

Hit the 'Stay' Button

Ready:

"So I sent messengers to them, saying, 'I am doing a great work and cannot come down. Why should the work cease while I leave it and go down to you?'"

-Nehemiah 6:3

Set

We all have seen the ads about the "Easy" button. Just hit the Easy button and things become easy. I actually have an Easy button on my desk that doesn't work anymore, because I used it so much. I think the batteries died.

I love the "easy" button," but I think a better button would be a "New" button — one that gives us a fresh start. We could hit it at the beginning of a year (or month or day) and start over with a clean slate. Wouldn't that be great? We could hit the New button for lots of things: diet, workout routine, pets, schools, sports teams, coaches, friends or jobs. The list could go on and on.

As competitors, we know there are no shortcuts and there is no New button. If we had one, we would hit it early and often. Maybe we would even hit it when we shouldn't. Maybe God wants us to have that tough coach so that we can learn perseverance. Maybe a team that doesn't act like a team needs us to bring unity through selfless playing. The school or job that seems like it's not a good fit is exactly where we need to be so we can learn determination. But we grow restless. We lose patience. We don't give circumstances time. We reach for the New button. We are ready for a change. It is too easy to bail out.

The heroes of the faith had incredible staying power. They dug in and had resolve that made others sit up and take notice. Joseph, Daniel, David, Esther, Paul and Stephen were just a few. God honored and blessed them for their unwavering commitment not to start over. Maybe it is time for us to hit a "Stay" button, instead. It's not a shiny button like the New button. The Stay button is just plain worn out, perhaps even chipped. It's been around for a long time.

When you hit the Stay button (yet again), it reminds you to stay put when it seems smart to pack up — to stand when it feels like you should run. It reminds us to believe God when it seems far easier to believe everybody else who encourages us to hit the New button. Off we go to do something that promises bigger, greater, better opportunities. Little do we know that God had begun a great work in us, right where we were; we just don't recognize it. But how could we see it when our gaze was elsewhere?

You just don't hear people say, "Just hunker in and see what God has in store for you." Big faith is always defined by a big jump like moving, stepping out or going on to new opportunities. But maybe big faith for some of us would be to stay right where we are. Maybe our faith will get big by digging in. Maybe, through the routine and drudgery of the current situation, the Lord wants to teach us the way of the cross.

Nehemiah was an incredible leader who rebuilt the Jerusalem wall in 52 days. He hit the Stay button over and over. Five times men approached him and told him to stop. They tried to discourage him. But each time, they found him on the ladder working on the wall, and he simply replied, "I am doing a great work, and I cannot come down." Maybe we need to take the same approach. "I am doing a great work and can't make a change. I am going to finish what I started. I am not going to quit, move, change, transition or stop. I am hitting the Stay button once again, because God has big plans for me."

Go

1. Do you wish you had a New button? How would you use it?
2. If you had a Stay button instead, why would you use it? What does God want to show or teach you through that decision to hunker in?
3. Why does Nehemiah provide a great example of someone with staying power? What can we learn from his consistency?
4. Is it harder to stay or go? Explain.
5. What life lessons have you learned about hunkering in? Use a sports example if you can.

Workout

Nehemiah 6:1-19

Overtime

"Lord, I ask for staying power in my life. I want to have my life marked by unwavering commitment that will not crumble under changing or difficult situations. You want me to learn from You. You ask us to come to You in our weariness. I am coming to You, and I desire to be yoked with You. Is it too bold to ask that I become a modern-day Nehemiah? Help me to fully understand that I am doing a great work and cannot come down. Thank You, Jesus. Amen."

Bible Reference:

Nehemiah 6



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