



# VICTORIOUS CHRISTIAN MINISTRY

## Weekly Bible Study - 19:06:2011

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### Study 16: INGREDIENTS FOR SUCCESSFUL LIVING

Nehemiah 4:14-23

Scripture is replete with vital ingredients for successful living, but often these are counted as strange things (Hosea 8:12; 1 Corinthians 2:14) by the spiritually unenlightened. Nehemiah finished the building of the wall in 52 days despite prevailing problems (Nehemiah 6:15). A perusal of their attitudes and activity highlights the essential ingredients that make for progress in troublous times. Surely, as succinctly pointed out by Solomon, the race is not for the swift, nor the battle for the strong (Ecclesiastes 9:11). A possession of these ingredients will propel anyone to success through any troublous time (II Chronicles 27:6).

#### 1. Sure Foundation:

Nehemiah 4:14; Psalms 11:3; Daniel 11:32; 2 Chronicles 16:9; 15:2; Isaiah 59:1,2; 1 Chronicles 28:9,10; 2 Timothy 2:20-21

Behind the scenes of history are the invisible hands of God, which cannot be deterred by circumstances. Men that have been mightily used of God are those who have purged and made themselves vessels of honour meet for the master's use. God is still looking for such men and women today.

#### 2. Constant Vigilance:

Nehemiah 4:16,20,22; Ephesians 6:10-18; Mark 13:37; Luke 22:31,32

The relentless onslaughts of the enemy calls for constant vigilance of the believer. An author illustrated this so well by using a proverbial statement of Eneke the bird who purportedly said that "since men have learnt to shoot without missing, it had learnt to fly without perching". The songwriters admonition "Christian seek not yet repose... thou art in the midst of foes, watch and pray" is very pertinent to modern Christians, who are serious about overcoming. "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed, lest he fall" (I Corinthians 10:12).

#### 3. Unwavering Faith:

Nehemiah 4:14, 20b; Romans 4:17-25; 1 Samuel 17:37

Believing the ability of God and building upon his past faithfulness generate a sustaining hope till light breaks forth in the darkness. As money is the currency for doing business in this world, so also is faith in doing business with God. As it was in the past so is it now that through people men and women accomplish great results from God.

#### 4. Quiet Confidence:

Nehemiah 4:21; Isaiah 30:1-3,7,15-19; Hebrews 10:35. Confidence in God produces a sound mind indispensable for constructive analysis, planning and progress. To the Israelites God declared "For thus saith the Lord GOD, the Holy One of Israel; In returning and rest shall ye be saved; in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength..." (Isaiah 30:15). Only those who hearken to this admonition reap the promised benefits.

**Your Spiritual Welfare Is Our Concern**

### **5. Undaunted Courage:**

Nehemiah 4:14-16; Joshua 1:6,7; 1 Samuel 30:4-9,18

Courage is essential for profitable action. Without it, men and women are paralysed just at the point where action is required for their breakthrough.

### **6. Rugged Determination:**

Nehemiah 4:17-20,23; 3:5b; Judges 7:4-7

The way up is down. Intelligence alone is not sufficient for meaningful progress.

Ruggedness is an indispensable virtue for efficient action. Christ lived a rugged life and this enabled Him to accomplish much. If in a company all the engineers are directors, there would be no one to do the construction. If an army is only made up of generals (as in proverbial war game stories) then there would be no one to do the fighting. It takes ruggedness to do the little mundane (but significant) tasks that often, no one is willing to do.

### **7. Undeterred Perseverance:**

Nehemiah 4:14,21-23; Joshua 14:6-13.

To win at last, one must persevere beyond all odds. It is correctly stated that failure cannot cope with persistence.

### **8. Unalloyed Loyalty:**

Nehemiah 4:14,19,20,22,23,12; John 6:60,66-68; Matthew 6:24; Job 13:15

Singleness of purpose is an invincible weapon. There is power in unity. Results of a survey in a country some years ago revealed that a significant proportion of Christians backslide within a year of graduating from Universities – an indication that they lacked unalloyed loyalty. ‘Rolling stones’ do not make good ‘corner stones’ in super structures. It is unalloyed loyalty that will enable one to accept the truth, which sometimes can be bitter to the flesh as iodine is to wounds (e.g. David when confronted by Nathan). In these days of egotism and fanaticism it is unalloyed loyalty to the truth that will enable one make a sensible decision when confronted with facts (e.g. a muslim who turned Christian on discovery of the fact that Christ will judge the world). Where this is lacking, one could easily become like the Middle East businessman who destroyed the magnifying glass simply because it exposed the germs in his favourite rice meal.

### **9. Willingness to Sacrifice:**

Nehemiah 4:18,19,21-23; 2 Samuel 24:24

A willing heart makes light a heavy burden. Acceptable service is only possible through willing sacrifice. Dignity, sophisticated lifestyle, personal differences and conveniences may constitute stumbling blocks to service where there is no willingness to sacrifice. However, the recognition that there is always an “Elim” after every “Mara” (Exodus 15:22-27) or a “great calm” after every “great storm” (Mark 4:37-39) can stimulate willingness to sacrifice. David’s determination not to offer God a sacrifice that costs him nothing should be the believer’s motto today.

### **10. Joyfulness in Service:**

Proverbs 17:22; 14:30; Acts 5:41; 16:22-26

A joyful attitude permeated the entire building programme. Joy is medicine to the soul. The joy of the Lord inspires strength and makes faith to sing through days of sorrow!