

The background of the slide is a light gray gradient. It is decorated with numerous realistic water droplets of various sizes, scattered across the top and bottom edges. The droplets have highlights and shadows, giving them a three-dimensional appearance.

September Bible Study Series:
How To Handle Criticism

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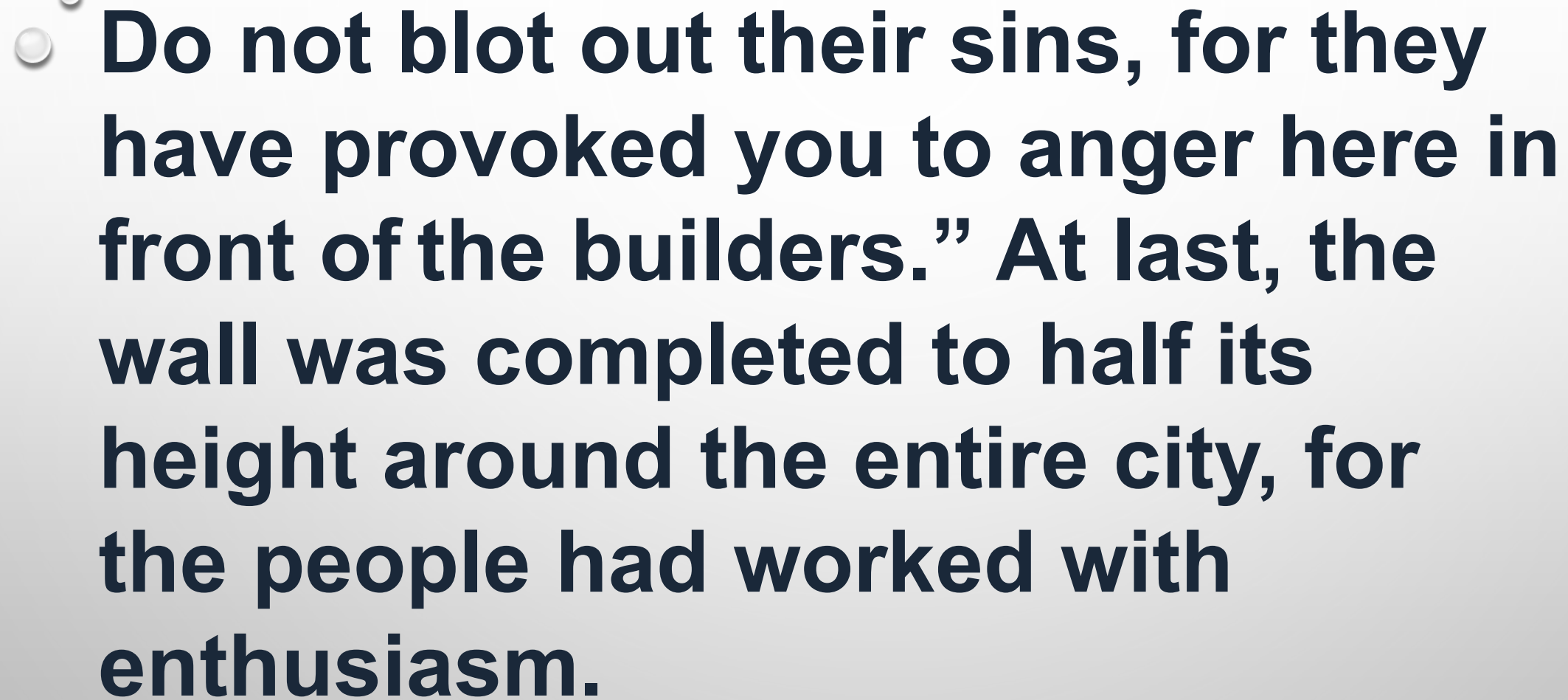
Lesson Three:
**How A Leader Handles
Criticism**

