

FRONT PORCH LIFE: A Two-Year Discipleship Journey

Jesus was accused of loving sinners. He was guilty. In Luke 15 he told three stories that have deeply shaped the vision and framework of Anchor Church.

LOST SHEEP: One was the story that reveals his heart to expand all efforts to go find and make room for "one more". At Anchor, this shapes our faithfulness to expand and activate all efforts to always make room for "one more". This includes building expansion, church planting, global missions and all multiplication.

"And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and neighbors, saying to them, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep which was lost!'" – Luke 15:6

LOST COIN: Another was a story that referenced a lost coin. The coin didn't lose itself. This represents Jesus' relentless heart to redeem the intrinsic value of broken people. This is where Anchor allocates all resources and efforts to relieve the oppressed and care for the broken and those in need. This includes all of our local outreach to the hurting, broken, poor, and in need of help.

"...if she loses one coin, does not light a lamp, sweep the house, and search carefully until she finds it?" – Luke 15:8

LOST SON: The third story he told reveals the Father's heart for His house to be a house that celebrates those coming home to Him. This is all of our worship, celebration, discipleship, hospitality, and the operational ministry life of the local church called, Anchor Church.

"...But when he was still a great way off, his father saw him and had compassion, and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him." – Luke 15:20

FRONT PORCH LIFE: We will always make room for one more and disciple people to care for the people God brings home. We love God. We love people. We bring our best. We choose joy. We make room. These are the core values of Anchor Church.

Luke 19:10 says, "For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost."

"They said to me, 'Those who survived the exile and are back in the province are in great trouble and disgrace. The wall of Jerusalem is broken down...'
When I heard these things, I sat down and wept...'

Nehemiah 1:3-4

INTRODUCTION

WHY NEHEMIAH?

There are many similarities between the book of Nehemiah and Luke 15.

Nehemiah carried the same burden of Jesus to restore what was broken down in the house of God in Jerusalem. He desired to love the people, gather the lost sheep back together, disciple them with the Word and in the community of Worship and make room for others.

Nehemiah activated a massive effort to risk his own life before the king and go pioneer the greatest expansion and restoration effort in Israel's history.

There are incredible similarities to the book of Nehemiah and Luke 15.

You'll see the heart of the Father along the way – and you'll see how incredible it is when God's hand moves a people to redeem what is neglected, find what's lost and make room in His house for others to be discipled and worship.

THE BURDEN OF THE LORD.

I first experienced the burden of the Lord most notably as the result of what many call "The Dream Question". I was a 22-year-old college ministry leader at LSU. A few friends traveled with me to Chicago for America's largest church leadership conference, and a well-known expert asked The Dream Question.

"If you had unlimited money, resources, time, and support to do anything for the glory of God and knew you wouldn't fail, what would you do?" That's it. For me, it activated more than a dream; it helped reveal the burden of the Lord to me. God used it to buffer my direction, character, and focus for the rest of my life. I immediately wrote down the mandate: "Plant a church that helps equip and multiply small-town churches all over the world." That came from the heart of God to offer hope to people on the fringe of their dreams and in the heart of smaller towns where there is a need for dynamic, healthy, vibrant churches.

I also remember the moment the burden began to turn into fire. I was in Manado, Indonesia, with Jonathan Shibley. We just finished training over 800 pastors from 37 different Islands in ministry, business development, and Church multiplication. He asked me to help him in stewarding the ministry his father started, to help equip and multiply frontline leaders in developing nations allover the world.

The mandate matured. It became part of my development. It was now a commission. A voice. A warning. An invitation.

And maybe that's why you're here. I believe it is. I believe God is aligning you with His heart for offering vibrant hope to the whole world through the service of this body of believers called Anchor Church in McKinney, TX. This resource is a guide for the kind of life that can only be built when you walk out onto the front porch and finally take in what's broken in the church, in the homes, in the world... and catch the burden for what's worth rebuilding.

Nehemiah wept when he saw the brokenness of what Jerusalem was. He fasted, prayed, and then... he got up. The same journey He experienced is for people like you who are ready to get up. People who've seen what's wrong with the world... with the church... with our own distracted hearts. And instead of sitting on the couch of convenience or scrolling away another week of discontent, you're stepping out onto the front porch of God's house. With God. With His heart. With faith. With resolve.

This Front Porch Life is about His Heart for discipleship and making room for one more. It's not about comfort. You know that. It's why you're here.

You're done with comforting yourself and investing most generously in your own comfort and ease. You know abundant life is found in making room for one more to have peace with God and help them fulfill their purpose and change their world. This is far beyond a comfortable life. Abundant life is not a comfortable life.

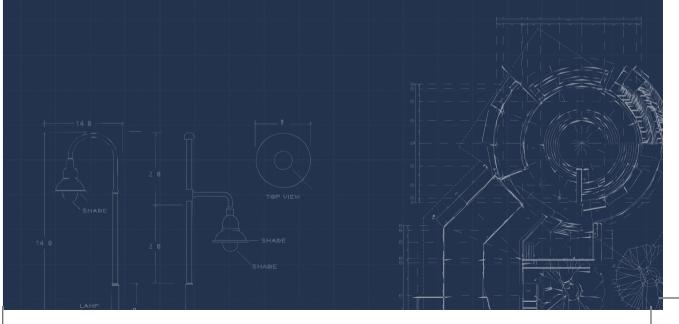
We are building toward things that matter...forever.

Together, we'll walk through Nehemiah's story... brick by brick, battle by battle, prayer by prayer and discover how Jesus, the true Rebuilder, is still restoring people, families, cities, and churches. It's time for every believer to count the cost. Gather the people. Take the first step.

It's time to come home and build what lasts right here in the place we call home, Anchor Church. You're about to see the miracle of God's heart activated right here in our areas of influence and you'll see Him change our world through us.

Best Ahead.

PASTOR JEFF



"Suppose one of you wants to build a tower. Won't you first sit down and estimate the cost...?"

Luke 14:28

WEEKLY SUMMARY

Week 1: THE BURDEN OF THE LORD

The burden of the Lord is His heart. When He shares His heart with you, then He will share his solution. That's vision. The Vision sets the blueprint.

Week 2: THE HAND OF THE LORD

Vision leads to Bold requests. Bold requests lead to supernatural favor, and supernatural favor begin with a fully submitted plan.

Week 3: THE WORK OF THE LORD

Unity is deeper than "buy-in". Unity fuels prayer. Prayer and action birth a movement. Here's where vision turns into labor.

Week 4: THE OPPOSITION

Opposition always rises... but so does the full restoration of all God has in His plan. Discernment always defiance, but God's will always prevail.

Week 5: WEAPONS AND TOOLS

This is warfare. You'll always need skill with a weapon in one hand and building tools in the other.

Week 6: RELATIONSHIPS AND INTEGRITY

When the mission begins to accelerate, you always must lead through difficulty in relationships and all that is festering inside the relationships.

Week 7: STAYING ON THE ASSIGNMENT

Distraction and manipulation won't win. We will not forsake the mission of God and we will not come down from the project He assigns us to.

Week 8: RENEWAL OF WORSHIP AND THE WORD

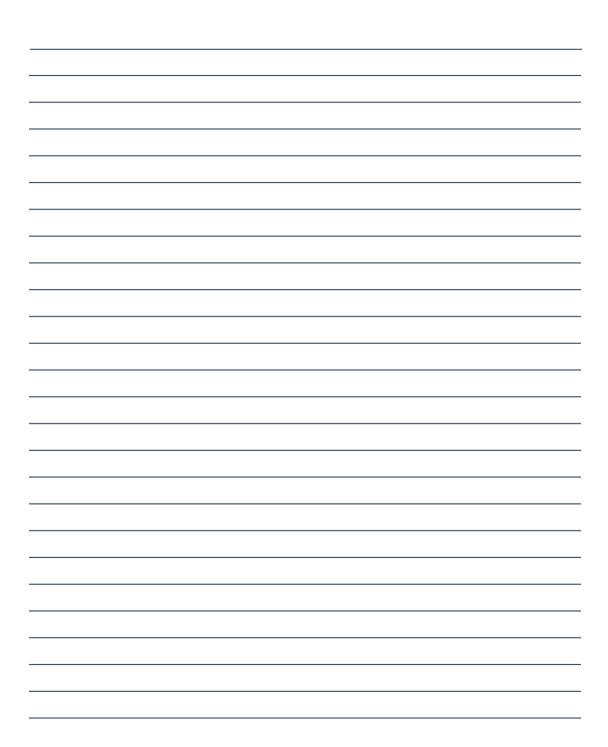
God brings revival through the reading of the Word. The restoration of the Word and discipleship are the building of the people.

Week 9: THE RESTORATION OF HIS HOUSE

God establishes His presence in His house. He reestablishes worship His way and finishes what He started. He will multiply to fill the earth with His glory.

WEEKLY SERMON NOTES

Date:	Speaker:_		
Key Text:		Title:	







KEY VERSE: "When I heard these things, I sat down and wept." — Nehemiah 1:4

BUILDING BLOCK: A holy burden is often the first sign of God's calling.

BIG IDEA: Before you ever start a plan, you will sense "the cause" of the Lord. This is the "why" and it usually makes you cry.

CONTEXT: This week is all about starting in the Spirit. It's not about what we can do for God... it's about letting Him awaken what matters most. Before Nehemiah ever builds the wall, he builds an altar of surrender. That's how this campaign begins too. Anchor is an "on our knees" church. We're not cold, stoic or afraid of the real depth of tears, prayers, and the weight of something worth carrying in this life.

IN HEBREW:

Nehemiah was just doing his job when God interrupted him with a burden The name "Nehemiah" means "God comforts." And that's what this moment is. Not just a burden of grief... but the beginning of divine comfort. He mourns for Jerusalem, but under the surface, the Spirit of God is already stirring a plan to redeem it. This is the same for Anchor.

FOR CHRIST:

Jesus wept over Jerusalem too. He didn't run from the broken walls of humanity... He ran toward them. In the Gospels, we see His face set like flint. He counted the cost. He gave up heaven's comfort to rebuild heaven's family. This burden is Nehemiah's story and it's Jesus' heartbeat.

FRONT PORCH
PERSPECTIVE:

Like the shepherd who couldn't rest until the one lost sheep was found, Nehemiah's burden for Jerusalem reveals the heart of expansion. You can't be comfortable when you know there's "one more" still outside the walls. The burden that breaks your heart for what's broken is the same burden that compels you to build, reach, and never stop making room.

FOR YOU:

What breaks your heart? What has God placed in your spirit that you haven't been able to shake? Maybe you've tried to ignore it or numb it. But you can't unsee it. This week, we lean in. We pray. We weep. And we let that take that longing and reveal his heart. It will becomes an assignment.

READ:

Nehemiah 1, Luke 15:1–7, Luke 14:25–35, Matthew 9:35–38, Psalm 126:5–6

DAYONE A BURDEN YOU CAN'T IGNORE

MAIN FOCUS: GOD OFTEN STARTS WITH A BROKEN HEART BEFORE HE GIVES A BATTLE PLAN.

KEY VERSE: "When I heard these things, I sat down and wept." - Nehemiah 1:4

READING: Nehemiah 1, Psalm 126:5-6

CONSIDER: There's a song called, "Deep Dive" that we sing at Anchor. One line says, "Show me what's breaking your heart even if it messes me up. I don't want to know you in part, I want to know you, really know you."

A significant part of knowing God is having your heart broken over the things that grieve him and stir up His holy affections.

I do cry at times because of emotions ... but recently I have wept because I'm experiencing the burden of the Lord for people. This is not just emotional; this is the full experience of something eternal breaking into my affections. It's powerful.

It would be a mistake to say, "Nehemiah was sad". Being stirred by the affections of the Lord is much more of a true calling and experience of the burden of the Lord. It comes with heart and it's not all human strategy.

There are moments when God puts a fire in your bones through something that looks like grief. Don't run from it. That ache may be the seed of the assignment He's bringing you into. It changes everything.

PRAYER: Father, move in me. Give me a heart that feels what You feel. Let me not become so numb or distracted that I miss the burden You want me to carry. Break my heart for what breaks Yours.

DECLARE: God has trusted me with a burden that leads to blessing.

CHALLENGE: Distractions will numb your sensitivity. Media, busyness, and even

ACTIVATION: Take 10 minutes to sit quietly with the Lord and ask Him: "What breaks Your heart that You want to share with me?" Then write it down. **NOTES:**

ministry can blur the ache. Turn it off. Tune in.

DAY TWO

FASTING TURNS BURDEN INTO BLUEPRINT

MAIN FOCUS: FASTING MAKES SPACE FOR GOD'S VOICE TO CLARIFY YOUR NEXT STEP.

KEY VERSE: "I mourned and fasted and prayed before the God of heaven." — **Nehemiah 1:4**

READING: Nehemiah 1:4-11, Matthew 6:16-18

CONSIDER: Fasting is abstaining from food. There are other forms of denying yourself things for a time in order to set yourself apart from the world in order to see, hear and know God. It's ok to call these other forms of abstinence "fasting", but a true biblical fast is to go without food.

I don't enjoy fasting, usually. The first time I fasted was in my early 20's. I went seven days with nothing but water and I drank orange juice a few times. I was studying the book of Ephesians in my very first graduate class in 1997. It was my best effort to set myself apart for the Lord in ministry training. It was the first of many fasts.

Nehemiah didn't jump into action. He marked his beginning with setting himself apart for the Lord and His purposes.

He stopped. He fasted. He waited. It may seem like a small detail, but fasting is what turned his grief into guidance. Burden alone won't build anything lasting. But burden mixed with fasting clears out the noise of your own opinions and creates space for divine wisdom.

Jesus said, "When you fast..." not "if you fast".

Fasting is part of how God restores our focus and strengthens our resolve. It's how Nehemiah received his strategy, and it's often how we'll receive ours.

In a world that numbs pain or rushes past it, the wisdom of God waits on the other

side of silence. So. this week, fast a meal, give up screen-time, lay down a luxury... and ask God to meet you in the space you create. If you do this and submit what you sense and discern to the Lord and the wise counsel of others who know you well and love you, you may be surprised by what He reveals.

PRAYER: Lord, I choose to fast not to impress You, but to draw near. Meet me in the space I create for You.

DECLARE: God gives me clarity when I give Him space.

CHALLENGE: Fast something today that steals your attention. Let the hunger remind you to pray.

ACTIVATION: Ask God for a specific prayer burden today and write it down. Who or what is He asking you to carry with Him?

NOTES:			
,			
,			
,			

DAY THREE PRAYER CHANGES EVERYTHING

MAIN FOCUS: GOD DOESN'T JUST REBUILD PLACES—HE REBUILDS PEOPLE THROUGH PRAYER.

KEY VERSE: "Lord, the God of heaven, the great and awesome God, who keeps His covenant of love..." — Nehemiah 1:5

READING: Nehemiah 1:4-11, James 5:16

CONSIDER: When was the moment that you knew God was giving you a humility that you couldn't muster up on your own? Most likely it came through a genuine grace that enabled you to live free from sin and with power to love Him with much more of your heart, consistently.

I've experienced so many waves of this over the years and it keeps getting better and better.

Nehemiah's prayer is a masterclass in humility, authority, and remembrance.

Before he ever stands before the king, he lets his ears hear his heart and mouth openly confess out loud who his God is and he declares the core of His love to God.

