

Centerline

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[Nehemiah 8:1-3](#) all the people came together as one in the square before the Water Gate. They told Ezra the teacher of the Law to bring out the Book of the Law of Moses, which the Lord had commanded for Israel. **2** So on the first day of the seventh month Ezra the priest brought the Law before the assembly, which was made up of men and women and all who were able to understand. **3** He read it aloud from daybreak till noon as he faced the square before the Water Gate in the presence of the men, women and others who could understand. And all the people listened attentively to the Book of the Law.

- Jesus is our centerline: We must desire to hear the Word of God
- **Desire:** A want so strong it changes behavior

[1 Timothy 1:5](#) "I am reminded of your sincere faith, which first lived in your grandmother Lois and in your mother Eunice and, I am persuaded, now lives in you also."

- The Word of God nourishes us- [Matthew 4:4](#)
- The Word of God guides us- [Psalm 119:105](#)
- The Word of God gives us wisdom- [Psalm 119:130](#)
- The Word of God shows how to get saved- [2 Timothy 3:15](#)
- The Word of God endures forever- [Isaiah 40:8](#)
- But here is the deal, according to a 2021 study called, "The State of the Bible" research showed that only 11% of professing Christians read their Bibles daily. (Good news though is that's up from last year) What is even more striking is that 66% (2/3) read their bibles less than 4 times a year, desire. God primarily works through the hearts of those who desire to hear His Word.

[John 7:37-38](#) "If anyone is thirsty (**desire**) let him come to me (**changed behavior**) and drink (**engagement**). Whoever believes in me as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him. (**changed life**)."

[Nehemiah 8:4-6](#) Ezra the teacher of the Law stood on a high wooden platform built for the occasion. Beside him on his right stood Mattithiah, Shema, Anaiah, Uriah, Hilkiah and Maaseiah; and on his left were Pedaiah, Mishael, Malkijah, Hashum, Hashbaddanah, Zechariah and Meshullam. **5** Ezra opened the book. All the people could see him because he was standing above them; and as he opened it, the people all stood up. **6** Ezra praised the Lord, the great God; and all the people lifted their hands and responded, "Amen! Amen!" Then they bowed down and worshiped the Lord with their faces to the ground.

- Jesus is our centerline: We must revere the Word of God
- **Reverence:** A deep respect
- (vs. 3) In the eighth year of his reign...he began to seek God...
- (vs. 3-7) In the twelfth year of his reign he tore down idol worship...
- (vs. 8-13) In the eighteenth year of his reign he set out to repair the temple of the Lord his God...
- (vs. 15) [While repairing the temple] Hilkiah the priest **found** the Book of the Law
- (vs. 18) Hilkiah the priest has given me **a book** and Shaphan read from it in the presence of the king.
- (vs. 21) The king gave the order to go and inquire about what is written **in this book that has been found**.
- What is reverence? A deep respect
- What does reverence do? It disciplines us

Psalm 46:10 "Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth."

Nehemiah 8:7-12 The Levites—Jeshua, Bani, Sherebiah, Jamin, Akkub, Shabbethai, Hodiah, Maaseiah, Kelita, Azariah, Jozabad, Hanan and Pelaiah—instructed the people in the Law while the people were standing there. **8** They read from the Book of the Law of God, making it clear and giving the meaning so that the people understood what was being read. **9** Then Nehemiah the governor, Ezra the priest and teacher of the Law, and the Levites who were instructing the people said to them all, "This day is holy to the Lord your God. Do not mourn or weep." For all the people had been weeping as they listened to the words of the Law. **10** Nehemiah said, "Go and enjoy choice food and sweet drinks, and send some to those who have nothing prepared. This day is holy to our Lord. Do not grieve, for the joy of the Lord is your strength." **11** The Levites calmed all the people, saying, "Be still, for this is a holy day. Do not grieve." **12** Then all the people went away to eat and drink, to send portions of food and to celebrate with great joy, because they now understood the words that had been made known to them.