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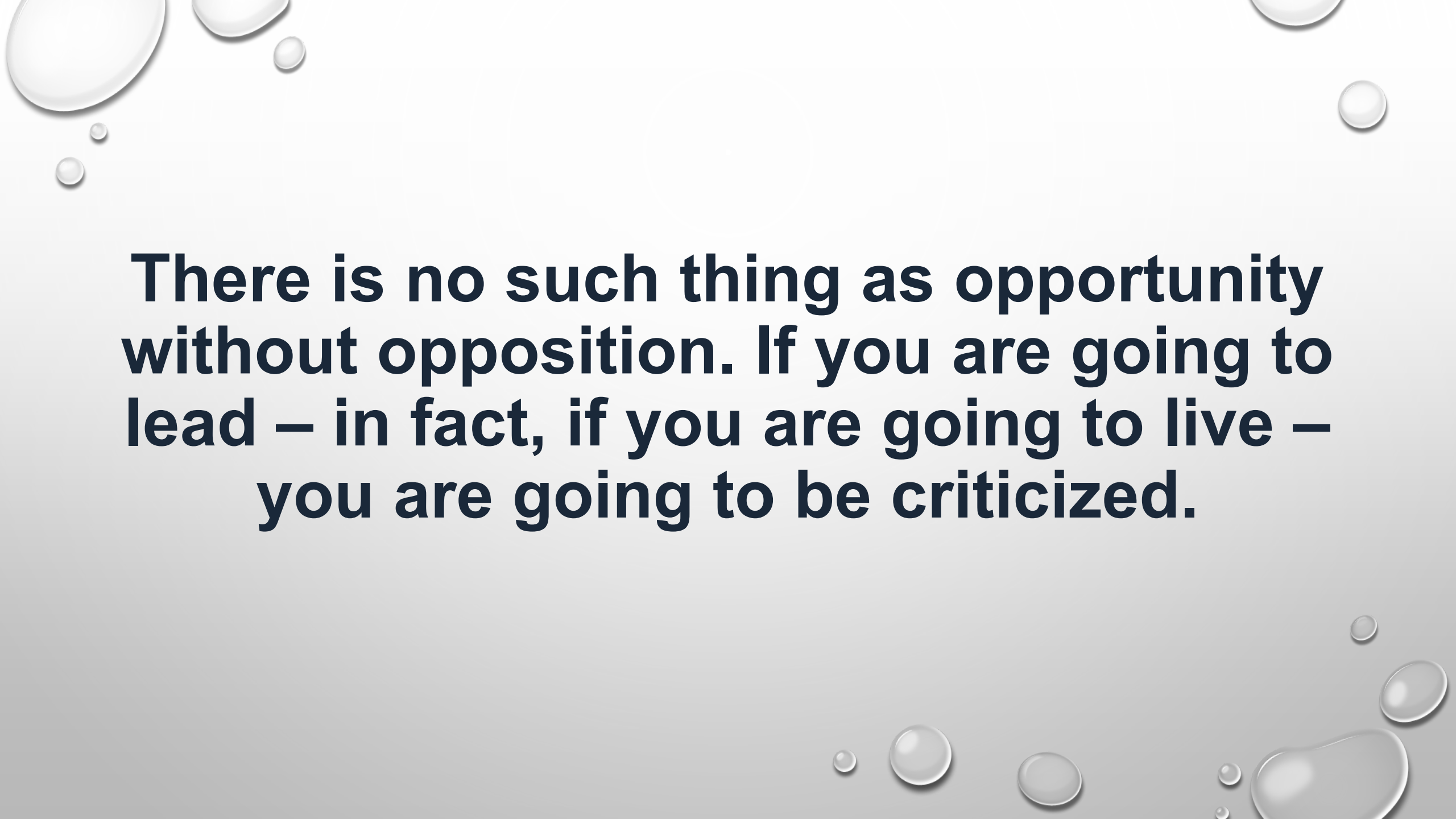
Scripture Lesson:
Nehemiah 4:1-6

Sanballat was very angry when he learned that we were rebuilding the wall. He flew into a rage and mocked the Jews, saying in front of his friends and the Samaritan army officers, “What does this bunch of poor, feeble Jews think they’re doing? Do they think they can build the wall in a single day by just offering a few sacrifices?”

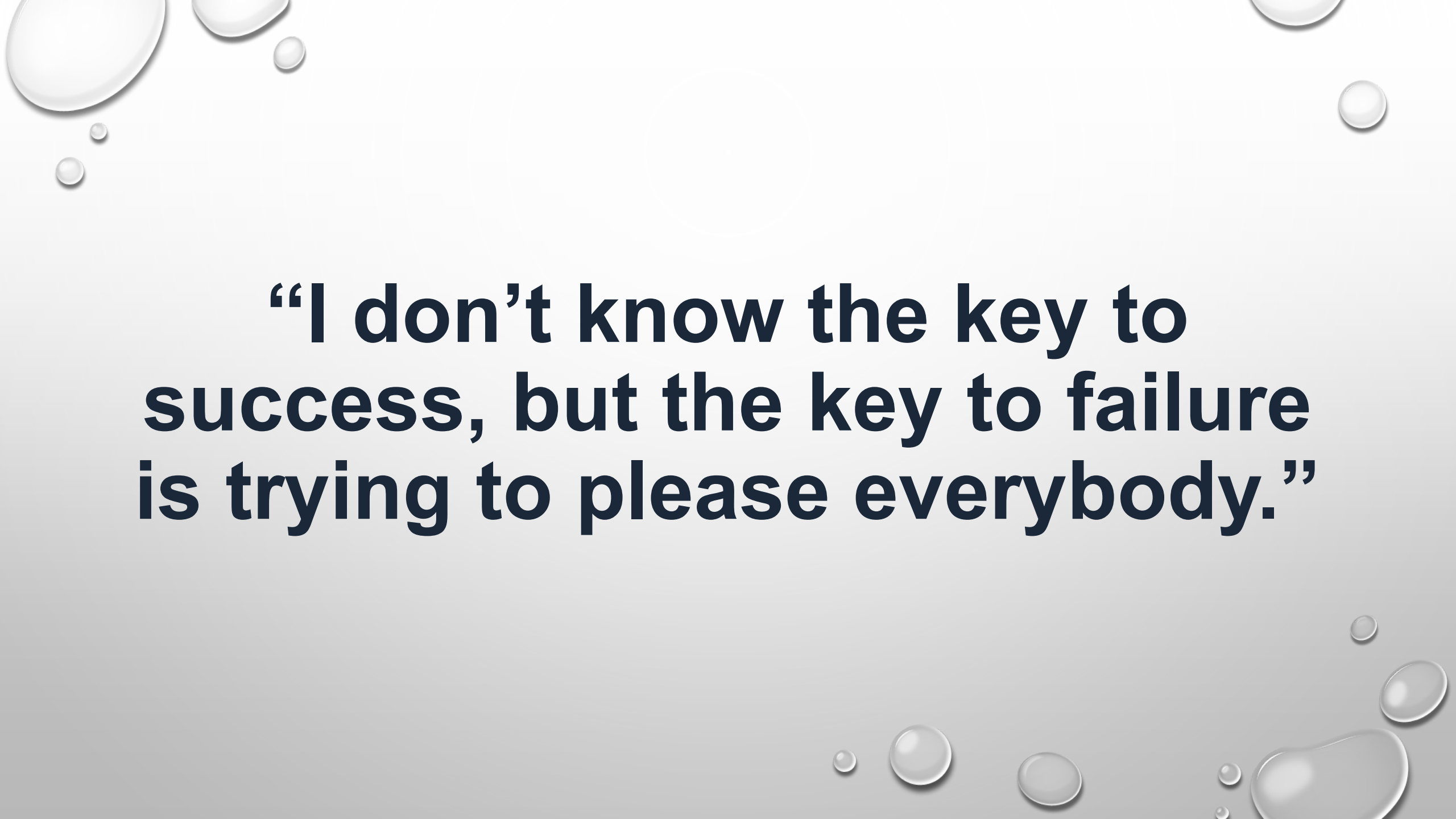
Do they actually think they can make something of stones from a rubbish heap—and charred ones at that?” Tobiah the Ammonite, who was standing beside him, remarked, “that stone wall would collapse if even a fox walked along the top of it!” Then I prayed, “Hear us, our God, for we are being mocked. May their scoffing fall back on their own heads and may they themselves become captives in a foreign land! Do not ignore their guilt.



