

## **PULLING TOGETHER**

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*We rebuilt the wall till all of it reached half its height,  
for the people worked with all their heart.*

—Nehemiah 4:6

### **INTRODUCTION**

Wouldn't it be great to have your own personal robot that would follow you around your house and do everything for you? That way, when you came inside, took off your coat, and dropped it on the floor, your robot would hang it up. When you finished watching TV, your robot would turn it off as you left the room. And when you asked someone to pass the mashed potatoes at dinnertime, your robot would even remember to say, "Please" and "Thanks" for you! Some kids act that way at home, never picking up after themselves, always having to be reminded to use their manners, and so on. But that's not the way a family is supposed to work. God wants all the members of your family to help each other and treat each other with consideration and respect so that everything goes well and everyone is happy. And that's true whether we're talking about your family at home or God's family at church. Remember, you're an important member of both!

Today's devotion is based on Nehemiah 4:6, in which Nehemiah, the governor of Judah who oversaw the rebuilding of the wall around Jerusalem, wrote, "We rebuilt the wall till all of it reached half its height, for the people worked with all their heart." The devotion is called "Pulling Together."

### **DEVOTION**

When C.J. and her brother Todd got home from school, their parents were busy cooking. "What are you making?" C.J. asked.

Her dad put down a spoon. "Well, I have a special activity planned. Your mom and I are ready to open our own flower shop. Now, the whole family will need to pitch in to make this new business a success. So we're having a taffy-pull party, to remind us all to keep pulling together." He showed them how to stretch the warm taffy again and again to make it light and chewy. "Grab a handful, everyone!" Soon they were all laughing and pulling, helping each other stretch the gooey candy.

In Nehemiah's day, the wall around Jerusalem was broken. The Israelites needed to rebuild it. So families pulled together to get the job done. That's what God wants to happen today in your family—and his. Do your part to make your family a success. Work at it with all your heart. And pull together with the members of God's family to help build his kingdom on earth.

## PEOPLE IN BIBLE TIMES

Families in Jerusalem worked as teams to fix the city wall. Each family repaired the part of the wall near their home. By pulling together, the people rebuilt the wall in fifty-two days. (See Nehemiah 2:11–6:16.)

## QUESTIONS

1. Do you treat your mom and dad like your own personal robots, expecting them to pick up after you all the time or do things for you that you should be doing for yourself? What are some specific ways you do this?
2. Do you ever treat the members of your family as if they were robots who didn't have any feelings, by forgetting to be polite and sometimes even acting rudely and selfishly? What are some specific ways you do this?
3. Do you ever feel as if your parents treat *you* like a robot—for instance, making you do more work around the house than your younger brothers and sisters? What should you do if you feel this way?

Two answers are: (1) talk to your parents respectfully about this (they may change some of your chores, or they may explain why you need to do them); (2) pray and ask God to help you have a good attitude about doing your part to help out at home.

4. What do you think is the reason why God wants the members of your family and his to “pull together” and live in harmony?

Two answers are: (1) God is pleased when the people he loves get along well together; (2) God wants the people he loves to experience the blessings that come from living together peacefully.

5. Are you willing to change your behavior and attitude at home and begin doing your part to make your family a success? If so, what is one specific thing you will start doing *today* to make that happen?