He reminds himself out loud who God is ... great, awesome, covenant-keeping. He confesses sin—not just of others, but his own. And he boldly prays the promises of God back to the One who made them.

When we pray like that, it's our heart being honest, humble, and hopeful. It's genuine and things change. We start moving earth, literally. Dirt moves, steel moves, foundations are set. For sure, we're moving heaven and earth at the same time.

Every revival in Scripture is birthed in prayer. Every step of Anchor Church has been covered in prayer. The same is true of your life. You can bet, someone is covering you in prayer. How do I know?

Every great work begins with someone who cried out to the God of covenant love. Don't underestimate the power of your secret prayer and other's prayers. God hears. God responds. And God still moves through ordinary people who pray extraordinary prayers. PRAYER: God of heaven, I remember who You are. I confess my need. And I ask You to move in power through me. DECLARE: My prayer life is the power source for my purpose. CHALLENGE: Pray Nehemiah's prayer out loud. Make it personal. ACTIVATION: Write your own prayer based on Nehemiah's pattern: praise, confession, Scripture promise, request. **NOTES:**



MAIN FOCUS: BEFORE NEHEMIAH GOT A "YES" FROM THE KING, HE GAVE GOD HIS FIRST YES.

KEY VERSE: "Lord, let your ear be attentive... to your servant who delights in revering your name." —Nehemiah 1:11

READING: Nehemiah 1:11, Isaiah 6:8

CONSIDER: In December of 2014, I said "Yes!" to the Lord regarding packing up everything we owned and investing all we had into moving to McKinney, TX to start Anchor Church. We had zero committed provision from people and didn't know a single person in the city. We didn't even know for sure if we had an open door; but we knew we had a burden and the vision of the Lord.

Most people wait for an open door before they say yes.

But Nehemiah said yes before he knew how, when, or what. That's what made his yes powerful—it was surrendered.

When Isaiah had his throne-room vision, he said, "Here I am, send me!" before God even told him what the assignment was.

I'm still learning more deeply that God looks for that kind of posture. A yes-before-you-know yes. A "whatever You say, I'm in" kind of faith.

Sometimes we delay obedience because we're still negotiating. But the Front Porch Life begins with the heart of the Father and a heart for what He loves. With Nehemiah, that yes looked like faithfulness as a cupbearer. For you, it might look like faithfulness in your business, your work, your home or your area of influence.

Don't despise where you are. That's where the yes gets tested—and where heaven starts moving.

PRAYER: Lord, You have my first yes. Before I see the plan, before I know the next step-my heart is Yours. DECLARE: My surrendered yes is stronger than fear, delay, or doubt. CHALLENGE: Say yes today to something God has already put on your heart. ACTIVATION: Write your "yes" in a sentence. What do you feel God is asking of you right now? **NOTES:**

DAY FIVE THE POWER OF A COVENANT NAME

MAIN FOCUS: GOD'S NAMES CARRY HIS NATURE—AND HIS PROMISES CARRY YOUR PERMISSION TO REBUILD.

KEY VERSE: "The God of heaven... who keeps His covenant of love..."Nehemiah 1:5

READING: Nehemiah 1:5-11, Exodus 34:6-7, 2 Corinthians 1:20

CONSIDER: Heaven is multifaceted. It is a word that refers to the sky. It also refers to the solar system beyond what we can see. But, in Scripture it ultimately refers to the entirety of the spirit realm or the unseen world.

Nehemiah prays to the "God of heaven" but not as a distant deity. He calls on the covenant-keeping God who reigns over the unseen realm and the seen realm.

He is aligning His heart with the highest order imaginable to mankind. For the first thirty-plus years of my life I had trouble calling God, "Father". It wasn't because of personal father issues, I just never felt like using that name to address him. He was much higher for me, but not so much nearby.

For Nehemiah, his relationship to God was not distant. His prayer was not to an unknowable energy. He's talking to the one who revealed Himself to Moses as "compassionate, gracious, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness." This is not a generic God. This is Yahweh. The "I AM." Nehemiah addressed the God who is personally close and cares about His Holy Name being related to His promises. He addressed a God who doesn't forget His Word.

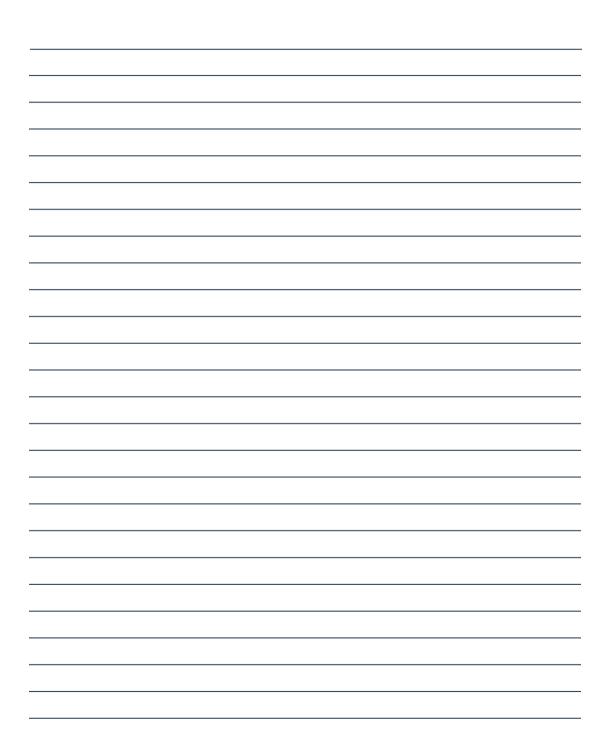
This simple prayer is a pattern for you to experience also. When you feel weak, when you don't know where to start, remember: God's name is the foundation for your assignment.

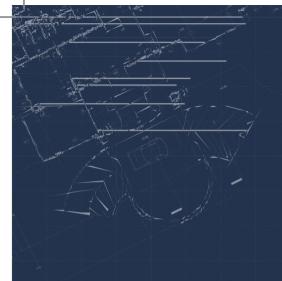
He's the keeper of His promises and the sustainer of His covenant love.

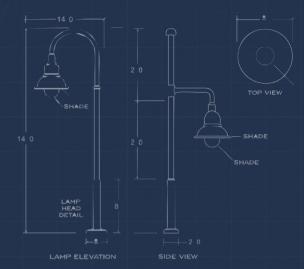
PRAYER: Lord, You are who You say You are. And because of that, I can become who You've called me to be. DECLARE: Every promise of God is yes and amen in Christ and I'm standing on it. CHALLENGE: Say one name of God out loud today every hour. Let it guide your perspective. ACTIVATION: Which covenant name of God do you need to cling to in this season? Write it. Meditate on it. Declare it. NOTES:

WEEKLY SERMON NOTES

Date:	Speaker:	
Key Text:		







WEEK TWO

THE HAND OF THE LORD IS ON ME

KEY VERSE: "And because the gracious hand of my God was on me, the king granted my requests." —Nehemiah 2:8

BUILDING BLOCK: The favor of God is far greater than what your talents can deliver.

BIG IDEA: The hand of God is His strength, power, favor and wind behind your success.

CONTEXT: This week is all about seeing the hand of God on your life. Gratitude is the result. You never even allow the thought to enter your mind – that it's by your ability, your degree, your work or anything else mancentered. You see the favor of God in gifts, abilities, timing, order and every detail. The result will be deep gratitude and sincere worship. You'll know it's Him, not you.

IN HEBREW:

Nehemiah knew the Lord turned the heart of kings. The Lord covered David in his exploits. The Lord was with Joshua, Caleb and Israel. The Lord was with Gideon. The Lord led Abraham. The hand of the Lord was on Elijah at Mount Carmel. Those who took glory in man didn't last. Those who see the hand of God on their life and assignment do not touch what He does and take glory for it.

FOR CHRIST:

Jesus said, "I only do what I see the Father doing." He gave glory to the Father. He told his disciples 'You can do nothing without me. With me, all things are possible." It's pretty clear. "I am with you always" is not just a cute goodbye statement. It means, "I'm never going to leave you and if I'm with you, you'll never fail."

FRONT PORCH PERSPECTIVE:

Just as the shepherd received favor from heaven to find what was lost, Nehemiah experienced supernatural backing for his impossible request. When God's hand is on your expansion efforts, kings become sponsors and obstacles become opportunities—because heaven always provides what's needed to make room for one more.

FOR YOU:

Can you sense when the Hand of God is on your life or your day? Can you sense his favor? How do you respond to His favor on you and all you do?

READ:

Ezra 7:6, Nehemiah 2:8, Acts 11:21, I Kings 18:46



$D\!AYO\!N\!E$ god's favor makes the impossible move

MAIN FOCUS: GOD OPENS DOORS NO MAN CAN SHUT.

KEY VERSE: "The king granted me what I asked, for the gracious hand of my God was on me." — Nehemiah 2:8

READING: Nehemiah 2:1-8, Revelation 3:7-8

CONSIDER: I had a dream in the Fall of 2010 that I believe was prophetic. I sensed the Lord telling me to go to Larry Stockstill's house and share the dream with him and tell him something specific.

Now, I had never met Larry or anyone in his family, but I knew who he was and had looked up to him for a few decades.

I waited for 6 years, and at the right time, God connected me with Larry and his family in ways I never imagined possible.

Nehemiah continued serving faithfully as a cupbearer until the king noticed something was different. And when Nehemiah got that holy nudge to speak, he did so with both courage and clarity. This moment wasn't just political favor.

It was divine favor. The hand of the Lord was on him. And when God's hand is on you, no man, no government, no circumstance can block what He's prepared. Some of the biggest breakthroughs in your life will come not because you fought harder, but because God leaned in.

That's what favor is. It's God saying, "Let Me go ahead of you." You don't have to push every door open, just walk through the ones God unlocks. When His hand is on you, what once felt impossible becomes inevitable.

PRAYER: Lord, I trust Your timing. Open the right doors. Place Your hand on my life and lead me forward.

DECLARE: God's favor opens doors I could never earn.

CHALLENGE: Pray today for a specific door to open and then surrender the outcome to the hand of God.

ACTIVATION: Ask God for a specific prayer burden today and write it down. Who or what is He asking you to carry with Him?

NOTES:	

DAYTWO HOLY BURDEN MEETS EARTHLY POWER

MAIN FOCUS: GOD'S HAND CAN MOVE EVEN PAGAN KINGS WHEN YOUR HEART IS SURRENDERED.

KEY VERSE: "Why does your face look so sad when you are not ill?"

-Nehemiah 2:2

READING: Nehemiah 2:1-6, Proverbs 21:1

CONSIDER: I am walking evidence that God can use anyone. I am by far the most unlikely person I've ever known to be doing what I'm doing.

I've never believed that God can only work through godly people. Why? Because He has always worked through me and that's not the story of Scripture. God moves through whomever He chooses, even pagan kings, to accomplish His purpose.

Nehemiah was afraid to show sadness in the king's presence. That was risky. But God stirred something in Artaxerxes that even Nehemiah couldn't predict. The king cared. He asked. He listened. And then—he said yes.

This wasn't manipulation. It was divine orchestration.

Sometimes we try too hard to make things happen. But when the hand of God is on us, He aligns the hearts of others in ways we could never control.

The key is having a holy burden—not a selfish ambition. Nehemiah wasn't trying to build a name for himself; he was weeping over God's people. And God honored it. When your motive is surrendered, your assignment gains heaven's backing. Trust that God can move the hearts of people you least expect.

PRAYER: Father, I trust You to move hearts and open ears even in places I least expect. Use me with pure motives.

DECLARE: God can stir hearts I can't reach.

ACTIVATION: Ask God for a specific prayer burden today and write it down. Who or what is He asking you to carry with Him? NOTES:

CHALLENGE: Ask God to prepare the hearts of those you'll speak to this week and

to purify your own motives first.

DAY THREE ASKING BOLDLY, MOVING WISELY

MAIN FOCUS: GOD HONORS THE COURAGE TO ASK AND THE WISDOM TO PLAN.

KEY VERSE: "If it pleases the king, may I have letters..." — Nehemiah 2:7

READING: Nehemiah 2:7-9, James 1:5

CONSIDER: When I finally had lunch with Larry Stockstill, Larry had already planted over 40,000 Churches and was the overseer of many of America's largest and fastest-growing churches. He had been a key influence over many governmental leaders. You don't just go up to Larry Stockstill with a dream and a word from the Lord – unless it's God and the timing is God's.

Waiting was very wise counsel.

Nehemiah didn't just blurt out a request, he came prepared. He had prayed, fasted, waited, and now he asked with boldness and wisdom.

He knew what he needed: protection for the journey, access to materials, and written authority. And because the hand of God was on him, every request was granted.

This is a picture of Spirit-led strategy. Many of us either pray without planning or plan without praying. But the Front Porch Life calls us to do both—bring our burdens before God, then think and prepare with His wisdom. When God gives you a holy assignment, He also gives you the wisdom to carry it out. But you still have to ask.

Some blessings remain unopened simply because we never asked. Don't be passive. Don't be entitled. Pray boldly. Ask wisely. And plan well. God delights in faith that listens and leads at the same time.

PRAYER: God, make me bold in faith and wise in action. Teach me to ask and prepare with confidence in You.

DECLARE: I will ask boldly and prepare wisely because God is with me.

CHALLENGE: What are you afraid to ask for? Write it out and present it to the Lord in faith.

ACTIVATION: Ask God for a specific prayer burden today and write it down. Who or what is He asking you to carry with Him?

NOTES:			
-			

DAY FOUR CARRIED BY THE HAND OF GOD

MAIN FOCUS: GOD'S HAND CARRIES US WHEN WE DON'T KNOW THE TERRAIN AHEAD.

KEY VERSE: "The king had also sent army officers and cavalry with me."

Nehemiah 2:9

READING: Nehemiah 2:9-10, Isaiah 41:10, Psalm 37:23-24

CONSIDER: When God's hand is upon you for His assignment and purposes, you never travel alone. There will be real power and provision and protection around you. You don't have to discuss it or even see it. You'll know it.

Nehemiah didn't travel alone. He was sent out with a royal escort of cavalry and soldiers backing his journey. But don't miss the real power behind his movement.

Nehemiah knew the journey was possible because of "the gracious hand of God." That phrase becomes a drumbeat throughout the story. In other words, Nehemiah saw divine fingerprints on every detail. His safety. His access. His timing. All of it was covered.

You may not have cavalry beside you, but you have something stronger—God's hand upon your life. And that hand is enough. It steadies your steps. It shields you from attack. It carries you forward when the way is unclear.

What matters most isn't the opposition ahead—it's the presence that goes with you. Keep your eyes on the hand of the Lord, not the hands that try to stop you. If God has called you to rebuild, He will carry you to it and through it.

PRAYER: Father, thank You that Your hand is steady when my heart is shaky. I trust You to guide me every step.

DECLARE: God's hand carries me where fear cannot follow.

ACTIVATION: Ask God for a specific prayer burden today and write it down. Who or what is He asking you to carry with Him? NOTES:

CHALLENGE: Visualize the hand of God over your life today. When fear rises, speak

His name instead.

DAY FIVE THE ENEMY ALWAYS SHOWS UP FARLY

MAIN FOCUS: RESISTANCE IS PROOF OF PURPOSE—NOT THE ABSENCE OF IT.