- Jesus is our centerline: We must respond to the Word of God

Romans 7:7 "...I would not have known what sin was had it not been for the Law..."

- Sin is serious - [Ezra 9:3](#)
- Sin can be subtle and have devastating consequences- [Ezra 4:1-3](#)
- Sin requires honest confession- [Ezra 9:5-15](#)
- God's mercy and grace are a person's only hope- [Ezra 9:13](#)

- All sin must be repented of- [Ezra 10:7-17](#)

[Romans 3:19-24 \(NLT\)](#) Obviously, the law applies to those to whom it was given, for its purpose is to keep people from having excuses, and to show that the entire world is guilty before God. **20** For no one can ever be made right with God by doing what the law commands. The law simply shows us how sinful we are. **21** But now God has shown us a way to be made right with him without keeping the requirements of the law, as was promised in the writings of Moses and the prophets long ago. **22** We are made right with God by placing our faith in Jesus Christ. And this is true for everyone who believes, no matter who we are. **23** For everyone has sinned; we all fall short of God's glorious standard. **24** Yet God, in his grace, freely makes us right in his sight. He did this through Christ Jesus when he freed us from the penalty for our sins.

[Psalm 19:8 \(NLT\)](#) The precepts of the LORD are right, giving **joy** to the heart. The commands of the LORD are radiant, giving light to the eyes.

[Jeremiah 15:16 \(NLT\)](#) When I discovered your words, I devoured them. They are my **joy** and my heart's delight, for I bear your name, O LORD God of Heaven's Armies.

[Nehemiah 8:13-18](#) On the second day of the month, the heads of all the families, along with the priests and the Levites, gathered around Ezra the teacher to give attention to the words of the Law. **14** They found written in the Law, which the Lord had commanded through Moses, that the Israelites were to live in temporary shelters during the festival of the seventh month **15** and that they should proclaim this word and spread it throughout their towns and in Jerusalem: "Go out into the hill country and bring back branches from olive and wild olive trees, and from myrtles, palms and shade trees, to make temporary shelters"—as it is written. **16** So the people went out and brought back branches and built themselves temporary shelters on their own roofs, in their courtyards, in the courts of the house of God and in the square by the Water Gate and the one by the Gate of Ephraim. **17** The whole company that had returned from exile built temporary shelters and lived in them. From the days of Joshua son of Nun until that day, the Israelites had not celebrated it like this. And their joy was very great. **18** Day after day, from the first day to the last, Ezra read from the Book of the Law of God. They celebrated the festival for seven days, and on the eighth day, in accordance with the regulation, there was an assembly.

- Jesus is our centerline: We must obey the Word of God

[John 14:23-24](#) Jesus replied, "Anyone who loves me will obey my teaching. My Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home (tabernacle) with them. **24** Anyone who does not love me will not obey my teaching. These words you hear are not my own; they belong to the Father who sent me.

[Hebrews 2:1,3 \(NLT\)](#) So we must listen very carefully to the truth we have heard, or we may drift away from it... **3** So what makes us think we can escape if we ignore this great salvation that was first announced by the Lord Jesus himself and then delivered to us by those who heard him speak?

- **The people desired to hear the Word of God:** In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God...and the Word became flesh and made His dwelling among us. We have seen

His glory...

- **They revered the Word of God:** *They build a wooden platform for the special purpose of understanding the Word of God and their need for saving. And they took Jesus and crucified Him, nailing Him to a wooden cross for atonement of our sins that we would be made right with God. Therefore, in your hearts revere Christ as Lord*
- **They obey the Word of God:** *Jesus said, those who accept my commands and obey them are the ones who love me. My Father will love those who love me; I too will love them and reveal myself to them."*
- Text **YES** to 321.574.6970 if you have accepted Jesus as your Lord and Savior

All Bible references are from the New International Version (NIV) unless otherwise noted. NLT = New Living Translation.