Do not blot out their sins, for they have provoked you to anger here in front of the builders.” At last, the wall was completed to half its height around the entire city, for the people had worked with enthusiasm.



There is no such thing as opportunity without opposition. If you are going to lead – in fact, if you are going to live – you are going to be criticized.



“I don’t know the key to success, but the key to failure is trying to please everybody.”

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1. Expect Criticism

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2. Source the Criticism

Nehemiah 2:10, but when Sanballat the Horonite and Tobiah the ammonite official heard of my arrival, they were very angry that someone had come who was interested in helping Israel.

Nehemiah 2:19-20, but when Sanballat, Tobiah, and Geshem the Arab heard of our plan, they scoffed contemptuously. “What are you doing, rebelling against the king like this?” They asked. But I replied, “The God of heaven will help us succeed. We His servants will start rebuilding this wall. But you have no stake or claim in Jerusalem.”


“What is true in nature is true of human nature: 95 percent of the seed you plant is good; 5 percent is bad. You can trust 95 percent of the people; the other 5 percent of the people are crooks, cranks, cheaters, and crackpots. Do you live your life ruled by the 95 percent or the 5 percent?”

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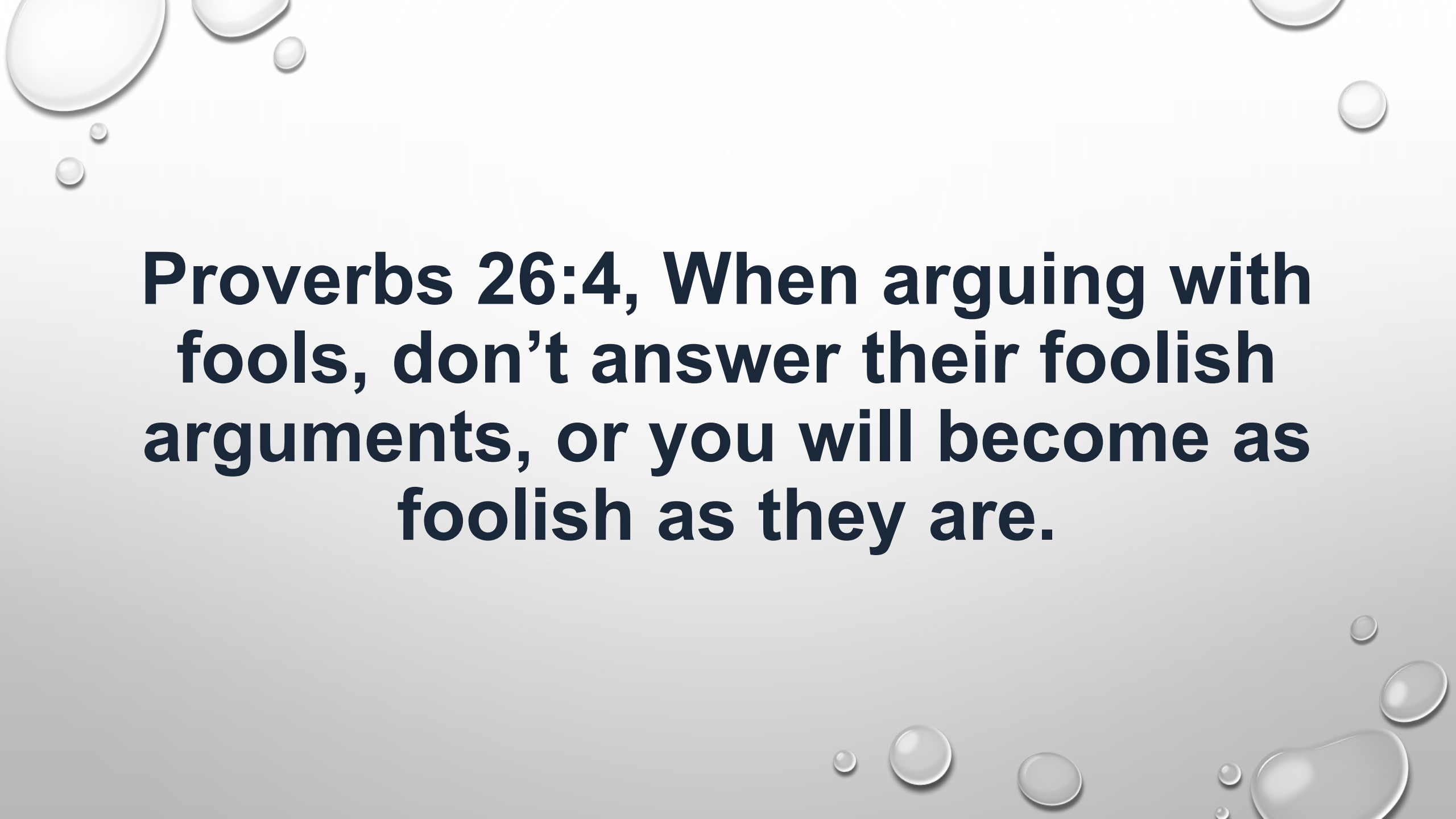
3. Pray About the Criticism.