KEY VERSE: "When Sanballat and Tobiah heard... they were very much disturbed that someone had come to promote the welfare of the Israelites." —Nehemiah 2:10

READING: Nehemiah 2:10, John 16:33, 2 Timothy 3:12

CONSIDER: My favorite experience with the Lord lately has been knowing that I'm being kept by Him. He is keeping me close. He drew me close and He's keeping me close.

I can see opposition so clearly and I know what to do almost immediately. It's because He's keeping me and His hand is upon me. I know this.

Before Nehemiah even started rebuilding, the critics came out. Sanballat and Tobiah weren't just annoyed—they were deeply disturbed that someone dared to care. T

That's how the enemy works. He doesn't wait for the first wall to go up. He tries to discourage you before you even begin. Why? Because the hand of the Lord on you threatens his grip.

If the enemy can stop you at the starting line, he never has to face the finished product.

Don't mistake early resistance for divine disapproval. It's often confirmation that you're on the right track. Jesus promised trouble—but He also promised victory. Nehemiah didn't flinch. He didn't react to their noise. He stayed focused on the favor of God.

The Front Porch Life is anchored. Expect resistance. But more than that, expect that the hand of God is stronger than any voice of fear.

PRAYER: Lord, when opposition rises, help me remember Your call. Let resistance refine me, not define me.

DECLARE: Early opposition is just a sign of God's early favor.

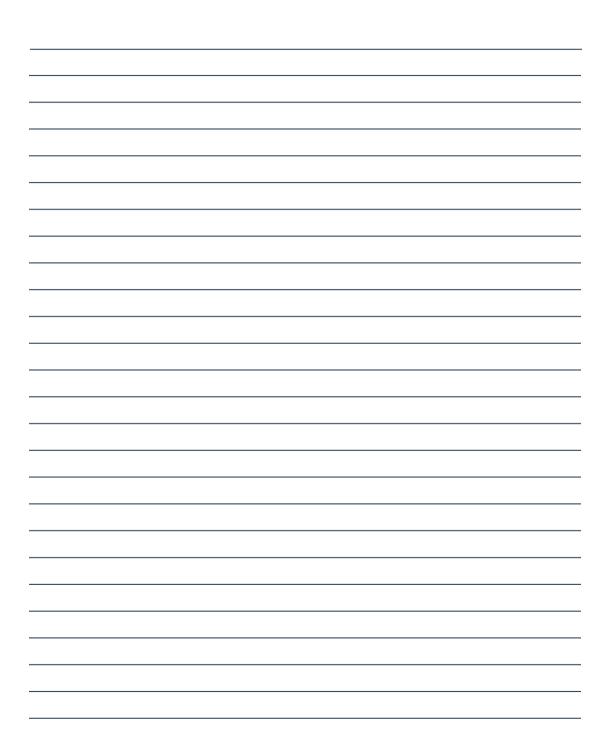
CHALLENGE: Name one voice of criticism or fear trying to stop you and strongly replace it with a Scripture today.

ACTIVATION: Ask God for a specific prayer burden today and write it down. Who or what is He asking you to carry with Him?

NOTES:			

WEEKLY SERMON NOTES

Date:	Speaker:				
Key Text:					



WEEK THREE

GET UP AND BUILD

KEY VERSE: "So they began this good work." —Nehemiah 2:18

BUILDING BLOCK: When vision becomes action, rebuilding begins.

BIG IDEA: Christ gathers the willing and builds what will last. He is the Cornerstone of a new humanity (Ephesians 2:20–22).

CONTENT SUMMARY: The first two weeks revealed the burden and the blessing of favor. But now, the people must decide: Will we stay in disrepair, or will we stand together and rebuild? In Week Three, Nehemiah rallies the people with vision, unity, and resolve. This is where movement begins. When the Spirit of God stirs hearts, bold steps follow. Get ready—what was broken is about to rise.

CONTEXT: There comes a moment when the burden must become a blueprint—and the blueprint must become movement. This is that moment. Sometimes, God will kick you out of where you refused to leave. He'll activate you getting fired, dismissed, rejected and sometimes worse. It's like a pitocin drip on a mother who needs a kickstart to go into labor.

IN HEBREW: Nehemiah cried. Nehemiah prayed. His cries and his prayers didn't avoid action. He stood up and called others to join him. "Let's rebuild." That one sentence that was like a Pitocin drip a movement of unity, risk, and action. For years, God's people had lived surrounded by ruins. But when one man stood with vision and resolve, courage spread like wildfire. Every revival starts with one person who dares to believe the time is now.

LOPHRAIR A

FOR CHRIST:

Jesus modled searching, building and leading even when the fear was louder than His will to obey. He even prayed, "not my will but your will be done." Pure obedience is louder than fear. The ministry of Jesus didn't begin with bricks. It began with the Spirit empowering hearts. And now, it's your turn to rise. To step. To build. You're building for Him and His legacy. Legacy begins the moment you say yes even when the work looks overwhelming. This is the week the Front Porch Life becomes a construction zone. Get up. God is with you.

FRONT PORCH PERSPECTIVE:

The woman with the lost coin lit a lamp and swept diligently until she found what had intrinsic value, and Nehemiah's methodical approach mirrors this redemptive work. Every person who picks up tools to rebuild is participating in God's relentless effort to restore the broken and reclaim what the enemy tried to destroy.

FOR YOU:

What gives you the power to sit in the presence of Christ and stay. Abide. Rest. Trust. Obey. There's no greater joy than abiding in the presence of Jesus deeper than the duty of obedience could ever carry you. He empowers you to pick up and go. He empowers the grind of building, staying, investing, loving and serving.

READ:

Nehemiah w, Luke 15:8-10, Luke 14:31-33, Luke 14:27-28, Matthew 10:38-39





DAYONE LET'S REBUILD TOGETHER

MAIN FOCUS: GOD GIVES VISION THAT STIRS COLLECTIVE COURAGE.

KEY VERSE: "Let us start rebuilding." - Nehemiah 2:18

READING: Nehemiah 2:17-18, Ephesians 2:10

CONSIDER: I know what crippling anxiety, doubt and depression feel like. It's a spiraling down that seems to have no reverse gear. It's painful. It's like seeing a future surrounded by ruins and not being able to see real light.

But when God breaks through with hope and you trust Him, you will then know the reason people who know the presence of the Lord and the hand of God on their lives must speak up and move.

Nehemiah saw utter ruins firsthand. But when the hand of God was on him, things changed. He spoke up. "You see the trouble we're in..." He named it, and then he called them higher. What was the people's response? "Let's rebuild." Hope came alive.

No more blame. No more delay. Just a clear decision. When God puts His hand on you, your voice carries weight. His word becomes a fire in you. His resources become clear to you.

Provision starts to invade lack. Protection starts to drive away darkness. Power starts to abolish limitations. Hope takes over and the vision becomes action.

There's something contagious about courage. And when you speak from a holy burden, others will rise too.

PRAYER: God, help me see clearly and speak boldly. Use my life to stir courage in others.

DECLARE: My "yes" invites others to build with God.

CHALLENGE: Write down one person who needs encouragement today and tell them you believe in their calling.

ACTIVATION: Ask the Lord: "Who do You want to build with me?" Then text or call them with a simple word of encouragement.

NOTES:	

DAYTWO INSPECT BEFORE YOU BUILD

MAIN FOCUS: WISE BUILDERS DON'T RUSH— THEY WALK THE RUINS WITH DISCERNMENT.

KEY VERSE: "I went out by night... examining the walls." - Nehemiah 2:13

READING: Nehemiah 2:11–16, Luke 14:28–30

CONSIDER: When we moved into our first building in March of 2023, I couldn't see anything because I had no idea how we were going to grow enough to afford to pay for what we now occupied. We didn't even have the resources to buy furniture or anything else for the new house. I wasn't ready to think further and had no desire to even think of expanding or anything "Phase 2". We couldn't afford where we were.

Then in late August of 2024, one of our worship pastors, Cammie Avers brought me a dream she experienced on August 23, 2024. It was very vivid and was about us being in another new building that wasn't the one we're in. Her dream revealed a huge totally packed new building with a balcony that extended into the heavens and something about my notes catching on fire and people's fingers catching on fire when they touched the notes.

That was the moment I knew we had to expand and that very day I started working with my team to look ahead and see what God was going to do. Within one year of that dream, Anchor grew with over 3,000 new members and much more provision than we could have imagined.

But I didn't announce the expansion, I waited. I discerned the Word of the Lord for us with elders, advisors, experts and very close friends. Then I shared it in October 2025. Nehemiah didn't announce the plan the day he arrived. He waited. He walked the ruins at night. He examined, measured and took time to understand the true state of things before starting the work. That's wisdom.

Some people rush into spiritual rebuilding with excitement but no understanding and their walls don't last. Real vision requires real honesty. This week don't skip the

step of reflection. What areas of your life need repair? What ruins have you walked past for too long? Slow down. Discern the voice of the Lord with trusted advisors and spiritual friends. He is working so powerfully in us.

PRAYER: Lord, help me walk slowly through what's broken. Give me honest eyes and a Spirit-led plan.

DECLARE: I build with wisdom, not impulse.

CHALLENGE: Take 30 minutes alone this week to walk, journal, or sit in silence and ask God to show you what needs attention.

ACTIVATION: Draw a basic map of your spiritual life relationships, habits, thought patterns—and circle any areas that feel "broken down." That's where the rebuilding begins.

NOTES:			

DAY THREE START WITH YOUR SECTION

MAIN FOCUS: EVERY PERSON HAS A SECTION OF THE WALL—AND YOUR PART MATTERS.

KEY VERSE: "Next to them, so-and-so built... and next to them..." — Nehemiah 3 (summary)

READING: Nehemiah 3:1-32, 1 Corinthians 12:12-27

CONSIDER: Anna was a nine-year-old girl who gave over \$12,000 to build the new church building her family worshipped in. She colored every picture in a large coloring book and sold them in her daddy's business office to all his co-workers and friends. She tore out every picture and sold each one. Some went for \$20 and some went for over \$1,000.

"I colored these pictures for Jesus and I want you to have one and help me build a house for the Lord." That's what she told everyone. She did her part.

Nehemiah 3 might read like a construction report, but it's a holy roll call asking every family to show up and bring their best. Family by family, section by section, each one said yes. Every person did what they could and God built the wall through each of them. Every family.

Nobody built the whole wall alone, they built together. Some repaired gates. Others handled stones. Every part mattered. And it still does.

No one person will do everything and it doesn't matter what you can do compared to anyone else. It's personal and it's your best to the Lord.

You're not responsible for what others can do or what you cannot do. But you are responsible for your section. That's your seat. That's your friend's seat. That's your family's seats. Can you see it?

What part of the Front Porch Life vision has God entrusted to you? Don't despise

your portion. God's strategy always includes your obedience.

PRAYER: Father, show me the section You've entrusted to me and give me the strength to be faithful.

DECLARE: I will build my section with faith, joy, and diligence.

CHALLENGE: What area of ministry, leadership, or service do you sense God stirring in you? Write it down.

ACTIVATION: Say this out loud: "My section matters." It does! Now, commit to one practical step this week to steward it well.

NOTES:		

$D\!A\Upsilon FOUR$ ignore the critics, build anyway

MAIN FOCUS: CRITICS SHOW UP EARLY, BUT YOU DON'T HAVE TO ANSWER THEM.

KEY VERSE: "The God of heaven will give us success. We His servants will start rebuilding." —Nehemiah 2:20

READING: Nehemiah 2:19-20, 2 Timothy 1:7

CONSIDER: Elijah encourages me because he was suicidal just hours after doing one of the greatest miracles in world history. He literally called down fire from heaven in the middle of a drought and the fire consumed all of the water on a drenched stack of wood and consumed all of the water anywhere near the wood.

Just a few hours later, a woman named Jezebel got in his head and he ran for his life begging God to let him die.

I've never done that, but I have obsessed in anger and wanting revenge on someone who gave Anchor a petty and immature 1-star Google review. True.

Critics didn't get in Jesus' head. They also didn't get in Nehemiah's head. Before a single brick was laid, Sanballat and Tobiah mocked the whole thing.

Critics always come early and they're obnoxious and very loud. Their job is to make you doubt the call or distract you from the assignment.

But Nehemiah didn't argue or explain himself. He didn't get dragged into distraction. He simply said, "The God of heaven will give us success."

Then he went back to building.

When you know God sent you, you don't need approval to obey. The enemy's voice is loudest when the breakthrough is closest.

PRAYER: Jesus, give me boldness in the face of doubt. Let me be deaf to discouragement and alive to Your call.

DECLARE: God's voice is louder than my critics.

CHALLENGE: What voice has been trying to distract or discourage you lately? Write it down and then put a bold "X" through it. Cross it out. Do this!

ACTIVATION: Speak Nehemiah 2:20 aloud. Let your spirit hear your resolve.

NOTES:			

DAY FIVE THIS IS THE GOOD WORK

MAIN FOCUS: WHEN GOD CALLS YOU TO REBUILD, IT'S NOT BUSY WORK, IT'S HOLY.

KEY VERSE: "So they began this good work." — Nehemiah 2:18

READING: Nehemiah 2:18, Philippians 1:6

CONSIDER: In January of 2024, my wife and I were at a resort in Riviera Maya celebrating our 25th anniversary. In her downtime, she was crocheting a blanket.

I asked her what it was and she said, "It's a blanket for I started it a long time ago but never got around to finishing it." The baby was now a teenager but Sarah is highly responsible. If she said she'd do it or if she started doing it, she's going to finish it regardless of how old the baby is now.

I'm the opposite. There are some things I never start because I can't see how it's going to be finished. Sometimes, I can see the end and know how it will get done. Other times, I just can't see. Those are the times It's hardest for me to begin.

God knows the beginning from the end and most of the time, when He moves you to build or work on something, he doesn't show you how it's going to happen.

Nehemiah called it a good work. Not because it was easy. Not because everyone agreed. But because God said to start it and He ordained it.

You're not just volunteering when you say yes to God. You're not just helping. You're participating in something eternal for Him.

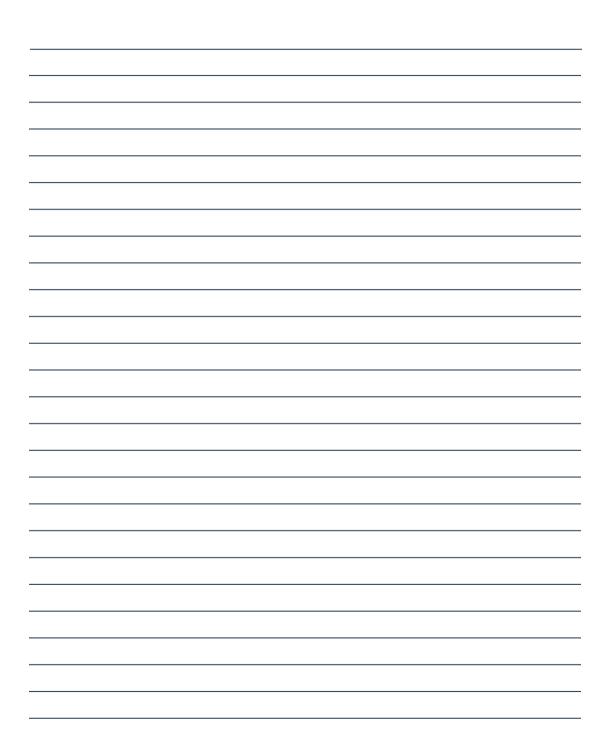
If God started it, He'll sustain it. You may feel overwhelmed by the task ahead but you're not alone. He's working on you and you are more important than what you do.

