



An Invitation to Ono!

FOCUS

There has always been a devil's advocate. There is someone or something which calls to you desiring your attention. A person, place or thing which would draw your consciousness away from the will and purpose of God for your life. Even though we know this there are still times when we weaken and even may stumble and fall in the face of these things. However, when we realize our dilemma then we fall upon the mercy of the risen Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

"What does your anxiety do? It does not empty tomorrow of its sorrow, but it does empty today of its strength. It does not make you escape the evil; it makes you unfit to cope with it when it comes. God gives us the power to bear all the sorrow of His making, but He does not guarantee to give us strength to bear the burdens of our own making such as worry induces."

Ian Maclaren.

TEXT:

Phil 4:6-9

6 Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.

7 And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall **keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.**

8 Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.

9 Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you.

SCRIPTURE LESSON

Neh 6:1- 19

1 Now it came to pass, when Sanballat, and Tobiah, and Geshem the Arabian, and the rest of our enemies, heard that I had builded the wall, and that there was no breach left therein; (though at that time I had not set up the doors upon the gates;)

2 That Sanballat and Geshem sent unto me, saying, Come, **let us meet together in some one of the villages in the plain of Ono.** But they thought to do me mischief.

3 And I sent messengers unto them, saying, **I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down: why should the work cease, whilst I leave it, and come down to you?**

4 Yet they sent unto me **four times** after this sort; and I answered them after the same manner.

5 Then sent Sanballat his servant unto me in like manner the fifth time with an open letter in his hand;

6 Wherein was written, *It is reported among the heathen, and Gashmu saith it, that thou and the Jews think to rebel: for which cause thou buildest the wall, that thou mayest be their king, according to these words.*

7 *And thou hast also appointed prophets to preach of thee at Jerusalem, saying, There is a king in Judah: and now shall it be reported to the king according to these words. Come now therefore, and let us take counsel together.*

8 Then I sent unto him, saying, *There are no such things done as thou sayest, but thou feignest them out of thine own heart.*

9 For they all made us afraid, saying, Their hands shall be weakened from the work, that it be not done. Now therefore, O God, strengthen my hands.

10 Afterward I came unto the house of Shemaiah the son of Delaiah the son of Mehetabeel, who was shut up; and he said, **Let us meet together in the house of God, within the temple, and let us shut the doors of the temple: for they will come to slay thee; yea, in the night will they come to slay thee.**

11 **And I said, Should such a man as I flee? and who is there, that, being as I am, would go into the temple to save his life? I will not go in.**

12 And, lo, *I perceived that God had not sent him; but that he pronounced this prophecy against me: for Tobiah and Sanballat had hired him.*

13 Therefore was he hired, **that I should be afraid, and do so, and sin, and that they might have matter for an evil report, that they might reproach me.**

14 My God, think thou upon Tobiah and Sanballat according to these their works, and on the prophetess Noadiah, and the rest of the prophets, that would have put me in fear.

15 **So the wall was finished in the twenty and fifth day of the month Elul, in fifty and two days.**

16 And it came to pass, that when all our enemies heard thereof, and all the heathen that were about us saw these things, **they were much cast down in their own eyes: for they perceived that this work was wrought of our God.**

17 Moreover in those days the nobles of Judah sent many letters unto Tobiah, and the letters of Tobiah came unto them.

18 For there were many in Judah sworn unto him, because he was the son in law of Shechaniah the son of Arah; and his son Johanan had taken the daughter of Meshullam the son of Berechiah.

19 Also they reported his good deeds before me, and uttered my words to him. And Tobiah sent letters to put me in fear. (KJV)

I. Compromising our trust in God

Anxiety is a thin stream of fear trickling through the mind. If encouraged, it cuts a channel into which all others thoughts are drained.

Arthur Somers Roche.

An average person's anxiety is focused on :

40% -- things that will never happen

30% -- things about the past that can't be changed

12% -- things about criticism by others, mostly untrue

10% -- about health, which gets worse with stress

8% -- about real problems that will be faced

HUMOR

Q. What lies at the bottom of the ocean and twitches?

A. A nervous wreck.

Health, Canada.

A. It is so easy to become disillusioned with the things which God calls us to do. Nehemiah was a man who was driven by a burden for his people and homeland. We see his concern as he approaches the Persian King with sadness. *Neh 2:2*

B. A Persian subject was expected to be perfectly content so long as he had the happiness of being with his king. A request to quit the court was thus a serious matter. *(from Barnes' Notes, Electronic Database. Copyright (c) 1997 by BibleSoft)*

C. According to history Nehemiah was born and raised in Persia. He had no direct relationship with Jerusalem other than what he may have heard or been taught as a child.