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Three Reasons to Pray:

The image features a light gray gradient background with several realistic water droplets of various sizes scattered in the corners. The droplets have highlights and shadows, giving them a three-dimensional appearance. The text is centered in the middle of the page.

**a. Tell God how you feel about
your critics.**



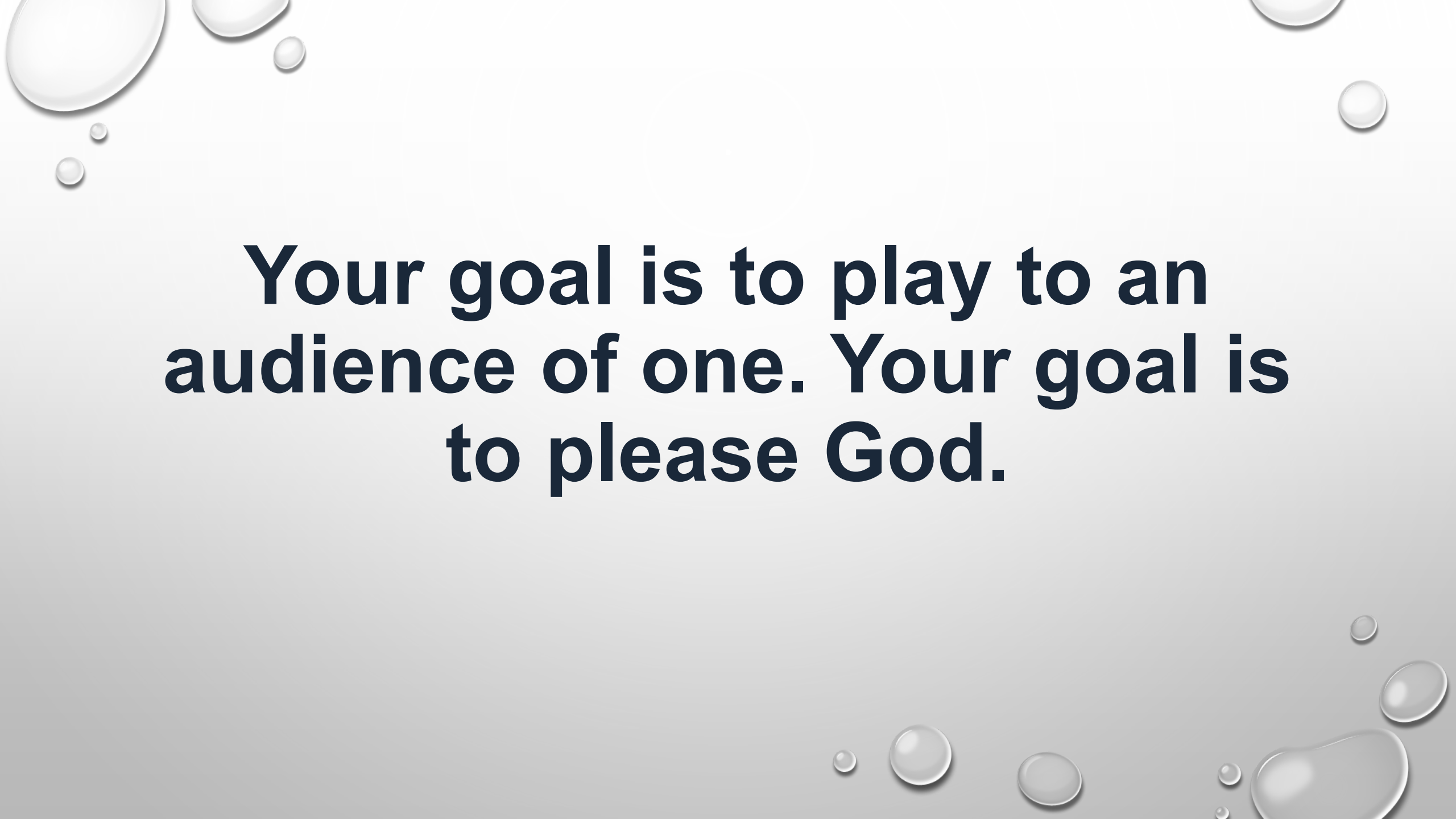
**Proverbs 26:4, When arguing with
fools, don't answer their foolish
arguments, or you will become as
foolish as they are.**



**b. Ask God is there any validity
in this criticism?**

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C. Be clear about your audience.



Your goal is to play to an audience of one. Your goal is to please God.