Your job is to keep rooting in Him. Keep coming back to Him in the journey. Keep believing there's a purpose for the work. Keep showing up. Keep knitting.

Because the work isn't just good. It He started it; it's God's work and it has purpose. PRAYER: God, thank You for the good work You've begun in me. Help me build with faith and finish strong. DECLARE: This is a good work and I will not come down. CHALLENGE: Write down the "good work" you feel God is inviting you into. Name it. Bless it. Own it. ACTIVATION: Pray Philippians 1:6 out loud. Then say: "The God who started this will finish it." NOTES:

WEEKLY SERMON NOTES

Date:	Speaker:				
Key Text:					



WEEK FOUR

POWER OVER OPPOSITION

KEY VERSE: "They all plotted together to come and fight against Jerusalem and stir up trouble against it." —Nehemiah 4:8

BUILDING BLOCK: Opposition confirms the assignment but discernment sustains it.

BIG IDEA: Jesus was opposed at every turn, yet He never came down from His purpose. The Cross was His wall and He stayed on it for us.

CONTENT SUMMARY: The work has started but now, so has the warfare. The enemy doesn't mind when we talk about rebuilding. But when we actually do it, resistance comes fast. This week is about recognizing opposition for what it is and refusing to be derailed by it. God gives discernment, strategy, and courage when critics rise. Stay focused. Stay faithful. Stay on the wall.

CONTEXT: There's a story of a cod-fish company in New England that was shipping cod to the Southwest for multiple chain-restaurants. There was a problem after months of shipping that the frozen Cod wasn't as fresh and lost its texture and quality.

So, the cod-fish company decided to invest in live tanks to ship the cod in so they could stay alive and fresh. They were surprised that this didn't solve the problem. The fish were still not the same as they were in the New England market. The fish just floated around in the water mostly and because they weren't very active, they were just as unordinary as the frozen version.

One day the decided to put a catfish in the tank with the cod. This is the cod fish's enemy. Sure enough, this shipment was drastically different. The cod-fish were just as fresh and amazing in Arizona and California after shipment as they were in New England. The enemy, catfish kept the cod-fish active, vibrant and blood flowing continually. The result was that the fish was just as fresh and tasty as if it were harvested locally. Every calling comes with a critic. But that doesn't mean you're doing it wrong—it usually means you're being challenged in ways that keep tension and vitality in your prayer and faith.

IN HEBREW: The wall was going up. The work had begun. And right on cue, the enemy showed up. First with mocking. Then with threats. Finally, with psychological warfare. But Nehemiah didn't cave. He didn't rage. He didn't flinch. He prayed, posted a guard, and kept building.

IN CHRIST: From the moment the water was turned into wine, trouble was going to start unfolding and the kingdom was going to start getting built. There was a holy overhaul coming to the house of God. People were going to matter more than anything and the heart was going to matter more than the external benefits of the promises of God's covenant. Every step Jesus took to build the kingdom was met with fierce opposition, mockery, threats and eventually death.

FRONT PORCH PERSPECTIVE: Like the father who never stopped watching the horizon for his son's return, Nehemiah faced opposition because love always threatens the enemy's grip. The attacks intensify when you're close to completion—whether building walls or building people because the enemy knows restored spaces become launching pads for more lost sons and daughters to find their way home.

IN YOU: This is the week you learn to fight without quitting. To discern when to answer and when to stay silent. To spot the lies, the sabotage, and the subtle distractions that pull you off the wall. You don't have time to come down—not when the call is this clear. Jesus knew the feeling. He was mocked too. Opposed. Rejected. And yet, He never stopped rebuilding what sin had broken. You'll face resistance. But take heart, opposition is not the end of your story. It's what makes you more dependent upon the Lord. That's your power. Stay steady. Keep building.

READ: Nehemiah 3-4, Isaiah 54:17, Romans 8:37, James 1:12, Galatians 6:9

DAYONE CRITICISM IS YOUR GYM

MAIN FOCUS: OPPOSITION IS OFTEN A SIGN YOU'RE ON THE RIGHT TRACK.

KEY VERSE: "What are those feeble Jews doing? Will they restore their wall?"Nehemiah 4:2

READING: Nehemiah 4:1-3, John 15:18-20

CONSIDER: My greatest attacks and opposition in ministry have come from people who had a few facts about me that weren't true. Not all of the facts brought against you are the whole truth about you or the story.

Every time this happens, I'm tempted to defend myself and even avenge myself. I can't stand passive aggressive bullies who could never do what you're doing but chip away at you.

Cancel culture does this too. It's hard to just let things roll off your back. It's humiliating to turn the other cheek.

But you must.

The first whale to blow it's top usually is the one to get harpooned.

Sanballat and Tobiah didn't attack with swords first. They attacked with sarcasm. "Even a fox could knock this wall over."

The goal was simple: discourage and dismantle through mockery. The enemy knows that fear works fast when planted in fertile minds. But Nehemiah didn't spiral. He saw the attack for what it was—confirmation that the work mattered.

If nobody's resisting you, you might not be threatening the enemy. When you start to do your part in building the things hell strongly opposes and longs to tear down, expect a reaction.

Do not come off of that wall. It's go time. PRAYER: Lord, when the critics come, help me not to crumble. Let their resistance confirm Your call. DECLARE: Criticism cannot cancel what God has commissioned. CHALLENGE: Write down one past criticism that's still echoing and surrender it to Jesus today. Replace this! ACTIVATION: Say this aloud: "The presence of critics confirms the power of my call." **NOTES**:

DAYTWO DISCERNMENT OVER DRAMA

MAIN FOCUS: DISCERNMENT KEEPS YOU ANCHORED WHEN THE ENEMY STIRS CHAOS.

KEY VERSE: "But we prayed to our God and posted a guard." - Nehemiah 4:9

READING: Nehemiah 4:6-9, Philippians 1:9-11

CONSIDER: If you know anyone who tries to kill flies with a sledgehammer, then you understand over-reaction. I call it the B.K.R., or "Brass Knuckle Rule". The golden rule is do unto others as you'd have them do unto you. The B.K.R. is "Do unto others before they do unto you." Do you know someone who follows the brass-knuckle rule?

Nehemiah didn't live in that kind of over-reaction. He didn't flow with a "get them before they get us" mindset. He didn't post an attack or subversive strategy. He prayed and posted a guard.

Prayer and planning are what lead to Holy Spirit empowered strategy. This is what wise leadership looks like. You don't have to match the chaos around you. You don't have to fight every critic. But you do need discernment to know when to act and when to stay still.

Drama is designed to drain your energy, get you out of God's rhythm and into an unhealthy avenger mindset. Discernment protects everything.

This week, God wants to give you discernment. He is leading you into a way of the Spirit and His divine strategy.

PRAYER: Holy Spirit, give me discernment. Help me see beyond the noise and stay grounded in what You're doing.

DECLARE: I trade drama for discernment.

an assignment?" ACTIVATION: Pray Nehemiah 4:9 over your life: "I will pray to my God and post a guard." NOTES:

CHALLENGE: When conflict rises this week, pause and ask: "Is this a distraction or

DAY THREE WHEN FATIGUE SETS IN

MAIN FOCUS: SOMETIMES THE GREATEST THREAT ISN'T THE ENEMY, IT'S YOUR EXHAUSTION.

KEY VERSE: "The strength of the laborers is giving out, and there is so much rubble." —Nehemiah 4:10

READING: Nehemiah 4:10-12, Galatians 6:9

CONSIDER: I love Christmas but I do not love putting up decorations or taking down decorations. The main reason is because Sarah and I disagree pretty strongly on what is trash, what should be thrown away and what is treasure and should be kept for generations to come.

I would never say out loud, "Sarah, that's an ornament? It's kindergarten art from our now 21-year-old son and it's ugly and was poorly painted. It's not a treasure! It's rubble!" I value being married too much to say that ... and I want to live.

When the rubble or clean up seems like it's too much, I tend to want to burn it all or throw it away or call the trash collectors. I get capacity fatigue. It's real.

Nehemiah's crew wasn't quitting because of the enemy. They were quitting because they were tired of the size of the rubble.

I mean – it's the dung gate! Who wants to restore the dung gate!??

Burned out. Surrounded by rubble and unending work, so it seemed.

And that's when the whispers crept in: "They're coming for you. You'll never finish."

Fatigue can open the door to fear. But don't miss this, Nehemiah kept the people together. He reorganized, encouraged, and reminded them of the vision.

If you're tired, don't isolate. Let others stand beside you.

Rest when needed. But don't let rubble steal your resolve. PRAYER: God, when I'm tired, remind me why I started. Give me supernatural strength for what You've called me to finish. *DECLARE*: My fatigue is real—but so is God's faithfulness. CHALLENGE: Name what's wearing you down right now and invite God into it. ACTIVATION: Text a friend or team member and say, "I'm tired but I'm not quitting. Stand with me." The key is getting seated with Christ and operating from Him. This is everything. **NOTES:**

DAYFOUR a sword and a hammer

MAIN FOCUS: GOD CALLS YOU TO BUILD AND BATTLE AT THE SAME TIME.

KEY VERSE: "Those who carried materials did their work with one hand and held a weapon in the other." —Nehemiah 4:17

READING: Nehemiah 4:13–18, Ephesians 6:10

CONSIDER: I like to call the sword, "The Urgent" and I call the hammer, "The Important". Sometimes you must do what you must do until you're able to do what you really want to do. For a ministry builder, fundraising is like fighting giants and ministry leadership is like building the wall.

For an entrepreneur, putting out legal fires is fighting giants and leading the team through a successful product launch is like building the wall. For a young mom, fighting to get your whiny 2nd grader out of bed is like fighting giants and reading to a peaceful and compliant child before bed is like building the wall.

Nehemiah and his people built with tools in one hand and a sword in the other. That's not just ancient history, it's your life right now.

Every day you build your family, your faith, your future and every day you battle lies, fear, and distractions. That feels like failure, but it's not. It's actually the path for every person's deepest progress forward and formation. Don't expect the work to get easier. Always expect God to make you stronger.

Be very careful to avoid people in life who always ask God to make things easier and loads lighter. Be very intentional to run with people who instead ask God to broaden their shoulders for all He has for them. Nehemiah always asked for broader shoulders.

When you stay armored and aligned, you can do both. You don't have to choose between building and battling. You were made for both.

PRAYER: Jesus, be my strength in battle and my guide in the work. Teach me to fight and build with confidence in You.

DECLARE: I am both a builder and a warrior.

CHALLENGE: What area of your life feels most like a battle right now? Don't ignore it. Name it—and armor up.

ACTIVATION: Declare Ephesians 6:10–11 out loud. Then pick up your "trowel" and take the next step.

NOTES:			

DAY FIVE THE LORD FIGHTS FOR US

MAIN FOCUS: THE BATTLE BELONGS TO GOD—BUT YOU STILL HAVE A ROLE TO PLAY.

KEY VERSE: "Remember the Lord, who is great and awesome, and fight..."

—Nehemiah 4:14

READING: Nehemiah 4:14-23, Exodus 14:13-14

CONSIDER: Here's a secret. Not because no one knows it, but because it's so far away from the normal Christian mindset. Everything in the Christian life flows out of abiding in Christ and knowing his grace working in you personally. It comes from sitting with Him and resting in him. Rest in him is everything.

Anything you do externally either comes from striving in human strategy, effort, will power and grit – or – through rest in Him.

I know this personally and I feel the difference so deeply lately. I know what it's like to speak a truth from the Lord and walk in Him vs. try to find the plan for persuading people to move forward.

Nehemiah didn't give a military speech. He declared a simple imperative faith declaration: "Remember the Lord." When the enemy comes in, your first task isn't to fight. It's always more personal than that. Faith is relational. It's relational intentionality to "Remember Him".

Who called you.

Who covers you.

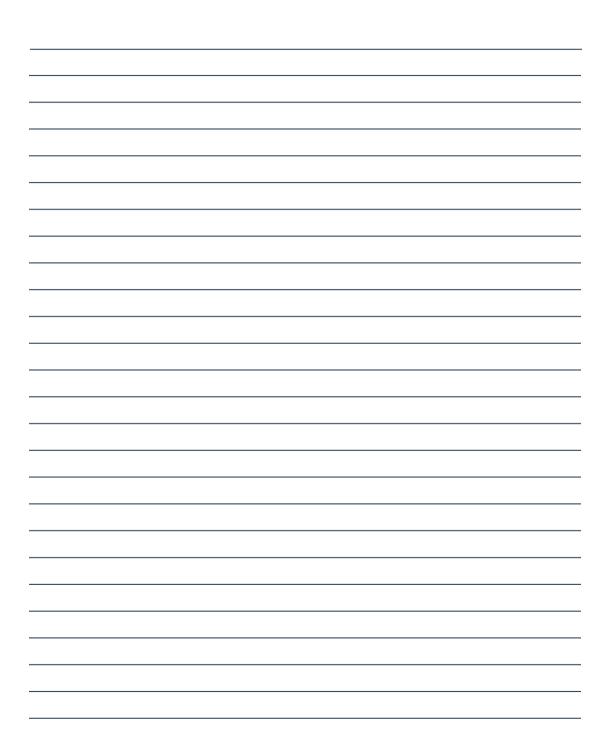
Who goes before you.

This is not your battle to win, it's God's. But you still stand in Him. You still fight in Him. You still show up seated in Him. And when you do, heaven moves. The Lord fights for those who keep their eyes on Him.

Don't let the noise of war make you forget the One who never loses. PRAYER: Lord, I remember who You are. You are great. You are awesome. And You are fighting for me. DECLARE: I remember the Lord and He raises me up for battle. CHALLENGE: Write Nehemiah 4:14 somewhere visible this week. Let it steady you. ACTIVATION: Lift your hands and say, "The battle is the Lord's. I will not fear." **NOTES**:

WEEKLY SERMON NOTES

Date:	Speaker:				
Key Text:					



WEEK FIVE

A SWORD AND A TROWEL

KEY VERSE: "Each of the builders wore his sword at his side as he worked." —Nehemiah 4:18

BUILDING BLOCK: The rebuild requires spiritual warfare—and spiritual wisdom.

BIG IDEA: Jesus is both Lamb and Lion. He's our Cornerstone and our Captain. He builds the Church and conquers the grave. He is our mighty defender and rebuilder.

CONTENT SUMMARY: This week is about spiritual stamina. You don't get to build without learning how to battle. The battle is from His presence, always. Nehemiah's people worked with one hand and held a sword in the other. That's your life now too. Prayer becomes a weapon. Worship becomes a shield. And your perseverance becomes prophetic. The rebuild may be messy, but it's mighty. And when you stay on the wall, heaven backs you up.

CONTEXT: Some days you're building. Other days you're battling. Most days it's both. Everyday. . . it's from His presence. We've already discussed this briefly, but it's a big enough issue to dedicate a whole week to understanding and strength. When Nehemiah's team picked up their tools, they also picked up swords. Because as the wall went up, so did the opposition. And this is what every rebuilder must learn: spiritual progress always attracts spiritual pressure. You're not crazy. You're not weak. You're just in the middle of something sacred.

