

Vision¹

Nehemiah 4

INTRODUCTION:

1. Vision is more like parachuting than ice skating. You don't "sort of" parachute. You either do it or you don't. A first time ice skater, however, takes to the ice cautiously.
2. Visions never become reality until someone is ready to make the jump.
3. Launching the vision requires a whole-hearted commitment.
 - a. Goliath would not have been defeated had David not stepped out to challenge him.
 - b. Peter would not have known the thrill of approaching Jesus on the water had he not thrown both legs over the side of the boat.
 - c. We will never experience the fulfillment of accomplishing the vision God has given us if we are not willing to take risks and make sacrifices.
4. Vision is not accomplished single-handedly.
 - a. Nehemiah pitched a vision to the people.
 - b. The people bought into it (2:17-20).
 - c. Jobs were assigned and the work began (ch. 3).
5. Nehemiah was committed.

DISCUSSION:

- I. Leaders must not expect others to take greater risks or make greater sacrifices than they have.**
 - A. They have to risk ridicule and failure.
 - B. Not everyone will follow. Some will even resist.
 - C. Nehemiah remembered that his was a vision of God and more than a material endeavor. He would not be distracted from the spiritual dimension of the vision.
- II. Leaders respond to criticism with prayer, remembrance, and a revision of the plan.**
 - A. Praying (v. 4)
 - B. Remembering (v. 14)
 - C. Revising (vv. 16-18)
- III. Leaders don't confuse their plans with God's vision.**
 - A. Nehemiah didn't quit because his first plan did not work perfectly.
 - B. Instead, he continued with an educated, informed, and prayerfully considered "guess."
 - C. We may need to revise a plan...several times.
- IV. Leaders refine plans but never the vision.**
 - A. Staying the same, a vision may be refined but not revised. Plans are revised.
 - B. We must be confident in the vision, but flexible in the plan.

CONCLUSION:

¹ From "20 Essential Building Blocks for Vision – Part 3," David Derry who took most of the material from Andy Stanley's book, *Visioneering*. www.sermoncentral.com. Accessed, 07/16/2004. Adapted by Andy Kizer.