

## *Day 1*

*March 5*



*Pray | Ask God to help you focus on his word*

There's something special about being gathered together with other people for one purpose. Whether it's a sporting event, a music festival, or holiday celebration, or a celebration of a community, people love to gather together for one focus. The same is true whenever believers gather to hear God's Word. In Nehemiah 8 we will see a powerful example of God's people gathering to hear God's Word. Here we see the people of Israel gathered together, not to see a ball drop or to cheer on their favorite team, but rather to hear the word of God being read.



*Read | Nehemiah 8:1-6*



*Reflect | Spend some time reflecting on the following questions.*

Gathering to hear God's word is important, but we are a busy society, and have many excuses to not attend church service consistently. What can you change in your schedule to make church attendance or a Bible study group a priority?

As Christians, we do not have to wait for the availability of God's Word every seven years. We are blessed to have the Bible at our fingertips every day. We can read the copy on our bookshelves, or listen to the audio version on our phones. What holds you back from reading or hearing of God's Word every day?

God wants to build us both individually and as a community. How does attending worship services regularly help you in your faith journey?

## *Day 2*

*March 6*



*Pray | Confess the distractions that stop you from focusing on God's word*

We live in a culture where it's often difficult to hold people's attention. With our phones and tablets at our fingertips, we are quick to grab them when we have just a minute of boredom. Our attention spans seem to be getting shorter and shorter. We sometimes even find it difficult to stay focused during a 30-minute work meeting, class, or a sermon at church every weekend. The people of Israel stood and listened to Ezra's reading of Scripture for six hours. No pens to doodle on the sermon notes, no cell phones to distract them when they got bored. They were fully attentive and excited to hear the word and teachings of God, a contrast from society today.



*Read | Nehemiah 8:3-6*



*Reflect | Spend some time reflecting on the following questions.*

Our church services are about 70 minutes in length, yet we still find it difficult to be fully focused for that period of time. What is your level of attentiveness when you attend worship services? How can you prepare to attend worship with an attentive heart and mind every weekend?

Everyone who could understand the Book of Law attended the reading. What is filling up your heart or life to prevent you from attending weekend worship services and hearing God's Word?

We find it extremely easy to skip a church service to attend a sporting event, a party, or a weekend at the cabin. Why do we so often fail to crave God's word as we should?

## Day 3

March 7



*Pray* | Ask God to help you crave his word daily

Attending church service is not just something God wants us to do. Hearing God's Word and worshiping him helps us to be revived spiritually. We grow both individually and as a community. The Israelites all gathered together, and as Ezra read, the people and leaders listened attentively, gave thanks, prayed, and worshiped. The Holy Spirit was working in them, and revival was happening.



*Read* | *Nehemiah 8:3-6*



*Reflect* | Spend some time reflecting on the following questions.

The people stood up when Ezra started reading, showing respect for the scripture. How do you respond to God's word as you read it or hear it? Ask God to show you what you are doing well or what you can work on.

Ezra gave praise to the Lord, and the people followed. They were humbled by the words. How were you humbled by this week's sermon? Spend a minute in prayer acknowledging and thanking God for his words and guidance.

The people listened attentively to Ezra as he read God's word, and their lives were changed. Because we hear the Bible so often, we often become bored in its words and immune to its teachings. How can you listen more carefully to the Bible, every verse, and let the Holy Spirit guide you?

*Day 4*  
*March 8*



*Pray | Thank God for giving us his word, the Bible*

God has blessed his people by communicating with them in ways they can understand, using languages and words. When Ezra read the scriptures, the Levites walked among the people and took the time to explain the scriptures to them in the language and words they could understand. As Christians, we are called to understand and follow the Bible. Attending regular worship services and breaking into small groups where people can ask questions, get explanations of passages, and discuss their meanings, are vital to understanding and growing deeper in faith and God's Word.



*Read | Nehemiah 8:7-12*



*Reflect | Spend some time reflecting on the following questions.*

When has someone helped you understand something in Scripture that was difficult to understand? How did that change your heart or perspective towards the Bible?

As Christians, it is our responsibility to share the Word of God with others. How can you be more purposeful in helping others grow in their faith by sharing and teaching Scripture?

At Five Oaks, we are blessed to have the Word taught to us every weekend, and have small groups that meet weekly to help us learn, discuss, and grow deeper in God's word. Are you taking advantage of these opportunities? If not, what is holding you back?

*Day 5*  
*March 9*



*Pray* | For our church community as we gather this weekend

Revival happens when God's people focus on hearing from him through the reading and teaching of his word. Revival happens in community, never in isolation. Revival occurs when God's people repent and hold each other accountable.

When we gather and build each other up, it becomes easier for us to go out into our communities and share the gospel and make disciples. If we desire to see God move mightily into our world as he did in Nehemiah 8, we as a community of believers must gather together to pray, to hear from God's word, to obey his commands, to repent and be held accountable, and then go and share the good news of Jesus.



*Read* | *Hebrews 10:24-25*



*Reflect* | *Spend some time reflecting on the following questions.*

How important is hearing the Bible in your own spiritual renewal?  
Whom can you invite to church or small group with you this week, even if it means stepping out of your comfort zone?

Revival happens when God's people work together to build each other up. What can you do this week to strengthen your relationships with other Christians, and focus on good together, instead of on your individual interests?

As Christians, we gather to celebrate God and give thanks for Jesus, our Lord and Savior. Spend some time in prayer, committing yourself to living a life for Jesus, inviting his spirit into your heart each day, promising to live for him. Every day is a renewal in him.

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