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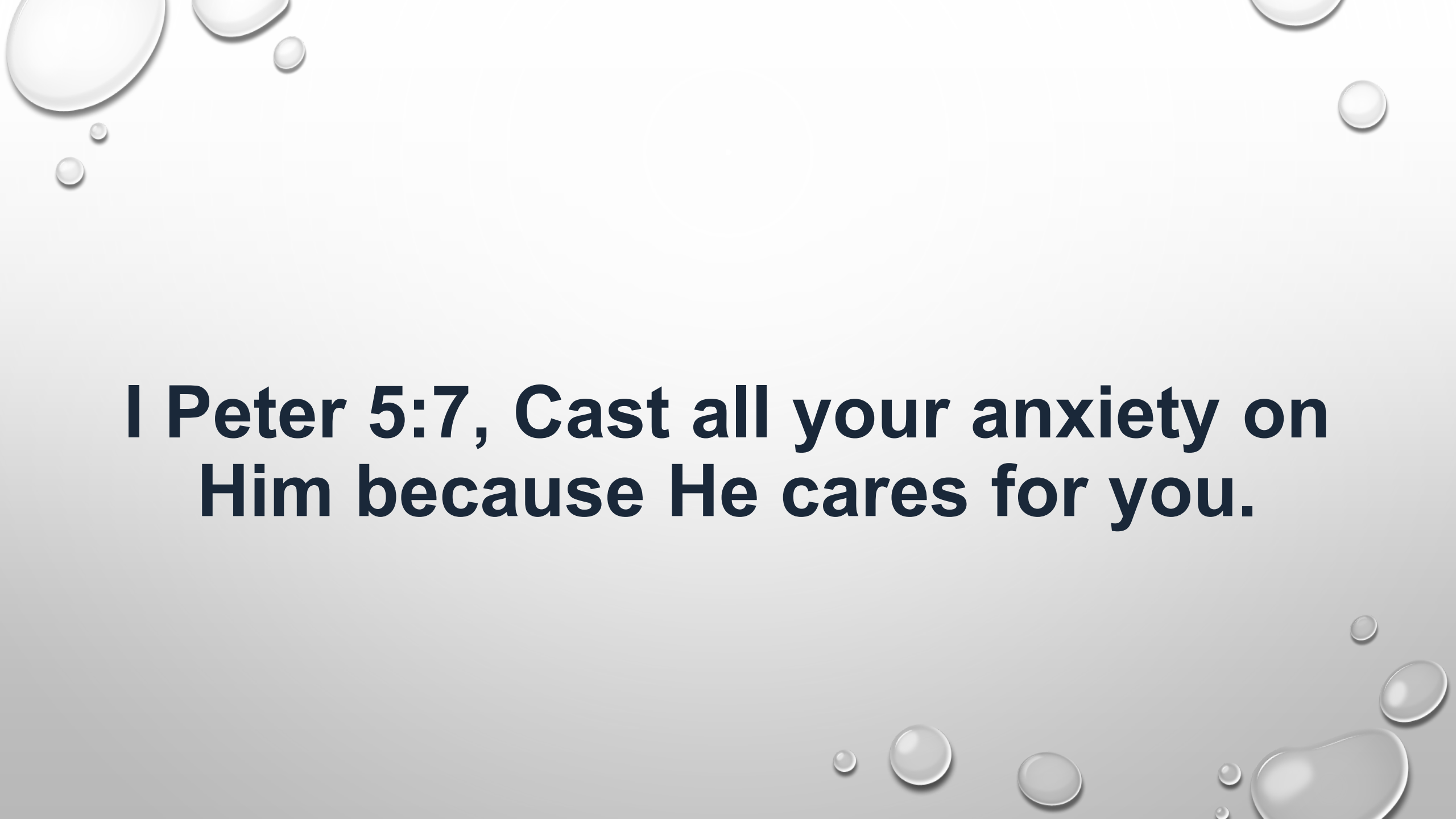
**Two examples of leaders in
scripture who prayed when
criticized:**

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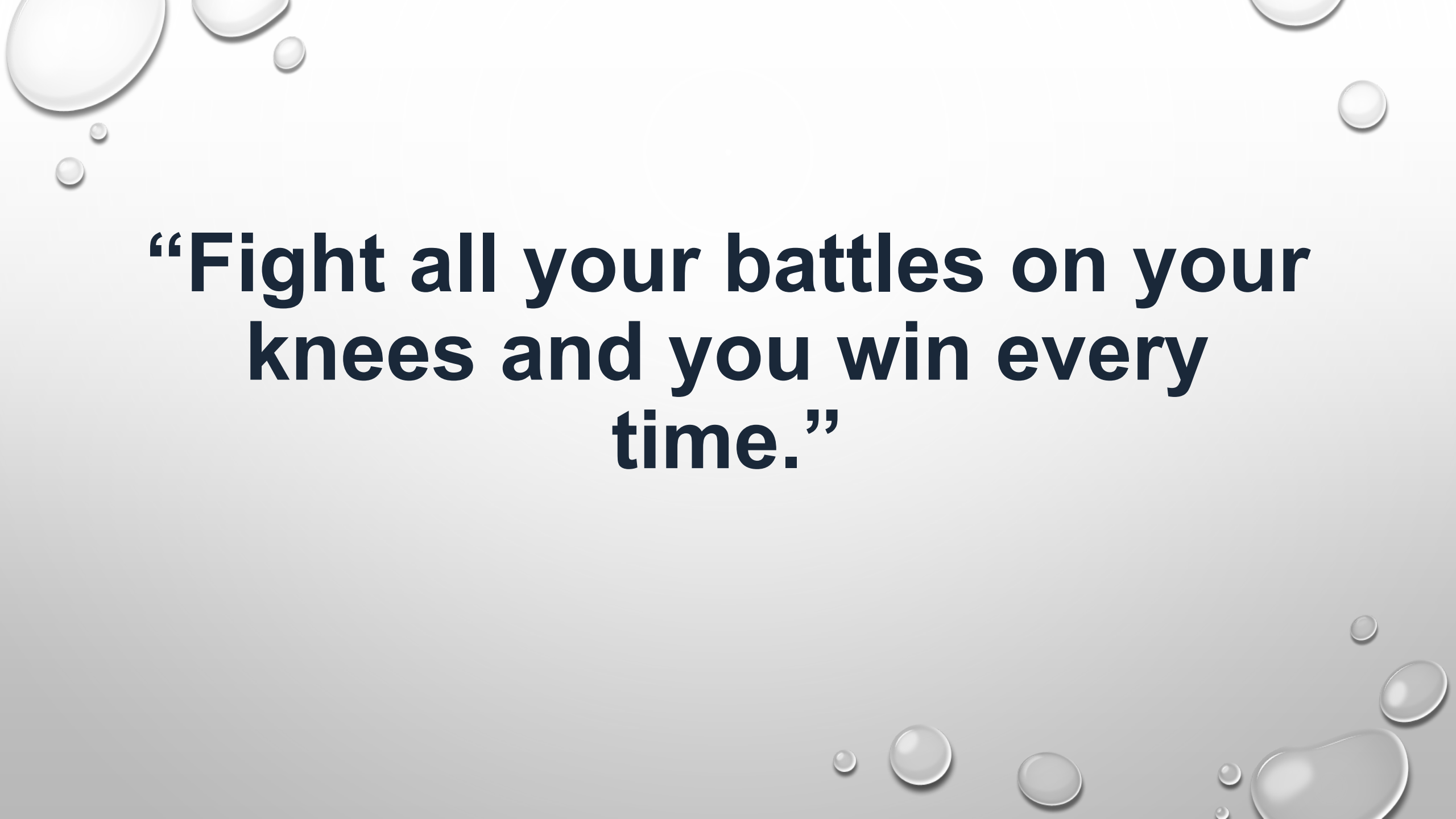
**Moses Prayed when criticized.
Exodus 17:1-4**