IN HEBREW:

Nehemiah modeled how to live on high alert but not in fear. He mastered the art of keeping your hand on the hammer without losing grip of his sword. Every leader in God's favor mastered taking care of the urgent and the important at the same time. It's not just a part of laying bricks and building the future. He was a part of taking sacred ground and advancing the Kingdom of God. When God's people take ground, the enemy shows up. But so does God.

FOR CHRIST:

Jesus was equipped with wisdom, discernment, and divine authority. He modeled the fierce heart of the shepherd to carry steadfast love and mercies that are new every morning. He endured opposition from sinful men and he did not grow weary and lose heart. He learned obedience through suffering.

FRONT PORCH
PERSPECTIVE:

The father kept his house ready for battle and celebration simultaneously, and Nehemiah's people learned to build with tools and weapons at the same time. In the Front Porch Life, you're always fighting for the lost while building for the found—one hand defending what matters, the other constructing what lasts.

FOR YOU:

The deep formation and the fatigue of obeying God is not failure. Pain is the friend of a leader. God is making you into a warrior who knows how to build what lasts. Don't drop the tools. Don't sheath the sword. The Lord is mighty in battle and He is with you.

READ:

Nehemiah 4:17-18, Ephesians 6:10-11, Ephesians 6:17, I Corinthians 16:13-14, II Timothy 4:7, I Peter 5:8-9



MAIN FOCUS: GOD'S WORK REQUIRES BOTH COURAGE AND COVERING.

KEY VERSE: "Those who carried materials did their work with one hand and held a weapon in the other." —Nehemiah 4:17

READING: Nehemiah 4:16-18, Psalm 18:32-39

CONSIDER: The emerging generations have grown up in a world that is all about them. What do you feel? What do you want? If you don't like it, give it a poor review and put the cancel culture on it. If you feel it, then you can be it. If you dream it, then you should go for it and everyone should fully fund your "GoFundMe" and help make it happen.

I may be over stating this, but I don't think so.

This kind of mindset produces a silver spoon in one hand a fake trophy in the other.

I've seen people absolutely crushed by the weight of having to wait more than two years out of college to get a job in the field they majored in. I'm serious.

The rhythm of real revival is far from this. Real revival and building things that lasts demands a life with one hand on the bricks and one hand on the sword.

And yes, you can do both while staying seated "in Christ".

You're called to build your home, your church, your calling as a co-laborer in Christ. You're also equipped to fight for it, in Him. It's by faith. This is the best part of every day. Doing everything from and through Him. Never in the flesh, but in the Spirit. All of your greatest assignments will require resilience in HIm.

Your life is not about what you want to be or what you feel. It's about Jesus and His kingdom and your faithful stewardship of all He's given you for His glory.

You must know when to move and when to watch. Don't be surprised by the

tension. You were made for this.

PRAYER: Lord, teach me to work with worship and to battle with wisdom.
Strengthen my hands for the work ahead.

DECLARE: I was born to build and trained to battle.

CHALLENGE: What area of your life feels like both a construction zone and a battlefield? Name it.

ACTIVATION: Stand up, stretch out your hands, and pray aloud: "God, give me strength in both hands—one to build, one to fight."

NOTES:			

DAY TWO BLOW THE TRUMPET

MAIN FOCUS: WE WERE NEVER MEANT TO FIGHT ALONE.

KEY VERSE: "When you hear the sound of the trumpet, join us there. Our God will fight for us!" —Nehemiah 4:20

READING: Nehemiah 4:19–23, Ecclesiastes 4:9–12

CONSIDER: Anchor Church is like a brand-new ten-year-old church. On January 9, 2022 – we relaunched on Sunday morning with 142 adults and about 40 kids in the Cockrill Middle School in McKinney. Today, there have been over 3,800 new people join the church in just the last year. Over 5,000 new people since 2022.

One challenge I face as the person God is using as a "Nehemiah" in leading this new church forward is discerning what the unifying word of the Lord is. What is His battle cry that we all hear together? What is the burden of the Lord and the call forward that He's saying to those who sacrificed three years ago to get in this first building? What is the burden of the Lord for all of the new family members who are enjoying the fruit of others' warfare? What is the battle cry forward that touches all of our hearts – together – as we move forward in Him.

Nehemiah's people were spread out. Each one focused on their section. That's kind of like us. So many people have their own burdens and their own houses and their own areas of influence. But Nehemiah had a system. "If you hear the trumpet, come running."

They were all new to the vision also but they weren't isolated. The vision of God connected them. That's how the church should operate.

When one of us is under attack, we rally. When someone's hands grow weak, we strengthen. None of us suffers silently.

Yes, we're all a part of building the kingdom and doing our part on the "wall" to move things forward. But we're also a part of a family and each of us is here to respond to help you as you do what God's called you to do.

PRAYER: God, remind me I'm not alone. Teach me to call for help and to show up when others do the same.

DECLARE: I will not battle in silence. I blow the trumpet and God answers.

CHALLENGE: Who do you need to "blow the trumpet" for today? Text, call, or pray for them now.

ACTIVATION: Share one specific need with a trusted friend or group and ask them to stand with you in prayer.

NOTES:			

DAY THREE THE POWER OF PRESENCE

MAIN FOCUS: GOD DOESN'T JUST ANOINT YOUR WORK—HE STANDS IN THE MIDDLE OF IT.

KEY VERSE: "Our God will fight for us!" — Nehemiah 4:20

READING: Nehemiah 4:20, Exodus 14:13-14, Deuteronomy 20:1-4

CONSIDER: You can judge where a person is in relationship with you by the parking lot test. Do you know what that is?

If you see their car in the parking lot, do you go in the building looking for them or do you go in the building hiding from them? Well, you may do neither but maybe you know what I mean. Who just makes life better for you? Who do you smile when you know they're going to be there?

For Nehemiah, He didn't just know that God was with Him, He knew that God was present.

Never trust the phrase, "you can do it". You can't alone. The declaration in this text was "God is here." God is everything.

Nehemiah knew that bricks weren't enough. They needed presence. They needed God Himself to fight for them. And He did.

This is your confidence too. Success does require human effort but the key factor is in His nearness. Your job is to stay by being kept by Him. He keeps you on the wall. He stands in the gap. When God fights for you, you walk in a different kind of peace, even when you're in war.

PRAYER: God of angel armies, I trust You to fight what I can't. Be present in my pressure and powerful in my process.

DECLARE: The presence of God surrounds my purpose.

ACTIVATION: Pray Deuteronomy 20:4 out loud: "For the Lord your God is the one who goes with you to fight for you... to give you victory." NOTES:

CHALLENGE: Pause today and imagine God standing next to you as you work. Let

that reality reframe your pressure.

DAY FOUR WATCH THE GAPS

MAIN FOCUS: EVERY WALL HAS WEAK POINTS—SO GUARD WHAT'S VULNERABLE.

KEY VERSE: "From that day on, half of my men did the work, while the other half were equipped with spears, shields, bows and armor." —Nehemiah 4:16

READING: Nehemiah 4:13-16, 1 Peter 5:8-10

CONSIDER: One of the most fundamental aspects of strategic planning is zooming all the way out to the end result and then coming back in to map the steps. When it comes to security for your home or business, "zooming out" means going into the worst case scenario and observing the weakest places in your security.

For Nehemiah, the weakest parts were the lowest points of the wall. These lowest points were the places the enemy was most likely to invade.

So, Nehemiah positioned guards at the lowest points of the wall where the enemy was most likely to enter. That's wisdom.

Question: Do you know where you're weak? Do you know where you've been hit before repeatedly? Don't ignore those spots. Do everything you can to get them before the Lord and to get His security established there.

Invest in help. Invite accountability. Strengthen the gaps in your personal life and in what you're building with the Lord.

The enemy looks for access points, not strongholds. And he's not creative. He's just repetitive.

So post up. Pay attention. Protect what matters.

This is how we outlast the enemy in the battles ahead.

PRAYER: Holy Spirit, reveal the gaps. Show me where I'm vulnerable and help me guard it well.				
DECLARE: I guard the gaps with wisdom and vigilance.				
CHALLENGE: Name one area of your life where the wall feels thin—and invite someone to help you strengthen it.				
ACTIVATION: Write this prayer: "Lord, I guard the gate of Strengthen my hands and post angels at the breach."				
NOTES:				

DAYFIVE KEEP YOUR SWORD CLOSE

MAIN FOCUS: THE WORD IS YOUR WEAPON—AND YOU NEVER OUTGROW YOUR NEED FOR IT.

KEY VERSE: "Each of the builders wore his sword at his side as he worked."Nehemiah 4:18

READING: Nehemiah 4:18, Ephesians 6:17, Hebrews 4:12

CONSIDER: In the summer of 2008 I went on a pretty intense Men's retreat called Quest. On the final day of the event every person is presented a full 4.5 ft long Sword. It came with a sheath and represented the spiritual warfare and deliverance work we did and submitted to over the course of the four-day long retreat.

Mine has no blood on it. It's in a sheath in my bedroom. It's for show and memories.

The men with Nehemiah didn't hang their swords on the wall. They weren't office décor or powerful sermon illustrations. They wore them. While they worked.

I do have a sword that has blood all over it. It's called the sword of the Spirit.

It's the Word of God and it's not meant for occasional reference.

It's my daily strength, my sharp defense, my guiding truth. I don't just read it, I carry it. Memorize it. Pray it. Speak it. It's everything to me because It's His Word. When I get the Word in me, He abides in me and I abide in Him by His Spirit.

When lies come, the Word cuts through. When fear rises, the Word stands firm. Builders who finish well never lay down their sword.

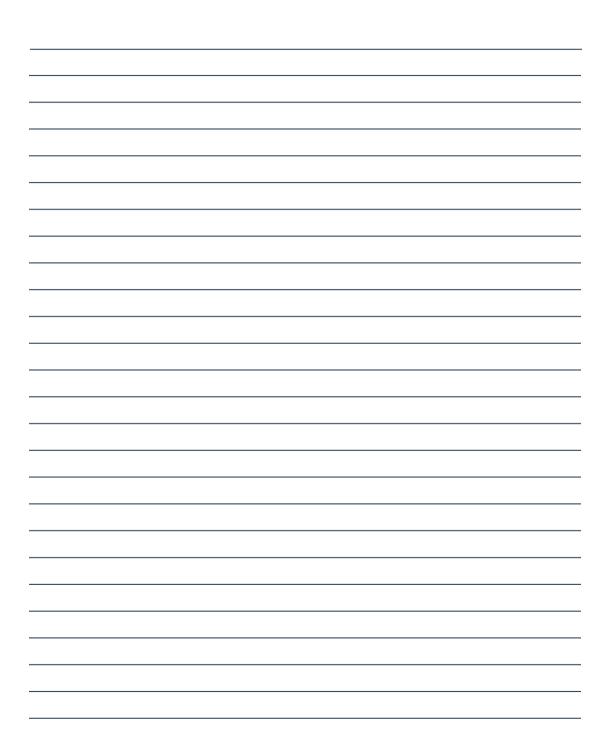
PRAYER: Jesus, Your Word is alive. Let it sharpen me, steady me, and sustain me in every battle.

DECLARE: The Word is my weapon and I never lay it down.

CHALLENGE: Choose one verse to memorize this week as your "sword verse." Write it. Speak it. Carry it. ACTIVATION: Say this aloud: "I wear the Word. I wield the Word. I win with the Word." NOTES:

WEEKLY SERMON NOTES

Date:	Speaker:	
Key Text:		



FROM INJUSTICE TO INTEGRITY

KEY VERSE: "What you are doing is not right. Shouldn't you walk in the fear of our God...?" —Nehemiah 5:9

BUILDING BLOCK: Revival is all about repentance. Every revival starts in repentance. The evidence is in what's made right.

BIG IDEA: Jesus didn't just die for our sins He also confronted corruption, lifted the poor, and called His people into holy justice. His righteousness rebuilds hearts and systems through grace and truth.

CONTENT SUMMARY: The wall is halfway built but inside the camp, cracks are showing. Exploitation. Greed. Injustice. Nehemiah doesn't ignore it. He couldn't ignore it. Because He was so rotted in the Lord, he was firm in confronting it. True revival requires alignment. When the Spirit moves, hidden sin gets exposed, systems get corrected, and people walk in holiness again. This week is about integrity, humility, and the courage to clean house.

CONTEXT: Sometimes the greatest threat isn't outside the walls of what you're fighting to build. Sometimes the greatest threats can come through what you're experiencing inside. Nehemiah was fighting critics and there were plenty. Unfortunately, he also had to face corruption in his own camp. The wealthy were charging interest to the poor. Families were selling children into slavery just to survive. The wall was going up, but the people seemed to be breaking down.

IN HEBREW:

Guess what Nehemiah did. He stopped the work. He called a meeting. And he said the words every leader must be willing to say: "This is not right. "This is what revival leadership looks like. There's so much more to it than just excitement or growth. Repentance, integrity and holy justice are essential.

FOR CHRIST:

Jesus constantly dealt with complaints, theft, arguing, arrogance, doubt, unbelief and petty squabbles among his disciples. That's part of the Front Porch Life. It's dealing with rebellious lost sons and arrogant entitled lost sons. It's motivating the servants to serve and uniting the search crews to find. There comes a moment in every kingdom project where God says, "Now let's deal with what's festering underneath." Jesus did this all the time.

FRONT PORCH PERSPECTIVE:

Just as the father's house had to be cleansed of bitterness before the celebration could continue, Nehemiah confronted internal corruption that threatened the rebuild. True Front Porch hospitality requires integrity. We can't welcome the lost home to a house divided by greed, exploitation, or unforgiveness.

FOR YOU:

It may feel disruptive. But it's a mercy. Because what's built on injustice will never last. And God loves His people too much to let them fake it. This is the week to walk in the fear of the Lord. To make things right. To tear down pride and build back integrity. The wall matters. But the people matter more.

READ:

Matthew 5:23-24, Luke 10:41-42, Philippians 2:3-4, I Peter 3:7, Galatians 6:2, Colossians 3:12-14

DAYONE FACE WHAT'S FESTERING

MAIN FOCUS: GOD EXPOSES WHAT WE'VE IGNORED—NOT TO SHAME US, BUT TO HEAL US.

KEY VERSE: "There was a great outcry of the people..." - Nehemiah 5:1

READING: Nehemiah 5:1-5, James 5:1-6

CONSIDER: I was preaching by video on Easter of 2020. The cameras were rolling and a huge number of people were tuned in online watching the two live streams of Anchor Church Online during Covid. I was preaching on an "Unshakable Faith" with all of my heart and I was being shaken inside like never before.

While the sermon was literally being played live, I was battling the worst frustrations of my life with the division between me and the very people on the worship set and those shooting the video of the live stream and much of the "mock" audience during the live recording.

Within just thirty days, we were working out severance packages for multiple pastors and the spiral downward escalated quickly.

I know many other examples of smiling on the outside and crying on the inside. I know how to stay steady on the water and kick like crazy underneath.

I'm sure you do too.

For Nehemiah, while the wall was going up, something else was falling apart. People were being crushed financially. Their homes, fields, and children were being taken. But no one said anything—until someone finally did. "There was a great outcry."

Don't ignore the cries around you. God doesn't.

