



GOVERNOR PERRY'S ADDRESS

“By most accounts, this school was struggling when Dr. Cook took over the reigns when he arrived in 1988, and like the Jerusalem that confronted Nehemiah, the walls or the structure of this institution were a bit broken down, but Dr. Cook wasn’t deterred. Like this Biblical leader of old, he knew that God would bless his toil.

I would say that Dr. Cook borrowed from Nehemiah’s playbook in a lot of ways. The man who was the cup bearer to the king knew that the people would be discouraged if they viewed the building project as a whole, so he broke it down into manageable pieces. For example, the men of Jericho, they rebuilt their section of the wall, and the priests, they handled theirs.

If you look at a map of the school, you’ll see that same investment by the families that make up this vibrant community of faith. Now instead of the Sheep-gate or the Tower of the Hundred, we’ll see Spence Hall, the Landry Welcome Center, and soon the Patty and Bo Pilgrim Chapel.

And like those Old Testament builders, we need to remember that the naysayers will lurk on the fringes of our vision. When any of us attempts greatness, we must remain vigilant, holding our trowel in one hand and our sword in the other.

The Jerusalem Wall was rebuilt in 52 days. I hope this campus never stops growing. God continues to draw people from near and from far,

as we saw on this stage, to study and worship under His leading; however, the vision is being realized, and the school has developed what you might call ‘critical mass.’ I predict that any critics DBU may have, any doubts of

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the vision that lurk in the shadows, they will fade just as they did in Nehemiah’s day.

In the sixth chapter of the story, when Israel’s enemies heard the wall had been completed, they were afraid and lost their self-confidence because they realized that this work had been done with the help of God. There is no question that this school has grown with the help of our Lord. His presence is felt on the campus; it’s reflected in these young, vibrant men and women....You can see it in the faces of these students. Whether they are walking across the campus or whether they are singing for us in this event tonight, God’s blessings are clearly upon this place.

When the wall was completed, the Israelites joined in a great celebration. I would suggest it might have been

not unlike tonight as we have enjoyed this joyful event. And as a leader, Nehemiah understood that building the wall was an important task, but it was also just a starting point. With their boundaries secure, he knew that this community needed to keep God as the focal point of its existence. So he challenged his people to give of themselves to perpetrate God’s work.

This evening we rejoice in God’s goodness. We celebrate the remarkable people that have been given so much. But as we have been reminded—those who have been given much, much is expected.

I challenge you as fellow followers of Christ to consider your commitment to this place and its vision. The men and women who have been transformed by DBU will go forth into a sometimes cold and dark world spreading God’s love, spreading God’s Word with their actions and their lives.

So, my question to you tonight is, will you participate in this grand vision or will you merely sit nearby content to let others guard your section of the wall? The choice is up to you, but your presence here tonight indicates you sense the great work that God is doing on those 293 acres.

I hope that He will move in your heart and that you will follow your heart in an effort to enrich this campus, to revitalize a city, and to transform a world.”