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**King Hezekiah prayed when
criticized.
I Kings 19:14**

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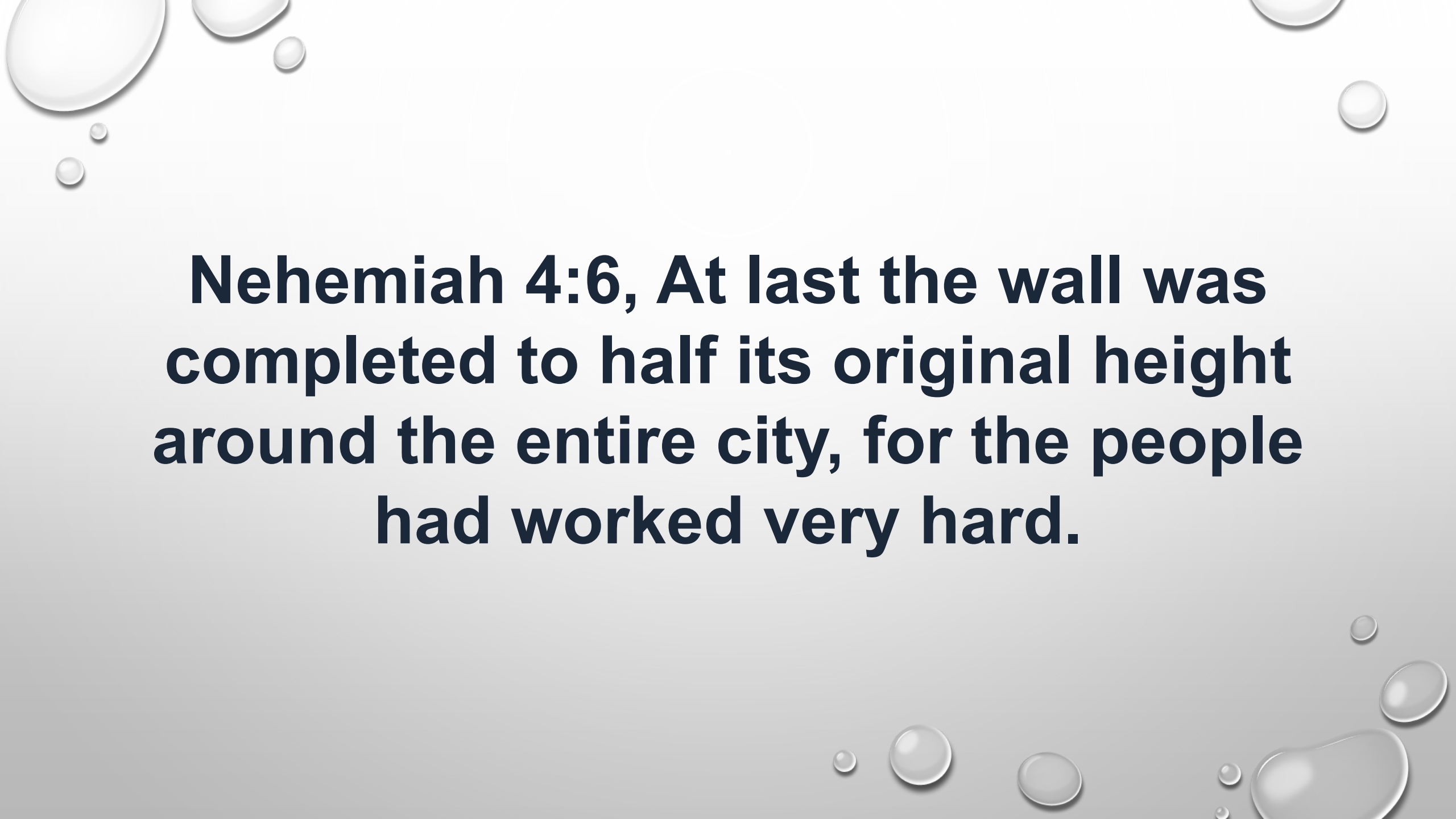
**1 Peter 5:7, Cast all your anxiety on
Him because He cares for you.**

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“Fight all your battles on your knees and you win every time.”