And don't silence the ones in your own soul either. This is the time to look beneath the surface. What's festering in the systems, relationships, or habits of your life? You

can't fix what you won't face.
If I knew then what I know now, I would have focused on my own soul and I would have had much less fear and much less fall out. I didn't know.
<i>PRAYER:</i> Lord, open my eyes to what's been ignored. Let my ears hear the cries You hear.
DECLARE: God reveals what's wrong because He's making things right.
CHALLENGE: Ask the Holy Spirit: "What issue have I been pretending doesn't exist?"
ACTIVATION: Write this prayer: "God, I'm listening. Expose what You want to heal."
NOTES:

DAY TWO CONFRONT WITH COURAGE

MAIN FOCUS: GODLY CONFRONTATION RESTORES PEOPLE AND REBUILDS TRUST.

KEY VERSE: "I pondered them in my mind and then accused the nobles..." —Nehemiah 5:7

READING: Nehemiah 5:6-9, Galatians 6:1-2

CONSIDER: I'm not an explosive person. I don't have a history of exploding and have never been even accused of losing my temper badly on people I work with or have pastored. I operate in much greater discretion these days than I did even 5 years ago. Battle scars are great teachers.

Nehemiah didn't explode. He was tempered but he was also very strong.

Meek. Not weak. Weak people explode on others because they don't have the power to ponder.

He did something else also and I'm taking notes. He called the leaders out with courage and clarity. "What you are doing is not right."

That kind of confrontation takes maturity and character. Especially when you do it front of all of those who are being divisive and worse.

It also has to be about the real injustice. You can't just throw this out there anytime you sense someone not doing what you prefer to do. Let's all admit it; leading people with people for the sake of Jesus and His people is a pretty controversial and coarse-correcting thing most of the time.

Also, real love and real wisdom and strength do not stay silent when something must change. God calls us to restore, not just react. To speak truth with grace. To confront for healing and avoid every ounce of confronting for humiliation.

If God gives you a holy ache for something broken, be bold—but be Spirit-led. Righteous anger must always be married to righteous action.

PRAYER: God, make me bold and wise. Help me confront with compassion—and be open when I need correction too.

DECLARE: I will confront with courage and receive correction with humility.

CHALLENGE: Is there a conversation you've been avoiding? Ask God if now is the time—and how to do it in love.

ACTIVATION: Say aloud: "I won't avoid hard truth. I'll speak it with grace and receive it with humility."

NOTES:		

DAY THREE MAKE IT RIGHT

MAIN FOCUS: REVIVAL BRINGS NOT JUST RESTITUTION AND REPENTANCE.

KEY VERSE: "Give back to them immediately their fields..." -Nehemiah 5:11

READING: Nehemiah 5:10-13, Luke 19:1-10

CONSIDER: When Sarah and I get into a disagreement; I'm almost always the one who is in the wrong. And even when I'm right, I can usually find a way to be wrong in the way I'm in the right.

Make sense? In other words, even when I win the fight, I lose the war in how I won the fight.

When Zacchaeus met Jesus, he changed. He confessed and repented. The evidence of his repentance was he gave back more than he cheated out of people.

That's what repentance does. It finds a way to make even the right things more perfect. It's a heart to be Jesus not just be right.

Nehemiah called the people to return what they had stolen and they did.

God blesses that kind of "win".

Revival without restitution is incomplete. You don't earn God's grace by paying people back, but when grace compels you to make things better than right . . . you can look for the presence of God all along that path.

That's righteousness because it's Jesus.

Jesus leads us to go beyond what's right. He says there's a more perfect way and it's the way of sacrificial love. It sometimes makes you feel like a weakling, but when It's Him in you, then it's the greatest of Kingdom strength. Real transformation restores what pride or greed once took.

PRAYER: Jesus, give me integrity. Help me not just confess with my mouth, but live repentance with my hands. DECLARE: In repentance and in rest is my true deliverance. CHALLENGE: Is there someone you owe an apology or restitution? Write it down. Then take the step. ACTIVATION: Ask the Holy Spirit to show you any way your past words, finances, or actions need to be made right. **NOTES:**

DAY FOUR WALK IN THE FEAR OF GOD

MAIN FOCUS: THE FEAR OF GOD KEEPS YOU HUMBLE, HONEST, AND HOLY.

KEY VERSE: "Shouldn't you walk in the fear of our God...?" - Nehemiah 5:9

READING: Nehemiah 5:9-15, Proverbs 9:10

CONSIDER: The fear of man is so dangerous that Jesus said it's basically impossible to believe in Him if you fear man. (John 5:44) The apostle Paul said if you live to win the approval of man or live to please man you cannot be a servant of Christ. (Galatians 1:10)

Nehemiah didn't take advantage of his position. He lived with integrity because he feared the Lord. This wasn't terror of God as the "Almighty" wizard who scorches you if you mess up. It was reverence of the God who is merciful and whose steadfast love never ceases and who is worthy of praise.

This is ultimate respect. A settled awareness that God sees everything.

The fear of the Lord isn't talked about much anymore but it's the root of wisdom, justice, and purity.

If you want to last in leadership, you need more than charisma. You need way more than strategy and charm. You can only get so far on talent.

You need holy fear. When the spotlight shines bright, fear of God keeps you anchored in the dark.

When you're up against all odds and there are accusations and opposition all around you, the fear of God will draw you near like nothing else. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of the ultimate wisdom. It's the ability to enter divine rest for your soul.

The fear of the Lord is what keeps you connected to being seated in the heavenlies

with Christ and ministering, serving, planning and working from him. PRAYER: God, teach me to walk in holy fear. Let me love what You love and hate what You hate. DECLARE: I walk in reverence and the fear of God keeps me aligned. CHALLENGE: Reflect: Is there any area of your life where compromise has crept in? ACTIVATION: Pray Proverbs 9:10 aloud. Then say: "Lord, anchor my life in the fear of You." **NOTES:**

DAY FIVE LEAD WITH CLEAN HANDS

MAIN FOCUS: WHEN THE WALL IS HALFWAY BUILT, YOUR CHARACTER MUST BE FULLY ANCHORED.

KEY VERSE: "I devoted myself to the work on this wall. All my men were assembled there for the work; we did not acquire any land." —Nehemiah 5:16

READING: Nehemiah 5:16-19, Psalm 24:3-4

CONSIDER: Have you ever really processed what it means to "bear the Lord's Name in vain"? It's way more than saying OMG. Actually "God" isn't even his Name. His Name is "Yaweh".

To bear the Lord's name in vain means to use His name for your own personal gain. It also means to throw His name around or carry His Name when it's convenient for you but live in rebellion to His Name when it's convenient to do so as well.

There's something powerful about a life that is rooted in the Name of the LORD, Yaweh and refusing to use your salvation or ministry for your own personal gain.

Nehemiah refused to use his position for personal gain.

He didn't grab land. He didn't exploit power. He led with clean hands and a full heart. That's rare. And that's revival.

When leaders are more concerned about God's name than their own it shows by how they treat opportunities for personal success when no one is looking.

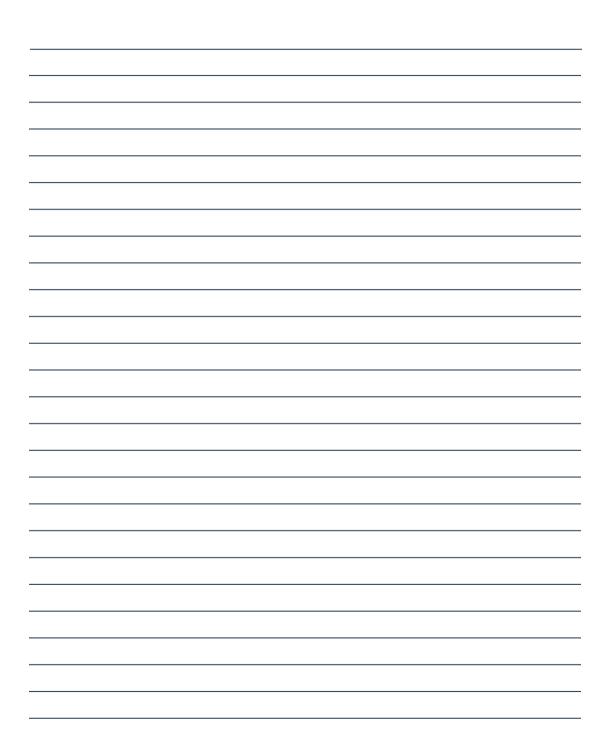
People who aren't about themselves do their part to finish the wall without compromising their worship. Let that be said of us; that we led with integrity, loved with humility, and built something holy that actually lasted.

Your part in building the house of God is sacred and your character is empowered by His presence and His power alive in you. It's by Him and for Him. Always.

PRAYER: Jesus, keep me pure. Let me build with clean hands and a heart that fears only You.
DECLARE: My legacy is integrity.
CHALLENGE: Take inventory of your leadership, finances, or influence. Are you stewarding it with purity?
ACTIVATION: Lift your hands and pray Psalm 24:4 out loud. Declare your intent to lead without compromise.
NOTES:

WEEKLY SERMON NOTES

Date:	Speaker:	
Key Text:		



WEEK SEVEN

STAY ON THE WALL

KEY VERSE: "I am carrying on a great project and cannot go down." — Nehemiah 6:3

BUILDING BLOCK: When distraction comes dressed as opportunity, discernment keeps you focused.

BIG IDEA: Jesus fixed His eyes on the cross and refused to come down. His focused obedience saved the world and now He calls us to follow with the same resolve.

CONTENT SUMMARY: Distraction is often more dangerous than opposition. The enemy shifts tactics this week no longer mocking from the outside, bu inviting from within. False friendships. Deceptive prophets. Compromised motives. But Nehemiah had discernment. He stayed on the wall. And so must we. This week is about resisting flattery, fear, and manipulation and staying laser-focused on what God has called us to finish.

CONTEXT: You can survive the enemy's roar. But can you resist his whisper? By now, the wall is almost done. The gaps are closed. The doors are going in. And suddenly Sanballat stops mocking. Instead, he sends a message: "Let's talk. Come meet with us." It sounded friendly. Reasonable. Even spiritual.

IN HEBREW:

Nehemiah had discernment. He knew distraction is sometimes more dangerous than destruction. He answered with six words that should become a life motto: "I am doing a great work." Noah never stopped building. Moses never stopped leading. Joshua never stopped conquering. David never stopped praising. Kingdom building leaders discern distractions and stay on mission.

FOR CHRIST:

Jesus spent the three years of His earthly ministry with his eyes fixed on the cross and his heart fixed on the Father and his compassion fixed on the lost, the hurting, the broken, the spiritually poor and those hungry for truth. He knew when manipulation, control and intimidation were in front of him and he stayed on course.

FRONT PORCH PERSPECTIVE:

The father refused every distraction when his son was still out there, and Nehemiah wouldn't come down from the wall for any meeting or manipulation. The Front Porch Life demands unwavering focus when you're building for the lost, every invitation to step away from the mission is a trap.

FOR YOU:

This is the week to recognize when the enemy changes clothes. When manipulation hides behind manners. When fear shows up in friendly form. And when subtle distractions threaten to pull you from your post. But you don't come down. Not now. The mandate is to trust the Lord in the grit. Yes!

READ:

Philippians 3:13-14, Colossians 3:1-2, Isaiah 26:3, Matthew 6:33, II Timothy 2:4

DAYONETHE POWER OF A FOCUSED NO

MAIN FOCUS: NOT EVERY OPPORTUNITY IS FROM GOD.

KEY VERSE: "I am carrying on a great project and cannot go down."Nehemiah 6:3

READING: Nehemiah 6:1-4, Matthew 4:1-11

CONSIDER: Have you noticed how many distractions and attacks came against Nehemiah to stop Him from completing his divine assignment.

My, oh my. I'm shaking my head even as I write this because of the level of attacks and distractions that have come up against me in the past 18 months. The attacks started with my son, Hayden in May of 2024. He had such a deadly panic attack and onslaughts of anxiety that he almost died.

This was one of many massive distractions that was designed by the enemy to take me off of "the wall" the Lord was assigning me to lead and build. I can name dozens of more distractions.

Nehemiah was almost finished. And that's when they came with the invitation. "Come, let's meet." But it was a trap. A setup dressed like a summit. Not every meeting is worth your time. Not every conversation is sent by God.

Some things are designed to delay you.

When you're building something holy, you must learn the power of a focused no. Jesus knew it too. When the devil offered Him shortcuts, He quoted truth and stayed the course.

Today, take time to ask the Lord what the distractions are that are delaying your progress, and what are the ones designed to get you completely off course?

He will reveal to you attacks, distractions and things aimed at delaying you.

Stay on the wall.
PRAYER: Lord, give me discernment and courage. Help me say no to what seems good so I can say yes to what is God.
DECLARE: I will not come down. I'm doing a great work.
CHALLENGE: Name the one distraction that's tempting you to step away from what matters.
ACTIVATION: Speak Nehemiah 6:3 out loud and insert your name: "I,, am doing a great work and I cannot come down."
NOTES:

DAY TWO WHEN LIES TRY TO STICK

MAIN FOCUS: WHEN THE ENEMY CAN'T STOP YOUR WORK, HE ATTACKS YOUR REPUTATION.

KEY VERSE: "They were trying to frighten us, thinking, 'Their hands will get too weak..." —Nehemiah 6:9

READING: Nehemiah 6:5-9, Isaiah 54:17

CONSIDER: Cancel culture is real. It's been a reality for thousands of years. IT's an old tactic to shame people and get them to quit doing good by making all those around them question their motives and agenda.

Jesus said there will be many who will say all kinds of false things about you, hate you, mock you, slander you, threaten you and abuse you for doing what you do in my name.

Jesus said to rejoice when this happens. He said pray for your enemies and do not ever retaliate or seek revenge.

Stay on the wall and don't flinch.

Sanballat upped the pressure. He sent an open letter full of rumors.

He said, "They're rebelling. They're trying to be king."

Sound familiar? The enemy loves to sling accusations.

When he can't touch your anointing, he tries to taint your name. But Nehemiah didn't explain.

He didn't spiral. He said, "Nothing like what you say is happening," and kept building.

The truth speaks for itself. And God defends those who refuse to bow to fear.

PRAYER: Jesus, defend me from false accusation. Help me stay rooted in truth and unmoved by slander. DECLARE: No weapon formed against me will prosper and no lie will take root. CHALLENGE: Have you felt misunderstood, misjudged, or misrepresented lately? Surrender it to the One who sees. ACTIVATION: Write down Isaiah 54:17 and keep it where you'll see it this week. Let it silence the noise. **NOTES:**

DAY THREE DISCERNING FALSE PROPHETS

MAIN FOCUS: SOMETIMES SPIRITUAL LANGUAGE HIDES SELFISH AGENDAS.

KEY VERSE: "Let us meet in the house of God... They are coming to kill you." —Nehemiah 6:10

READING: Nehemiah 6:10-14, 1 John 4:1

CONSIDER: Do you know that there are some well meaning people in your life who tend to project their own personal fear and anxiety onto you to get you to be as afraid as they are? Have you ever experienced this?

It's a form of manipulation.

A person who is lazy or slothful will project their fatigue onto others by telling them how hard or laborious a specific effort is to try to get them to shrink back because they don't want to put forth effort themselves.

Weak people do this. It's a form of false prophecy.

They'll find verses in the Bible to justify easy yokes and light burdens from Jesus to excuse their addiction to their pink blanket.

In Nehemiah's case, the false prophecy came from inside the city.

A man claimed to be speaking for God. He even quoted Scripture. He invited Nehemiah to hide in the temple. But Nehemiah saw the trap.

