

We tend to imagine faithfulness through dramatic moments.
But most faithfulness isn't dramatic.
It's repetitive.
Go to work.
Come home.
Keep your word.
Pay the bills.
Love your wife.
Teach your children.
Show up.
Pray.
Read Scripture.
Tell the truth.
Apologize when you're wrong.
Forgive.
Get up tomorrow and do it again.
Nobody gives medals for most of that.
There isn't always applause.
Sometimes nobody even notices.
But God does.
Jesus says in Luke 16:10:

“He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much.”

Men sometimes spend their lives waiting for a great mission while neglecting a hundred small acts of faithfulness sitting directly in front of them.

Don't underestimate ordinary obedience.

A faithful life is built one ordinary day at a time.

8. DON'T CONFUSE YOUR POST WITH YOUR IDENTITY

There is also a danger here.

Your responsibilities matter.

But they aren't God.

And your usefulness isn't your identity.

You are more than your job.

More than your paycheck.

More than your business.

More than your accomplishments.

Even more than the roles you hold.

Because eventually every post changes.

Children grow up.

Careers end.

Businesses change.

Bodies age.

People we love die.

Responsibilities shift.

If your entire identity comes from what you accomplish, eventually life will take something from you that you don't know how to live without.

Your identity begins somewhere deeper:

You belong to Christ.

Your post is an assignment.

It isn't your God.

That matters because otherwise “Stand Your Post” can become another excuse for exhausted men to destroy themselves trying to prove their worth.

That's not what we're talking about.

Session 1 taught us to allow God to restore us.

Session 2 teaches us what to do with that restored strength.

Be faithful with what He has entrusted to you.

9. STAND FIRM

Paul gives a similar command in 1 Corinthians 16:13–14:

“Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong.”

But don't stop reading there.

Verse 14:

"Let all your things be done with charity."

Strength without love becomes hardness.

Leadership without love becomes domination.

Discipline without love becomes cruelty.

Courage without love becomes recklessness.

The Christian man isn't simply called to be strong.

He's called to use his strength correctly.

To protect.

To provide.

To serve.

To build.

To sacrifice.

To love.

DISCUSSION

1. What are the primary posts God has entrusted to you right now?

Be specific.

2. Which one is receiving the least attention?

Why?

3. Are you spending significant time fighting battles that aren't actually yours while neglecting something that is?

4. What are you currently building that you want to survive you?

5. What threatens it?

Be specific.

6. Where have you become tired enough that you've considered simply quitting?

7. Is quitting actually necessary—or do you need restoration, help, a different approach, or another man beside you?

8. Who comes when your trumpet sounds?

9. Whose trumpet are you willing to answer?

And finally:

If the people closest to you were asked whether you are faithfully standing your post, what would they say?

Not strangers.

Not coworkers.

Not Facebook.

The people living inside your walls.

What would they say?

SCRIPTURE TO CARRY THIS WEEK

Nehemiah 4:14

"Be not ye afraid of them: remember the Lord, which is great and terrible, and fight for your brethren, your sons, and your daughters, your wives, and your houses."

Galatians 6:9

"And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not."

Ephesians 6:13

"...and having done all, to stand."

Sometimes you've prayed.

You've worked.

You've apologized.

You've forgiven.

You've prepared.

You've done everything God has placed in front of you.

And the next act of obedience is simply:

Stand.

WEEKLY CHALLENGE — IDENTIFY YOUR POST

Take a piece of paper this week.

Write:

WHAT HAS GOD ENTRUSTED TO ME?

Underneath it, list your responsibilities.

Not everything you care about.

Not everything you're worried about.

Things actually entrusted to you.

Your relationship with God.

Your wife.

Your children.

Your work.

Your employees.

Your church responsibilities.

Your health.

Whatever legitimately belongs there.

Then ask three questions about each:

1. Am I standing my post here?
2. What threatens this?
3. What is one thing I can do this week to strengthen it?

Then do one thing.

Not twenty.
One.
Call your son.
Take your wife to dinner.
Turn your phone off for an evening.
Have the conversation you've been avoiding.
Apologize.
Pray with your family.
Fix something you've neglected.
Ask another man for help.
Keep the promise you made.
Show up.
Stand your post.

CLOSING THOUGHT

God hasn't asked you to guard every wall.
He hasn't asked you to solve every problem.
He hasn't asked you to carry the entire world.
That's His job.
But He has entrusted something to you.
There is a section of the wall with your name on it.
There are people God has placed within your reach.
There is work He has put in your hands.
There are promises you've made.
There are responsibilities that belong to you.
Don't abandon your post because somebody else seems to have an easier one.
Don't abandon it because nobody applauds.
Don't abandon it because you're distracted by somebody else's wall.
And when you become tired, remember what we learned from Elijah:
Get restored.
Then get back on the wall.
Pray to God.
Set the watch.
Build what matters.
Protect what God has entrusted to you.
Help your brother when his section comes under attack.
And when you've done everything you know to do:
Stand.

CLOSING PRAYER

Father,

Thank You for the things You have entrusted to us.

Our wives.

Our children.

Our families.

Our work.

Our friendships.

Our churches.

Our responsibilities.

Our influence.

Forgive us for the times we've neglected what You've placed directly in front of us because we were distracted by things that never belonged to us.

Give us wisdom to know our post.

Give us courage to stand there.

Give us strength when we're tired.

Give us humility to ask for help.

Give us brothers who will come when the trumpet sounds, and make us the kind of men who come running when we hear theirs.

Protect us from fear.

Protect us from distraction.

Protect us from pride.

Help us build what is good and recognize what threatens it.

Teach us to trust You with the things only You can control while faithfully handling what You have placed in our hands.

Help us remember that our worth doesn't come from our performance. We belong to You before we accomplish anything.

And Father, when we've prayed, prepared, worked, fought, and done everything You've given us to do—

Give us the courage simply to stand.

Make us faithful men.

In Jesus' name, Amen.

NEXT SESSION

Session 3 — Learning to Rest in His Grace

Standing your post does not mean believing everything depends on you. Eventually every man must learn the difference between faithful effort and trying to carry what belongs to God.