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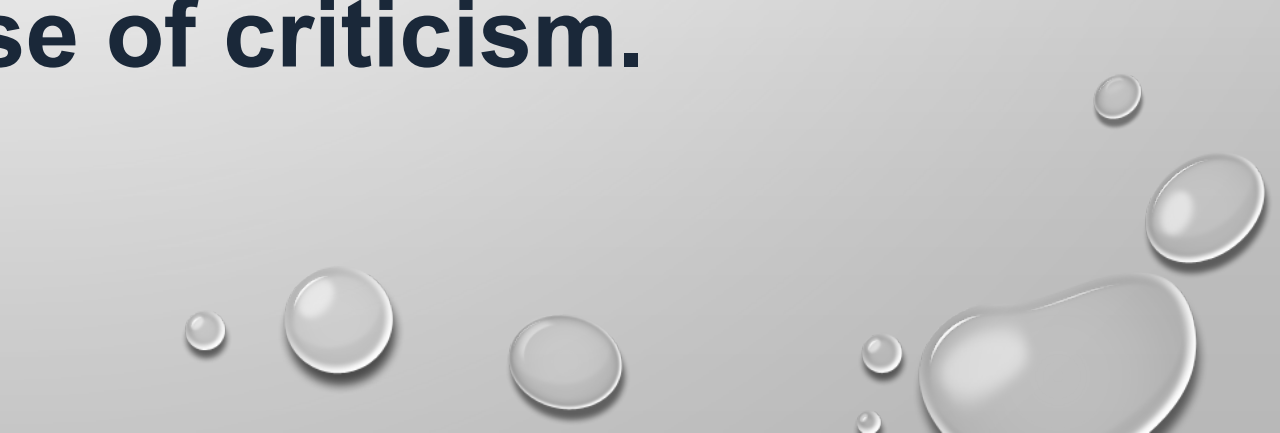
4. Continue Your Work.



Nehemiah 4:6, At last the wall was completed to half its original height around the entire city, for the people had worked very hard.




Four Focused Principles:

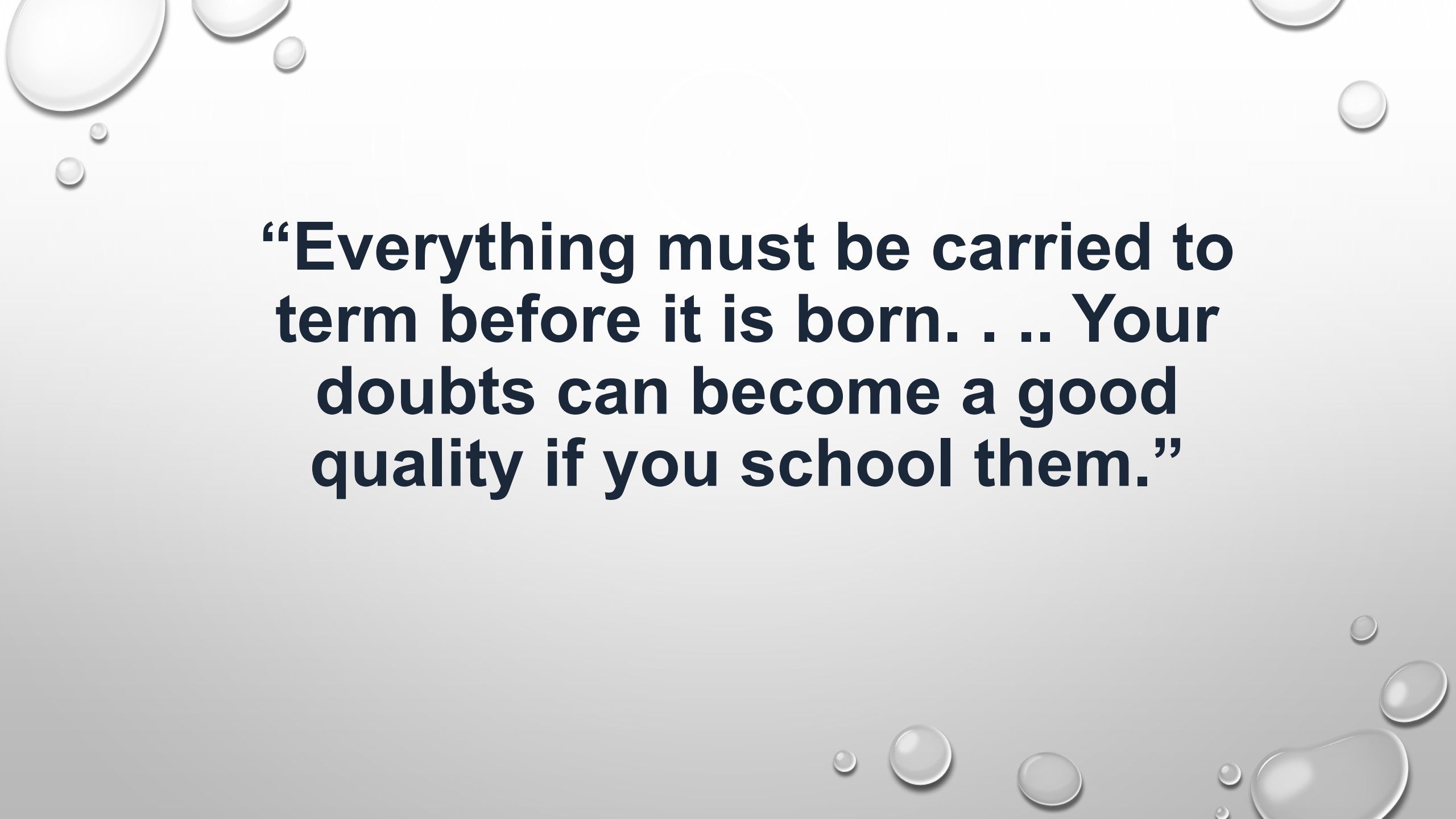
- 1. Never leave the wall to fight the enemy.**
 - 2. Learn to serve and battle at the same time.**
 - 3. Never allow ridicule to stop your ministry.**
 - 4. Don't give up because of criticism.**
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How Can Leaders Grow From Criticism?