Be shrewd as a viper. SHREWD. There's bait everywhere.

The "prophecy" was a setup. We need this discernment too. Not every spiritual voice is Spirit-led. Not every Scripture-quoting post, podcast, or person is from God.

Test the spirits. Watch for manipulation. And stay anchored in what God already said and be empowered by the presence and peace of Christ.

PRAYER: Holy Spirit, sharpen my discernment. Let no false voice lead me from the place You've assigned me.

DECLARE: If it smells like fear, it's not from God. Period.

CHALLENGE: Have you heard a voice that sounded spiritual but stirred fear or confusion? Ask the Spirit to clarify.

ACTIVATION: Pray 1 John 4:1 out loud and ask God to help you test every voice this week.

NOTES:		

DAYFOUR PEOPLE PLEASING IS A TRAP

MAIN FOCUS: THE FEAR OF MAN LEADS TO COMPROMISE.

KEY VERSE: "Should a man like me run away?" - Nehemiah 6:11

READING: Nehemiah 6:10-14, Proverbs 29:25

CONSIDER: I have a way of discerning fear in my core self. In the Spirit I am calm, connected, considerate, clear, creative, curious, courageous, kind and full of goodness and power. When I'm not in this state, then I don't trust my decisions.

My core spirit is never tempted to shrink back in fear or shy away from something because of what others think. But, there are for sure parts of me that think like this and I've learned to know when it's the flesh or the Spirit.

Nehemiah was tempted to hide.

The plan sounded safe. But the motive was rooted in fear, not faith.

His answer? "Should someone like me run?" He knew who he was.

And that identity kept him steady. The fear of man will tempt you to hide, shrink, or soften your voice.

But pleasing people is a trap.

When you know you're God's, you don't have to prove anything or protect yourself.

You just stay faithful. And stay up.

The Spirit of God rises up in you and the Word of God quickens you to see clearly and walk in a holy calm with courage and power from God.

PRAYER: Father, free me from the fear of man. Let my obedience be louder than my insecurity.

DECLARE: I will not run. I will not hide. I was born for this wall.
CHALLENGE: Where do you feel the pressure to please others more than God?
ACTIVATION: Say this out loud: "I don't need to be liked to be faithful."
NOTES:

DAYFIVETHE WALL IS FINISHED, BUT THE WORK

MAIN FOCUS: FINISHING WELL REQUIRES FOCUS, HUMILITY, AND PERSEVERANCE.

KEY VERSE: "So the wall was completed... in fifty-two days." - Nehemiah 6:15

READING: Nehemiah 6:15-19, Philippians 1:6

CONSIDER: When we were almost complete with the first building in 2023, Pastor Brad Crews told our lead team, "The land and the building are owned and occupied by us when we move in but the real test for us will be when we've actually had to defend the land and ground we've taken."

This is so true.

For Nehemiah and the people, the wall went up. The enemy backed off. And the people were in awe.

But Nehemiah didn't throw a party. He didn't take a vacation. He stayed vigilant.

Why?

Because the wall may be finished, but the people still needed formation. There's no way to defend ground you've taken without unity and the formation of the hearts of the people.

No people can stand that are divided and unformed from within.

This is the rhythm of revival: God builds through us but also within us.

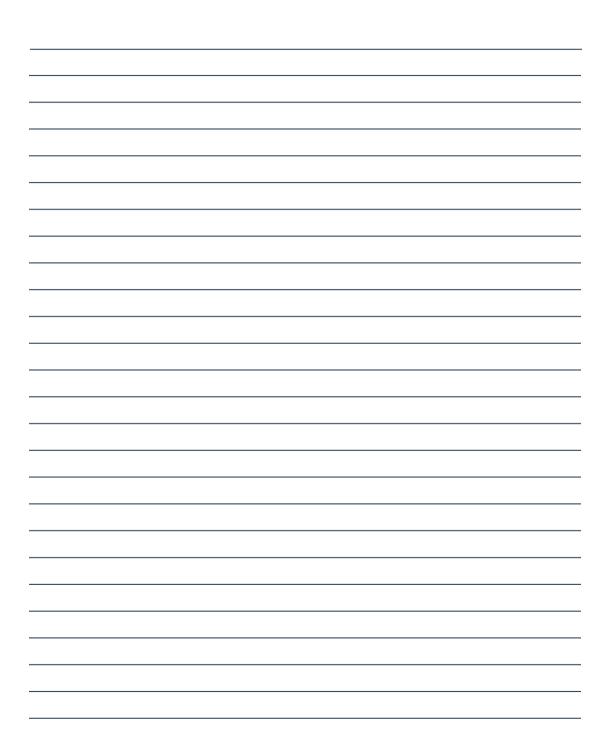
And we're not done yet. The goal isn't just to build something impressive. It's to become someone who is equipped to persevere and last.

Enduring.

<i>PRAYER:</i> God, thank You for what You've helped me build. Now keep me faithful for what's next.
DECLARE: I will finish strong and I will not let my guard down.
CHALLENGE: Where is God inviting you to celebrate the win and stay alert?
ACTIVATION: Pray Philippians 1:6 out loud: "He who began a good work in me will carry it on to completion."
NOTES:

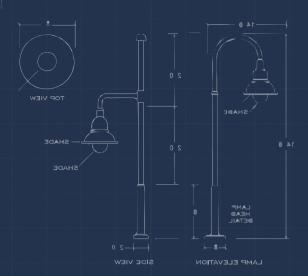
WEEKLY SERMON NOTES

Date:	Speaker:	
Key Text:		



WEEK EIGHT

SACRED RENEWAL



KEY VERSE: "All the people listened attentively to the Book of the Law." —Nehemiah 8:3

BUILDING BLOCK: The wall is finished—but revival isn't. Renewal comes through the Word.

BIG IDEA: Jesus is the Word made flesh. When He is lifted up, people are awakened, convicted, comforted, and changed.

CONTENT SUMMARY: The wall is done, but God's not done. Consecration is everything. The people gather not to admire the wall, but to hear the Word. Ezra reads. The Levites explain. The people weep. And then, they rejoice. This week is about rediscovering the sacred hungering for the Word, repenting with joy, and letting God's presence reshape our identity.

CONTEXT: The wall is finished. The gates are set. But something deeper is just beginning. The people didn't throw a block party. They didn't do a building dedication. They asked for the Word. "Bring out the Book." That one sentence changed everything. Ezra read. The people stood. They wept. Then they worshiped.

IN HEBREW: The prophets never spoke of revival being measured by how fast you build. They revealed that real revival is also not based on the sacrifice of humans through grit and determination. It's not measured by how much money is given or how sacrificial the hardest workers were. True revival in the Hebrew culture was always from the Lord. It was marked by how fully the hearts return to His Holy Word. Always.

IN CHRIST: Seeking first the Kingdom and His righteousness was always relational. It wasn't about buildings and earthly success. Satan offered him the whole world through dominance and territorial conquest. Jesus took the whole world through the road to the cross and servant-hearted submission to the Father.

FOR YOU: This week isn't about walls. This week is about the heart of the House of Prayer. We are a people of His presence and we are the hungry, broken, hopeful. We are standing in the open air with open ears. They heard the word of God and they were moved. They were cut by it. And comforted. And realigned. And that's what we need at Anchor Church. That's who we are. I see it every week. Not hype. Genuine holiness. It's not just religious duty or obligatory routine for you. It's relationship and I know that.

FRONT PORCH PERSPECTIVE: When the lost son finally came home, the father's first response wasn't rules but relationship through the Word that restored identity. Nehemiah's people gathered to hear Scripture because lasting revival isn't built on emotion but on the Word that transforms hearts and sustains the work of reaching one more. The Front Porch Life see what's sacred and recognizes the Father's heart because it is fueled with the Word of God. When God restores a heart for His Word, He's about to renew everything.

READ: Matthew 4:4, Jeremiah 15:16, I Peter 2:2, Hebrews 4:12, Psalm 119:105, John 17:17, Romans 10:17

DAY FIVE BRING OUT THE WORD

MAIN FOCUS: REVIVAL BEGINS WHEN PEOPLE HUNGER FOR THE WORD.

KEY VERSE: "Bring out the Book of the Law of Moses..."

-Nehemiah 8:1

READING: Nehemiah 8:1-3, Psalm 119:105

CONSIDER: I've never been around a more hungry people than you, Anchor Church. In 2025, I see Bibles everywhere in the sanctuary in all of our services. I don't see phone apps only, I see the tangible printed Bible. I see pens and paper and students of the Word highlighting, taking pictures of the screen and writing down notes. Even students and kids are doing this.

Maybe it's something about everything else being on a phone, but people want the book in hand when it comes to the Word these days.

With Nehemiah, when the Word was brought out, nobody had to beg the people to show up. They asked for the Word. They gathered with open ears and stayed for hours. Why? Because hunger had been awakened.

When God awakens a holy hunger in you it's for Him. It's a gift. It's His grace stirring up the deepest and most satisfying hunger for Him.

The construction project was about rebuilding the people. The walls were the illustration from God, the master teacher. The Lord used the project to restore the soul of His people. The bigger the project, the bigger the soul of His people.

This is happening at Anchor too. Rebuilding walls without renewing the soul will always fall short. The Word of God is what brings real change. It lights the path. It exposes the heart. It brings the dead back to life.

This week, return to the Word with fresh hunger. Ask again. "Bring out the Book."

PRAYER: God, awaken my hunger for Your Word. Let it come alive again in my mind and spirit. DECLARE: The Word is my foundation, my filter, and my fuel. CHALLENGE: Set aside 30 minutes today for uninterrupted time in the Word. Let it read you. ACTIVATION: Say aloud: "I don't live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from God." NOTES:

DAY TWO REVERENCE RESTORES

MAIN FOCUS: REVIVAL STARTS WHEN THE WORD IS REVERED—NOT RUSHED.

KEY VERSE: "All the people stood up." — Nehemiah 8:5

READING: Nehemiah 8:4-6, Isaiah 66:2

CONSIDER: We've recently started standing up during the reading of the Word at Anchor. People comment all the time on how they love it. It's an honor thing.

In America we stand up to say the National Anthem at sporting events. We put our hand over our hearts when we do it. It's honoring the sacrifice of humans who paid a high price for our freedom and it's honoring the flag and anthem that celebrate that freedom.

Then, how much more should we stand in reading the Word and in praise?

When the scribe, Ezra opened the book, the people stood.

I don't think it was because someone told them to. It was because reverence rose. The posture of their bodies reflected the posture of their hearts. They weren't casual about Scripture. They honored it.

Reverence isn't about ritualistic duty. It's not just manners. It's not like taking off your hat at your mommas kitchen table. For them, it's about awe. And when we lose our awe, we lose access to renewal.

God responds to honor.

He draws near to those who tremble at His Word.

This week, let reverence rise again for the living and breathing Word of God.

<i>PRAYER:</i> Lord, I repent for every time I treated Your Word as common. Let holy fear return to my heart.
DECLARE: I honor the Word—and the Word honors me with wisdom.
CHALLENGE: Ask yourself: Do I treat Scripture with reverence or routine?
<i>ACTIVATION:</i> Before reading the Word today, stand up and say aloud: "This is holy. This is truth. This is life."
NOTES:

DAY THREE LET THE WORD CUT—AND COMFORT

MAIN FOCUS: THE WORD OF GOD CONVICTS, BUT IT ALSO RESTORES.

KEY VERSE: "For all the people had been weeping as they listened to the words of the Law." —Nehemiah 8:9

READING: Nehemiah 8:7-9, Hebrews 4:12

CONSIDER: In the Summer of 2008 I spent some time working on my heart and getting a deep much-needed reset with some professionals in Seattle, Washington. On my drive home, I drove in silence.

I left Seattle and wound down through the mountains of Washington, Oregon and Idaho and Utah.

Silence. I didn't say a word or listen to anything audible.

Then I saw a sign that said something like, "Yellowstone 86 Miles". So I took a detour. I broke the trip up early and sensed the Lord leading me to go to Yellowstone.

After I entered the park, I was driving past a beautiful river and saw Bison in the road. It was about 6:00 PM and it was so beautiful. After about 10 hours of total silence all day, I turned on a worship album.

I wept and sang out loud.

The silence being broken was so moving.

In Nehemiah, the people were weeping from awakening. The Word exposed what they had lost. But Nehemiah didn't let them stay in grief. "This day is sacred, do not mourn." The Word may cut, but it also heals. It reveals the cracks and then fills them with grace.

Don't fear conviction. It's proof that your heart is still soft. And don't wallow in sorrow. Joy is waiting on the other side of repentance. Turn your tears and awe into relational worship.

PRAYER: Jesus, speak through Your Word. Cut what's diseased. Heal what's wounded. And comfort what's weary.

DECLARE: The Word convicts me—but grace lifts me.

MOTEC.

CHALLENGE: What part of God's Word has convicted you lately? Let it speak—but also let it heal.

ACTIVATION: Pray this out loud: "God, I receive the Word—even when it hurts. I trust You to heal what You reveal."

NOTES:		

DAYFOUR THE JOY OF THE LORD IS MY STRENGTH

MAIN FOCUS: JOY IS NOT A FEELING, IT'S A FORCE ROOTED IN GOD'S PRESENCE.

KEY VERSE: "Do not grieve, for the joy of the Lord is your strength."

-Nehemiah 8:10

READING: Nehemiah 8:9-12, John 15:10-11

CONSIDER: "Stop crying or I'm gonna give you something to cry about."

I'm not shaming all the people who disciplined me growing up, but I for sure heard that many times from my "caretakers".

That's not what Nehemiah was saying when he said, "Do not grieve."

Last night I was at a prayer meeting in Baton Rouge. The leader told us to get in groups of two or three. So I did. One man was shaking and crying and wanted prayer for anxiety. "I know He's coming back soon and I'm not ready."

I didn't rescue him, I ministered grace to his soul and told him there's nothing He can do to make himself more holy or ready, it's a work of grace.

God's grace is so powerful to change what you cannot change on your own. He takes a humble heart and He does His thing. The result of the grace of God working is not ongoing grief and mourning. Mourning is not your strength, the Joy of the Lord is your strength.

Nehemiah didn't tell them to ignore conviction, he told them to celebrate the grace they'd just received.

Joy wasn't a mood booster, It's not a pep rally. Hype isn't your strength, the Joy of the Lord is your strength. And it still is. Joy flows when truth is honored. It rises when grace is received. It's fierce. If you're weak today, ask yourself: Have I made

space for joy? It's not pretending everything is fine. It's fueled through remembering God is with you in everything. Hope is alive and well. PRAYER: Father, restore my joy. Let it become my strength again flowing from truth, not circumstances. DECLARE: My strength comes from joy and my joy comes from Jesus. CHALLENGE: What's stealing your joy? Bring it into the light and replace it with truth. ACTIVATION: Say out loud: "I receive Your joy, Lord. And I will not trade it for fear, shame, or heaviness." **NOTES:**

DAY FIVE CELEBRATE THE SACRED

MAIN FOCUS: CELEBRATION IS A HOLY RESPONSE TO RESTORATION.

KEY VERSE: "Their joy was very great." — Nehemiah 8:17

READING: Nehemiah 8:13-18, Psalm 126:1-6

CONSIDER: When the prodigal came home, the Father celebrated Him. When the lost sheep was found, it was celebrated. When the lost coin was restored, the owner celebrated.