D. **He had a burden without a tangible relationship.**

1. This may be compared to our burden for souls who have not yet responded to the gospel of Jesus Christ.
2. There are times when we see the broken down walls of the sinners and find ourselves weeping because of their need of repair.
3. ***God sends those who are moved by the perils of the unseen to perform the impossible. He uses those who will be moved by the rubble of rejection and refuse.***
4. **We need people today who will step out of their own "comfort zone" into the arena of God's call to reconstruction.** As we follow the call of the Lord we will be rebuilding decayed pillars of the past. Shoring up the supports that once held the structure solid and secure.

Nehemiah 1

1 The words of Nehemiah the son of Hachaliah. And it came to pass in the month Chisleu, in the twentieth year, as I was in Shushan the palace,

2 That Hanani, one of my brethren, came, he and certain men of Judah; and I asked them concerning the Jews that had escaped, which were left of the captivity, and concerning Jerusalem.

3 And they said unto me, The remnant that are left of the captivity there in the province are in great affliction and reproach: the wall of Jerusalem also is broken down, and the gates thereof are burned with fire.

4 And it came to pass, when I heard these words, that I sat down and wept, and mourned certain days, and fasted, and prayed before the God of heaven,

5 And said, I beseech thee, O LORD God of heaven, the great and terrible God, that keepeth covenant and mercy for them that love him and observe his commandments:

6 Let thine ear now be attentive, and thine eyes open, that thou mayest hear the prayer of thy servant, which I pray before thee now, day and night, for the children of Israel thy servants, and confess the sins of the children of Israel, which we have sinned against thee: both I and my father's house have sinned.

7 We have dealt very corruptly against thee, and have not kept the commandments, nor the statutes, nor the judgments, which thou commandedst thy servant Moses.

8 Remember, I beseech thee, the word that thou commandedst thy servant Moses, saying, If ye transgress, I will scatter you abroad among the nations:

9 But if ye turn unto me, and keep my commandments, and do them; though there were of you cast out unto the uttermost part of the heaven, yet will I gather them from thence, and will bring them unto the place that I have chosen to set my name there.

10 Now these are thy servants and thy people, whom thou hast redeemed by thy great power, and by thy strong hand.

11 O Lord, I beseech thee, let now thine ear be attentive to the prayer of thy servant, and to the prayer of thy

servants, who desire to fear thy name: and prosper, I pray thee, thy servant this day, and grant him mercy in the sight of this man. For I was the king's cupbearer. KJV

Nehemiah 2:1-3

1 And it came to pass in the month Nisan, in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes the king, that wine was before him: and I took up the wine, and gave it unto the king. **Now I had not been beforetime sad in his presence.**

2 **Wherefore the king said unto me, Why is thy countenance sad, seeing thou art not sick? this is nothing else but sorrow of heart. Then I was very sore afraid,**

3 And said unto the king, Let the king live for ever: why should not my countenance be sad, when the city, the place of my fathers' sepulchres, lieth waste, and the gates thereof are consumed with fire? KJV

B. We must not compromise the integrity of the call of God upon our lives.

Ps 37:39?40

39 **But the salvation of the righteous is of the LORD:** he is their strength in the time of trouble.

40 And the LORD shall help them, and deliver them: he shall deliver them from the wicked, and save them, **because they trust in him.**

Ps 118:8?9

8 It is better to **trust in the LORD** than to put **confidence in man.**

9 It is better to **trust in the LORD** than to put **confidence in princes.**

Isa 12:2?3

2 Behold, God is my salvation; **I will trust**, and not be afraid: for the LORD JEHOVAH is my strength and my song; he also is become my salvation.

3 Therefore **with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation.**

II. Compromising the calling of God

Rom 11:29 "For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance."

1 Cor 1:26?29

26 For ye see **your calling**, brethren, how that not many **wise** men after the flesh, not many **mighty**, not many **noble, noble**, are called:

27 But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty;

28 And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are:

29 **That no flesh should glory in his presence.**

Eph 1:15?23

15 Wherefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus, and love unto all the saints,

16 Cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers;

17 That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him:

18 The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; **that ye may know what is the hope of his calling**, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints,

19 And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us?ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power,

20 Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places,

21 Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come:

22 And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church,

23 Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.

2 Tim 1:8?9

8 Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God;

9 Who hath saved us, **and called us with an holy calling**, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began,

2 Pet 1:10?11

10 Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make **your calling** and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall:

11 For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

III. Compromising the purpose and plan of God

There is a relationship which makes life complete. Without that relationship, there is a void, a vacuum in life. Many people, even those who are well-known, can attest to that void.

For example,

§ H.G. Wells, famous historian and philosopher, said at age 61: "I have no peace. All life is at the end of the tether."

§ The poet Byron said, "My days are in yellow leaf, the flowers and fruits of life are gone, the worm and the canker, and the grief are mine alone."

§ The literary genius Thoreau said, "Most men live lives of quiet desperation."

