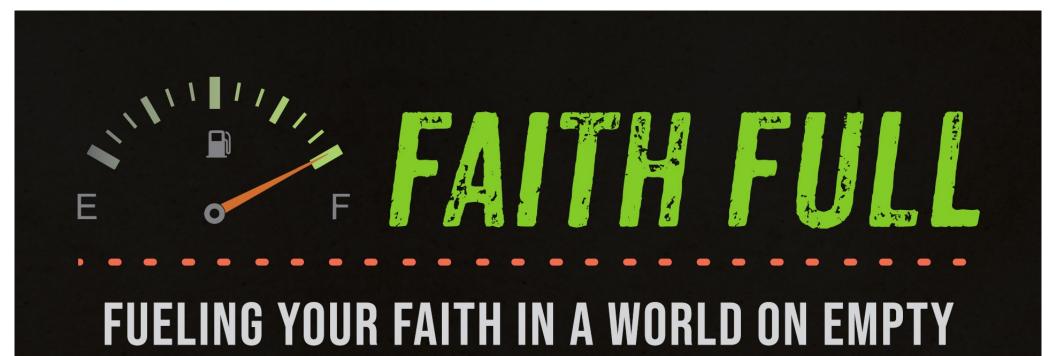
# FUELING YOUR FAITH IN A WORLD ON EMPTY

#### Therefore,

since we are surrounded by such a huge crowd (cloud) of witnesses to the life of faith, let us strip (throw) off every weight (everything) that slows us down (hinders), especially the sin that so easily trips us up (entangles us). And let us run with endurance (perseverance) the race (the path) God has set (marked out) before us.

Hebrews 12:1 NLT





## **MESSAGE 8: OBSTACLE COURSE**

## "RACE" IN GREEK "AGONY" NO "FUN RUN"



## NEHEMIAH



They said to me, "Those who survived the exile and are back in the province are in great trouble and disgrace. The wall of Jerusalem is broken down, and its gates have been burned with fire.". When I heard these things, I sat down and wept. For some days I mourned and fasted and prayed before the God of heaven.

Nehemiah 1:3-4 NIV



## FOUR RACING OBSTACLES

#### The Obstacle of Indifference



#### **"BYSTANDER EFFECT"**



## HOLY DISCONTENT "POPEYE MOMENT"



## FOUR RACING OBSTACLES

- ✓ The Obstacle of Indifference
- The Obstacle of Insufficiency



... so the king asked me, "Why does your face look so sad when you are not ill.? This can be nothing but sadness of heart." I was very much afraid, but I said to the king, "May the king live forever! Why should my face not look sad when the city where my ancestors are buried lies in ruins, and its gates have been destroyed by fire?" The king said to me, "What is it you want?"

Nehemiah 2:2-4 NIV



#### "ONE DAY MOMENT"



## FOUR RACING OBSTACLES

- ✓ The Obstacle of Indifference
- The Obstacle of Insufficiency
- The Obstacle of Opposition



Nehemiah has said yes to God, and that means saying yes to facing opposition. That's just how it works. Sometimes we say, "I ran into a problem. That means this isn't God's will." We get the idea that a smooth track proves God is on our side; bumps in the road are a heavenly thumbs-down. But what if it's just the opposite? Sometimes when you face roadblocks, you know you must be doing the right thing. Do you remember Newton's Third Law of Momentum? ... "Every action has an equal and opposite reaction." What's true in the physical realm tends to play out in the spiritual realm. Kyle Idleman: Don't Give Up

#### SPIRITUAL WARFARE



## FOUR RACING OBSTACLES

- $\checkmark \quad \text{The Obstacle of Indifference}$
- The Obstacle of Insufficiency
- ✓ The Obstacle of Opposition
- The Obstacle of Slow Progress



So we rebuilt the wall till all of it reached half its height, for the people worked with all their heart. But when Sanballat, Tobiah, the Arabs, the Ammonites and the people of Ashdod heard that the repairs to Jerusalem's walls had gone ahead and that the gaps were being closed, they (God's enemies) were very angry. They all plotted together to come and fight against Jerusalem and stir up trouble against it. But we prayed to our God and posted a guard day and night to meet this threat. Meanwhile, the people in Judah said, "The strength of the laborers is giving out, and there is so much rubble that we cannot rebuild the wall."

Nehemiah 4:6-10 NIV

#### What's the point?



#### 1. Embraced the Obstacles



- 1. Embraced the Obstacles
- 2. Persevered in Prayer



- 1. Embraced the Obstacles
- 2. Persevered in Prayer
- 3. Gathered as One



Let us consider how (discover creative ways) we may spur (motivate) one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting (gathering) together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another and all the more (frequently) as you see the Day (Jesus' return) approaching.

Hebrews 10:24-25 NIV



- 1. Embraced the Obstacles
- 2. Persevered in Prayer
- 3. Gathered as One
- 4. Never Stopped Building!



#### How long to rebuild the wall?



The wall was completed in fifty-two days, on the twenty-fifth day of the month Elul. When all our enemies heard this. all the surrounding nations were intimidated (afraid) and lost their confidence, for they realized that this task (work) had been accomplished (done) by our God. Nehemiah 6:15-16 CSB (NIV)



### **DISCOVERY BIBLE STUDY**

How to build an enduring, go the distance faith ...

#### THE BOOK OF HEBREWS

Read Hebrews 8: 1-13 (3-6 Translations) DBS: Hebrews 8:6-13 (Three-Column Study)