This celebration is what the Father wants you to mirror back to him in response to you being found, restored and returning.

The people with Nehemiah didn't just cry and confess, those things led to them celebrating.

They rediscovered the Feast of Tabernacles, remembered their story, and threw a week-long party. That's revival.

Not just conviction. Conviction without awe and gratitude doesn't get the grace of God. God wants it all to lead to joy and celebration.

Your story may have started in ruins but God is writing a better ending.

This is why we make room for others and expand to reach one more. God's party never stops with just us. He uses us to reach one more. We are His way of redeeming the intrinsic value of broken people.

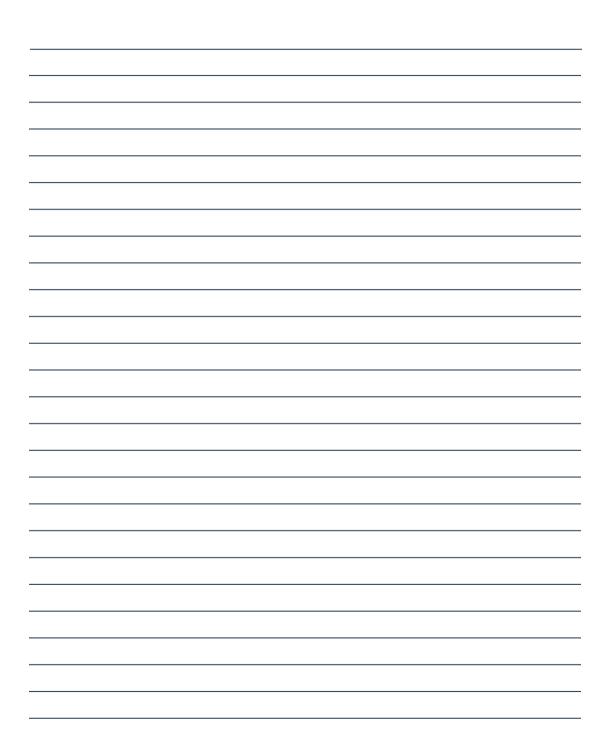
Don't downplay what He's done. Celebrate it.

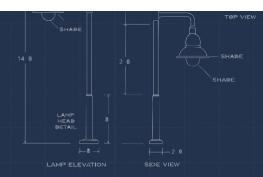
You model to others how much God loves them when your repentance and confession and sorrow turn to joy and power to offer hope to others. The world doesn't need more burned-out believers. It needs people who live fully alive in the joy of restoration.

PRAYER: Lord, let me never lose the wonder of what You've restored in me. I celebrate who You are and what You've done. DECLARE: I always rejoice in what is holy. It's where joy is found. CHALLENGE: Look back on what God has rebuilt in you since this journey began. Give thanks. ACTIVATION: Write a short prayer or song of gratitude. Then sing it, speak it, or share it. **NOTES:**

WEEKLY SERMON NOTES

Date:	Speaker:	
Key Text:		





WEEK NINE

THE HOUSE OF GOD IS RESTORED

KEY VERSE: "We will not neglect the house of our God." —Nehemiah 10:39

BUILDING BLOCK: Revival must be stewarded. Restoration becomes legacy when God's house takes central place again.

BIG IDEA: Jesus called the temple His Father's house and then made a way for us to become His dwelling place. True worship is no longer confined to buildings, but the heart still matters. Christ restores worship, resets priorities, and reignites first love.

CONTENT SUMMARY: The wall is finished. The people are revived. But now comes the real test. How will they keep the fire burning? This final week is about holy resolve. The people make a covenant. They restore offerings, prioritize the temple, and declare, "We will not neglect the house of our God." This is how rebuilding ends. It doesn't end with applause, it ends with devotion. When you join in the work of God, you're building a personal house of worship and prayer and it's for others to find hope as well.

CONTEXT: This is not the end of the story. It's the beginning of stewardship. Nehemiah led a construction project that was really about rebuilding people. And now, revival takes root.



IN HEBREW:

The Word changed the Hebrew culture every time it was returned. Worship was always renewed. The people always make a covenant. They always sacrificially give. They sing. They stand in awe again.

FOR CHRIST:

Jesus came to fix what was broken in the Hebrew worship routines. No matter how many times they fell, were taken captive, conquered and restored – something was always broken. It never lasted. So Jesus came to establish his church and build a kingdom that cannot be shaken and will last forever. The power of His life, death and resurrection conquered sin and death. He established a continual refreshing, renewal through the outpouring of His Spirit for His people.

FRONT PORCH
PERSPECTIVE:

The father's house became a place of perpetual celebration for every lost child who came home, and Nehemiah established systems to ensure the temple would never again be neglected. The Front Porch Life isn't a project to complete—it's a lifestyle of always making room, always redeeming, always celebrating what the Father loves most.

FOR YOU:

Anchor isn't finishing a project this week, we're still catching the vision. Catching the vision has to come with a resolve to endure and stay in the awakening of our hearts for Him. You've come through burden, warfare, opposition, repentance, and joy. Now it's time to declare: We will not neglect the house of our God.

READ:

Hebrews 12:28, Daniel 7:14, Matthew 16:18, Acts 3:19-20, Lamentations 3:22-23, Il Corinthians 4:16, Psalm 92:10, Romans 12:11

DAY ONE REVIVAL REQUIRES RESOLVE

MAIN FOCUS: GOD MOVES POWERFULLY—BUT WE MUST COMMIT DEEPLY.

KEY VERSE: "In view of all this, we are making a binding agreement..." —Nehemiah 9:38

READING: Nehemiah 9:32-38, Joshua 24:14-27

CONSIDER: When the Father told the servants to kill the fattened calf and put on a celebration for the lost Son, the story didn't end there. The Father went back to the front porch looking for you and then me and then one more.

When the Shepherd found the lost sheep they didn't live happily ever after, the next day there would be more lost sheep.

In the Kingdom of God, He's always looking for one more and celebrating one more. Guess how He does that?

Through you and me.

We are his search and rescue team. We are his celebration and party throwing team. We are his discipleship team. We are his broom that He uses to sweep the floor and redeem the value of a lost coin or a broken life.

It builds and builds and builds until He calls us all home.

The people had wept, rejoiced, and worshiped. But they didn't stop there. They made a covenant. Revival without resolve to keep it going is emotionalism. But when the Spirit really moves, it leads to deep decisions.

They put it in writing. They made it public. This wasn't a moment, it was a new way of life.

If God has moved in you during this journey, take time today to respond. What will

you commit to beyond the wall? What kind of Front Porch Life is He building in you?
PRAYER: Father, I don't want revival to be a phase. Let it shape how I live from here on.
DECLARE: This isn't a season. It's a way of life.
CHALLENGE: Write out a short "covenant prayer". It's a a holy resolve you want to walk in beyond this series.
ACTIVATION: Speak your prayer aloud: "Lord, in view of all this, I will"
NOTES:

DAYTWO WORSHIP IS THE FRONT PORCH LIFE

MAIN FOCUS: ONCE THE WALL IS BUILT, WORSHIP BECOMES THE CENTER AGAIN.

KEY VERSE: "At the dedication of the wall... the Levites were sought out... to celebrate joyfully." —Nehemiah 12:27

READING: Nehemiah 12:27-43, John 4:23-24

CONSIDER: The older brother was in the field. It was "his" field after all. His younger brother went out and squandered his inheritance. So, everything left was for the older brother.

So imagine when he heard music and dancing in what He believed to be "his house" though it was still His Father's house. He was very angry that a party was being thrown for someone less deserving than Him.

That's not how things go in the Father's house.

At the celebration of the restoration of a son it was not just a feast and dancing. It was much more.

With Nehemiah and the people of Israel, finishing the wall restoration was much like the restoration of a Father and his lost Son. When it was time to dedicate the wall, they didn't throw a political rally, they threw a worship service.

Choirs went up on the walls. Trumpets rang out. Sacrifices were offered. The people celebrated joyfully. That's what it's all for.

It's not about national status. It's not the celebration of a great strategic plan or even the beauty of walls and gates.

It was worship.

The Father ultimately wanted more than the productivity of the older brother, he wanted his presence taking delight in the things He loves. God loves restoring people and everything we do at Anchor is about restoring the people God loves and celebrating all He celebrates. PRAYER: Jesus, I dedicate all of it to You. Every brick, every battle, every breakthrough—it's all for Your glory. DECLARE: Worship is the reason I rebuild. CHALLENGE: Worship all day today with no requests, no agenda, just gratitude. ACTIVATION: Say out loud: "God, I give You this wall. It's Yours." **NOTES:**

DAY THREE SACRIFICE RESTORES RHYTHM

MAIN FOCUS: GIVING ISN'T ABOUT OBLIGATION—IT'S ABOUT DEVOTION.

KEY VERSE: "Men were appointed to be in charge of the storerooms... to distribute the portions." —Nehemiah 12:44

READING: Nehemiah 12:44-47, Romans 12:1

CONSIDER: Killing the fattened calf was special. It was already dedicated for the most special of occasions. Putting a ring on the young man's finger restored his significance. Putting a robe on him restored his place in the family.

When the Father sacrificed to celebrate His son, it restored the sons rhythm and order in the family.

That's a huge part of the Front Porch Life. We work, expand, disciple and serve as a sacrifice to the Lord and it's to restore all of the rhythms of His grace with people.

As worship was restored in Nehemiah, so was sacrifice.

The people brought tithes and offerings immediately. It was not because someone guilted them, but because their hearts were alive again.

Giving wasn't a task, it was an act of trust.

Imagine if the older brother would have seen the love the Father poured out and would have mirrored that with this, "Father I'm going to get my favorite calf and bring the best I can find. I've never seen you so full of Joy. I want to celebrate with all I have. Nothing matters to me more than you."

That wouldn't be tithing, that would be sacrificial worship.

When revival comes, generosity flows. You begin to see your time, money, and talents as sacred. It's not about earning. It's about honoring. You've given God your

tears and prayers, now give Him the rhythms of your work and best too. PRAYER: Lord, I give You what's mine—because it was always Yours. Let my giving reflect my gratitude. DECLARE: Generosity is my joyful response to grace. CHALLENGE: Ask the Lord if there's an area of giving (time, money, energy) He's inviting you to realign. ACTIVATION: Write this down: "From now on, I will steward _____ as holy." **NOTES:**

DAY FOUR DON'T NEGLECT THE HOUSE

MAIN FOCUS: WHAT YOU NEGLECT BEGINS TO DECAY SO KEEP THE FIRE BURNING.

KEY VERSE: "We will not neglect the house of our God." - Nehemiah 10:39

READING: Nehemiah 10:28-39, Revelation 2:4-5

CONSIDER: When David caught the vision for building the temple for God his words were, "It is not right that I live in this palace of cedar and God dwells in a tent."

The point was, How can I personally sacrifice and invest most in building my own dwelling place and retirement when the house of worship lacks the glory and support it needs.

This wasn't just about the physical temple. It was a vow to honor God's presence, prioritize worship, and steward what mattered most.

At Anchor, it's the Front Porch Life. We know that revival fades when attention fades.

In Nehemiah, the people had to declare: We won't drift. We won't forget. We won't go back to comfort and convenience.

For us, it never ends. Every generation has to get the Front Porch Life mindset.

The lost son is always about celebrating the lost coming home and all of the discipleship involved in equipping them to follow Jesus. The lost coin is about redeeming the intrinsic value in the broken people around us. The lost sheep is about always expanding to make room for one more.

We start strong, stay strong and finish strong. You may have started strong, but will you stay?

This is your moment to say, "God, You will remain first." I'm going to live the front

porch life steadily all of my days.
PRAYER: Holy Spirit, keep my heart attentive. Let me never neglect what You've restored.
DECLARE: I won't neglect what God entrusted to me.
CHALLENGE: Is there an area of your faith that's slowly drifting into neglect? Don't shame it—just return.
ACTIVATION: Pray Revelation 2:5 aloud: "Return to your first love"
NOTES:

DAY FIVE LEGACY IS WHAT YOU LEAVE BURNING

MAIN FOCUS: GOD DOESN'T JUST RESTORE YOUR LIFE—HE RECLAIMS YOUR LINEAGE.

KEY VERSE: "They purified the people, the gates and the wall." - Nehemiah 12:30

READING: Nehemiah 13:1-14, 2 Timothy 1:5-7

CONSIDER: Legacy is a buzz word these days. It's not what you leave behind for others, it's who you leave behind. Legacy is about the people you're impacting.

Legacy work never stops. We're always in the business of restoring value in people, finding lost people, making room for one more and celebrating the Lord together and His people coming home.

The final chapter reveals something sobering: years later, the people drifted again. Nehemiah returned and had to reestablish what they'd forgotten. Why? Because legacy must be guarded.

The Front Porch Life can't be guarded with rules, policy and control systems. It's a culture that is established with long-haul consistency.

Your impact isn't measured by what you start it's measured by what stays lit.

That's the Front Porch Life.

My greatest joy in life is seeing the Front Porch Life modeled in our kids and your kids. There's nothing in life like seeing generations behind you catching the vision and stewarding it well. They run to the weary. They bring the lost home. They make room for one more. The redeem the intrinsic value in others.

A light on for the next generation. It's the best of life and God rewards it ... BIG!

A house filled with the Word, worship, and holiness.

This is your inheritance. And your invitation. PRAYER: Father, let what You've started in me outlive me. May my legacy be love, truth, and holy fire. DECLARE: I'm building something that lasts. CHALLENGE: Ask yourself: What do I want the next generation to remember when they walk past my porch? ACTIVATION: Write a one-sentence legacy declaration: "I will be remembered as..." **NOTES:**

CONCLUSION

You've walked with Nehemiah. You've caught the burden. You've seen the vision of what's coming up at Anchor and here you are discerning your roll in the story that is about to unfold. Now comes the question that shapes everything: What is God calling you do to build His kingdom?

LOST SHEEP - Your Expansion Assignment:

Perhaps the Spirit is stirring you to invest sacrificially in the efforts to make room for others like you and advance even greater multiplication. This could mean sacrificially investing or just starting to tithe or give. It could be also multiplying a small group, launching a ministry, supporting church planting, or investing in global missions. The heart of the shepherd beats within you when you can't rest knowing there's still "one more" who needs to come home.

"Suppose one of you has a hundred sheep and loses one of them. Doesn't he leave the ninety-nine in the open country and go after the lost sheep until he finds it?" – Luke 15:4

LOST COIN - Your Compassion Assignment:

Maybe you're called to the lamp and the broom—the relentless work of redeeming intrinsic value in broken lives. This includes serving the poor, caring for the hurting, mentoring the lost, or advocating for justice. You see worth where others see waste.

"Or suppose a woman has ten silver coins and loses one. Doesn't she light a lamp, sweep the house and search carefully until she finds it?" – Luke 15:8

LOST SON - Your Discipleship Assignment:

Your calling might be to the front porch itself—worship leading, teaching, discipleship, prayer ministry, or hospitality. You help create the culture where prodigals feel safe to come home and mature sons learn to celebrate like the Father.

"But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him." – Luke 15:20

YOUR FRONT PORCH LIFE:

Listen closely. Where is the burden strongest? Where does your heart break? Where do you sense God's favor stirring? That's where your assignment begins. The Front Porch Life isn't about doing everything—it's about doing your part with all your heart.

"For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost." - Luke 19:10

I love you! Best Ahead.

PASTOR JEFF

NOTES