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**a. Save the Kernel, Throw Away
the Chaff.**



“Everything must be carried to term before it is born. . . . Your doubts can become a good quality if you school them.”

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b. Don't Be Self-conscious.

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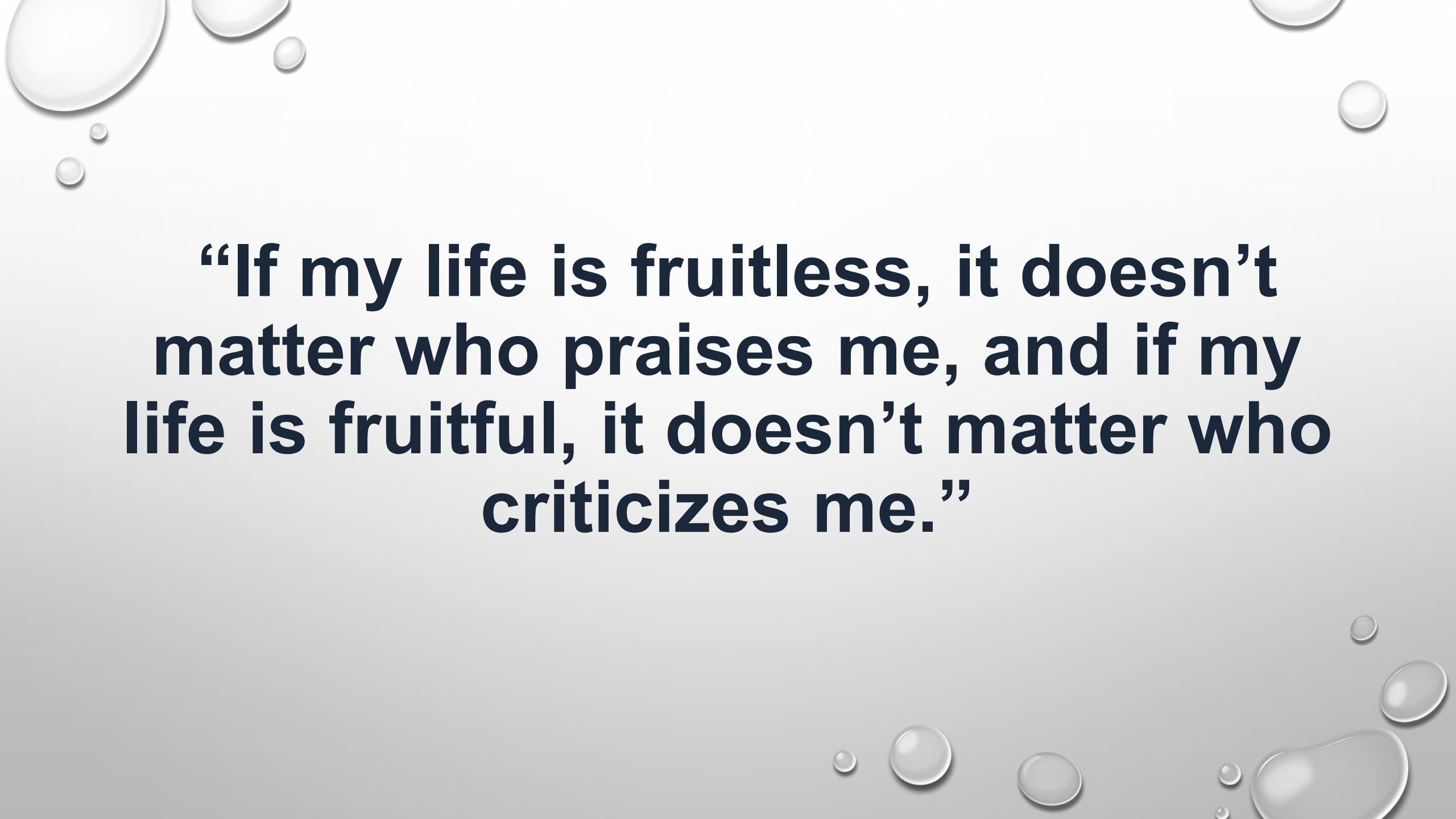
c. Never Stop Taking Good Risks.

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d. Smile



**“To avoid criticism, say
nothing, do nothing, be
nothing.”**



“If my life is fruitless, it doesn’t matter who praises me, and if my life is fruitful, it doesn’t matter who criticizes me.”

Bible Study Follow Up Chat Questions:

- 1. If you had been in Nehemiah's situation, how would you have responded to the criticism?**
- 2. What are some wrong ways of handling angry emotions when they are stirred up in us? What are some better ways to handle these emotions?**
- 3. What are steps you can take to prepare your heart for the criticism that's sure to come?**
- 4. Are you being called to rebuild? If so, what, and how?**
- 5. What important lesson(s) of life can be learned as we observed Nehemiah's labors?**
- 6. How do you handle the fear that comes from making enemies when you do what Jesus would do?**
- 7. Does Satan use believers to oppose God's work? If so, how?**