

So we built the wall. And all the wall was joined together to half its height, for the people had a mind to work.

**Nehemiah 4:6**

## Store In My Heart

### John 1:1-3

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being.

John begins his gospel with the revelation that Jesus, the Son, was present in the beginning. Just as important as the statement of creation in Genesis is this statement showing that Jesus, the Word, was present and active in creation. Jesus, our Savior, played a part in bringing this world into existence. His Deity, Godhood, is verified by these words.

John's gospel encourages belief in Jesus and His being present in creation adds power to this claim. It tells us the same Word that created the World has provided for us a way of eternal salvation.



# “And Next to...”

## Jason Hardin

*“You see the trouble we are in,”* Nehemiah said to a deflated people, *“how Jerusalem lies in ruins with its gates burned. Come, let us build the wall”* (**Nehemiah 2:17**). By the time he was done telling them of the hand of God that had been upon him for good and the words of the king who had sent him, the people were ready with an enthusiastic response: *“Let us rise up and build”* (**Nehemiah 2:18**).

It's easy to get lost in Nehemiah 3 as you begin to read name after name after hard-to-pronounce name. And yet, the chapter serves an important purpose as it documents not just the work, but the names of the workers involved, section by section.

*“Then Eliashib the high priest rose up with his brothers the priests, and they built the Sheep Gate... **And next to him the men of Jericho built. And next to them...**”* (**Nehemiah 3:1-2**)

In fact, fourteen times in this one chapter we read that phrase: *“and next to... and next to... and next to...”* Priests, goldsmiths, a perfumer, the ruler of half the district of Jerusalem and his daughters, temple servants, merchants ... *“and next to... and next to... and next to...”*

That's how those ordinary, recently discouraged people strengthened their hands for the good work (**Nehemiah 2:18**). That's how the monumental task got done in fifty-two days (**Nehemiah 6:15**). And that's how God's people continue to build. *“Next to... and next to... and next to...”*

Men next to women. Sisters next to brothers. Young next to old. Different members, varying talents, diverse backgrounds, unique opportunities, each one an indispensable part of the body. New disciples. Veteran kingdom soldiers. Song leaders. Deacons. Scripture readers. Shepherds. Teachers. Preachers. Businessmen and women. Retirees. Factory workers. Stay-at-home moms. Farmers. College students. Widows. High schoolers. Empty-nesters. *"Next to... and next to... and next to..."*

Thank God for the opportunity to be *"next to"* each other today at the foot of the cross. May our time together strengthen our hands and fill our hearts with zeal for kingdom work. *"Let us rise up and build."*

(Sometimes we get lost in the forest of names and miss the simplest of things. Jason gives focus to a very important part of the story of Nehemiah. I have recently been reading a series of posts about the leadership of Nehemiah and while I they included the idea of him getting the people to work together, this article really emphasizes the importance of everyone doing what they can for the work. It also reminds that working together, side by side or *"next to"*, helps provide encouragement and strength to do the work.

Knowing the situation during much of the rebuilding that strength and encouragement were necessary for the wall to be completed. They were discouraged and harassed for their desire to fortify the city of God. They needed all the support they could get. The question for each of us, *"Am I in my place 'next to' the rest of the workers in the kingdom?"* DLH)

## For Our Information

### Contact Us

We want opportunities to speak with others about the Lord.

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### Find Us Online

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Services for John Ragsdale will take place Tuesday at Ralph Robinson and Son in Pine Bluff. Details are on the bulletin board.

Stanley & Gloria Hurst are getting better.

Sue Soliday continues therapy on her arm and has seen some progress from the treatment.

Amy Simpson is in Iowa for a work conference.

Gracie Simpson is back in Conway for college.

Jeffrey Melton will have hip replacement surgery in the end of August to fix his broken hip that has not mended.

Sunday Evening - **Daniel 1:14**. Wednesday Evening - **James 5:17**

Our Wednesday will be in **1Peter** when we finish James.

Keep one another in your prayers each day.



We seek only to serve God according to His Will!