

# STANDING FIRM IN THE WORLD

**We can stand firm with God every day (1 Corinthians 15:58)**

**Read:** Nehemiah Paraphrase (on next page) = Working together to build a wall

**Talk:** Ask these questions and discuss together

- What made it hard for Nehemiah and the people of Jerusalem to stand firm?
- The Bible tells us that Nehemiah posted guards around the wall while they were building. Do you think you could have “guards” in your life to help you stand firm?
- How can the armor of God help us to stand firm for God every day?

**Activity:** Encourage children to follow your directions below as they compare physically standing firm to standing firm in their faith.

Directions to give children:

- Stand on tiptoes and walk around the room.
- Say “slow” to walk slowly
- Say “fast” to walk quickly
- Say “stop” to stop walking
- No Stand on one leg instead of on tiptoes
- Look up. Look down.
- Lean forward. Lean backward.
- Hop
- Stand still
- Switch legs
- Switch legs again
- Close your eyes
- Stand still
- Sit down

**Talk:** Ask these questions and discuss together

- Was it easy or hard to keep your balance while walking on tiptoes? What about when standing on one leg?
- Did you ever think you were going to fall? How did that make you feel?
- **Say:** The Bible talks a lot about how important it is to stand firm. But the Bible isn’t talking about standing firm on your feet like we were doing
- What do you think the Bible means when it says to stand firm?

*Before the prayer, have children either put on their physical armor from previous lessons or pretend as the Armor of God is invisible*



**Pray:** Here we are, Lord, dressed in the full armor of God. We’re ready to serve you every day. At church we will stand firm. At home we will stand firm. At school, in sports, in all our activities, we will stand firm. No matter where we go, we will stand firm. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

## Story of Nehemiah (Paraphrase)

*Before reading, gather building blocks such as LEGOS and assign one person to act like Nehemiah*

**Say:** This is the story of a man named Nehemiah. This story comes from the Bible. Nehemiah lived thousands of years ago. He was a Jewish man, but he didn't live in Israel. That's because the country of Babylon had won a war against Israel and many of the Jews were taken to Babylon to live.

One day some people from Israel came and gave Nehemiah bad news. Nehemiah, look like you've just been given bad news. (Pause.) The people said that the protective wall around Jerusalem was in ruins. That meant that Jerusalem was unprotected. Its enemies could easily attack the city. Also, Jerusalem was a very special city to the Jews. It was their homeland. And it was land that God had given them. To hear that the wall was in ruins made Nehemiah feel much the same as you would feel if you heard your home had been destroyed. Everyone show me how your face would look if you'd just found out your home had been destroyed. (Pause.)

This made Nehemiah terribly sad. Nehemiah, look sad. (Pause.) He cried, (pause) he mourned (pause), he fasted (pause), he prayed (pause). Finally, he came up with a plan. He asked his boss, the king, to let him go to Jerusalem and rebuild the walls. The king gave him permission, so he traveled to Jerusalem. Nehemiah, you can walk around the room once to show you've been traveling. (Pause.)

When Nehemiah got there, he inspected the wall and found there was much work to be done. The wall was in terrible shape. So he got to work. He organized the people and they all started to rebuild the wall with stones. The stones were very heavy. It was hot and dusty work. Have Nehemiah start building the wall with the LEGOs or other materials. After about half the building materials are used, ask Nehemiah to stop and return to the story.

The work was very hard. And two men made it even harder to get the work done. Sanballat and Tobiah discouraged the workers by teasing them. They even came up with a plan to fight against the workers and stir up trouble.

The Bible doesn't tell us exactly why Sanballat and Tobiah were so mean. But some think that they had become important people in the area. Nehemiah was moving in on their turf, and that made them mad.

But Nehemiah stood firm against the threats. He was determined to finish the task. He posted guards along the wall to watch for Sanballat and Tobiah. The people who worked carried weapons with them just in case there was an attack. They stood firm too. And they all worked from the time the sun came up to the time the sun went down. The Bible says they worked with all their heart.

**Nehemiah, let's finish the wall.** Have Nehemiah continue to put "stones" into place until there is a complete wall in the shape of a circle.

Fifty-two days after it was begun, the wall was finished. Nehemiah and the people of Jerusalem stood firm and completed their task even though Sanballat and Tobiah had teased them, discouraged them, and planned to attack them.