§ Ralph Barton, one of the top cartoonists of the nations, left this note pinned to his pillow before taking his own life: "I have had few difficulties, many friends, great successes; I have gone from wife to wife, from house to house, visited great countries of the world, but I am fed up with inventing devices to fill up twenty-four hours of the day."

Morning Glory, May 29, 1993.

Prov 20:18

18 Every **purpose** is established by counsel: and with good advice make war.

Eccl 3:1?8

1 **To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven:**

2 A time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted;

3 A time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up;

4 A time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance;

5 A time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together; a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing;

- 6 A time to get, and a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to cast away;
 7 A time to rend, and a time to sew; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak;
 8 A time to love, and a time to hate; a time of war, and a time of peace.

When you're up to your neck in alligators, it's difficult to keep your mind on the fact that your primary objective is to drain the swamp.

Rom 8:28-31

- 28 And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, **to them who are the called according to his purpose.**
 29 For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.
 30 **Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.**

31 What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?

Eph 1:7-12

- 7 In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace;
 8 Wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence;
 9 Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself:
 10 That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him:
 11 In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated **according to the purpose** of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will:
 12 That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ.
 8 erefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God;

9 Who hath saved us, **and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace**, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began,

"More men fail through lack of purpose than lack of talent." _____ Billy Sunday.

Imagine people going to work day after day without knowing their company's business, yet that's exactly what happens when church members don't know what their church is trying to do. Fanaticism consists in redoubling your efforts when you have forgotten your aim. _____ George Santayana.

HUMOR

A rich man was determined to give his mother a birthday present that would outshine all others. He read of a bird that had a vocabulary of 4000 words, could speak in numerous languages and sing 3 operatic arias. He immediately bought the bird for \$50,000 and had it delivered to his mother. The next day he phoned to see if she had received the bird. "What did you think of the bird?" he asked.

She replied, "It was delicious."

IV. Compromising the salvation of others

D.L Moody said, "I believe firmly that the moment our hearts are emptied of pride and selfishness and ambition and

everything that is contrary to God's law, the Holy Spirit will fill every corner of our hearts. But if we are full of pride and conceit and ambition and the world, there is no room for the Spirit of God. We must be emptied before we can be filled."

J. Kuhatschek, Taking The Guesswork Out of Applying The Bible, IVP, p. 153ff.

Ps 13:5

5 But I have trusted in thy mercy; **my heart shall rejoice in thy salvation.**

Ps 20:4?5

4 Grant thee according to thine own heart, and fulfil all thy counsel.

5 **We will rejoice in thy salvation**, and in the name of our God we will set up our banners: the LORD fulfil all thy petitions.

Isa 12:1?6

1 And in that day thou shalt say, O LORD, I will praise thee: though thou wast angry with me, thine anger is turned away, and thou comfortedst me.

2 Behold, **God is my salvation**; I will trust, and not be afraid: for the LORD JEHOVAH is my strength and my song; he also is become my salvation.

3 Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation.

4 And in that day shall ye say, Praise the LORD, call upon his name, declare his doings among the people, make mention that his name is exalted.

5 Sing unto the LORD; for he hath done excellent things: this is known in all the earth.

6 Cry out and shout, thou inhabitant of Zion: for great is the Holy One of Israel in the midst of thee. (KJV)

Acts 4:12

Neither is there **salvation in any other**: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.

Rom 13:11

10 And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: **for now is our salvation nearer** than when we believed.

The Fellowship of the Unashamed

by Dr. Bob Moorehead

I am part of the fellowship of the unashamed.

I have the Holy Spirit power.

The die has been cast.

I have stepped over the line.

The decision has been made--I am a disciple of His.

I won't look back, let up, slow down, back away, or be still.

My past is redeemed, my present makes sense, my future is secure.

I'm finished and done with low living, sight walking, smooth knees, colorless dreams, tame visions, worldly-talking, cheap giving, and dwarfed goals.

I no longer need pre-eminence, prosperity, position, promotions, plaudits, or popularity. I don't have to be right, first, tops, recognized, praised, regarded or rewarded.

I now live by faith, lean in His presence, walk by patience, am uplifted by prayer and I labor with power.

My face is set, my gait is fast, my goal is heaven, my road is narrow, my way is rough, my companions are few, my Guide is reliable, my mission is clear.

I cannot be bought, compromised, detoured, hired away, turned back, diluted, or delayed.

I will not flinch in the face of sacrifice, hesitate in the presence of the enemy, pander at the pool of popularity, or meander in the maze of mediocrity.

I won't give up, shut up, let up, until I have stayed up, stored up, prayed up, paid up, give up till I drop, preach till all know, and work till He stops me.

And when He comes my banner will be clear!

-From [Words Aptly Spoken](#), by Dr. Bob Moorehead