

Put God First Part 9

Give Importance to God's Word

Knowing the Word of God is important because studying God's Word will ultimately reveal to you in which way or circumstance you haven't placed God first in your lives. The Psalmist said, *"15 I will meditate in thy precepts, and have respect unto thy ways. 105 Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path."* (Psalm 119:15, 105 KJV) The studying and respecting God's Word will assess you and bring out your personal lives to the light. **Reading and studying God's Word will clearly show you yourselves and you will discern the situation that you are in.**

In particular, the Word of God will expose your sins and transgressions and the areas you fail God, so you can repent and correct yourself, and the consequences of what you have done, and the dangerous path where you have placed yourselves.

In the following passages we will evaluate how reading God's Word will help you to put God first, in the place where God needs to be your priority in life.

"1 And all the people gathered themselves together as one man into the street that was before the water gate; and they spake unto Ezra the scribe to bring the book of the law of Moses, which the LORD had commanded to Israel. 2 And Ezra the priest brought the law before the congregation both of men and women, and all that could hear with understanding, upon the first day of the seventh month. 3 And he read therein before the street that was before the water gate from the morning until midday, before the men and the women, and those that could understand; and the ears of all the people were attentive unto the book of the law. 4 And Ezra the scribe stood upon a pulpit of wood, which they had made for the purpose; and beside him stood Mattithiah, and Shema, and Anaiah, and Urijah, and Hilkiah, and Maaseiah, on his right hand; and on his left hand, Pedaiah, and Mishael, and Malchiah, and Hashum, and Hashbadana, Zechariah, and Meshullam. 5 And Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people; (for he was above all the people;) and when he opened it, all the people stood up: 6 And Ezra blessed the LORD, the great God. And all the people answered, Amen, Amen, with lifting up their hands: and they bowed their heads, and worshipped the LORD with their faces to the ground. 7 Also Jeshua, and Bani, and Sherebiah, Jamin, Akkub, Shabbethai, Hodijah, Maaseiah, Kelita, Azariah, Jozabad, Hanan, Pelaiah, and the Levites, caused the people to understand the law: and the people stood in their place. 8 So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading. 9 And Nehemiah, which is the Tirshatha, and Ezra the priest the scribe, and the Levites that taught the people, said unto all the people, This day is holy unto the LORD your God; mourn not, nor weep. For all the people wept, when they heard the words of the law. 10 Then he said unto them, Go your way, eat the fat, and drink the sweet, and send portions unto them for whom nothing is prepared: for this day is holy unto our LORD: neither be ye sorry; for the joy of the LORD is your strength. 11 So the Levites stilled all the people, saying, Hold your peace, for the day is holy; neither be ye grieved. 12 And all the people went their way to eat, and to drink, and to send portions, and to make great mirth, because they had understood the words that were declared unto them. 13 And on the second day

were gathered together the chief of the fathers of all the people, the priests, and the Levites, unto Ezra the scribe, even to understand the words of the law. 14 And they found written in the law which the LORD had commanded by Moses, that the children of Israel should dwell in booths in the feast of the seventh month: 15 And that they should publish and proclaim in all their cities, and in Jerusalem, saying, Go forth unto the mount, and fetch olive branches, and pine branches, and myrtle branches, and palm branches, and branches of thick trees, to make booths, as it is written. 16 So the people went forth, and brought them, and made themselves booths, every one upon the roof of his house, and in their courts, and in the courts of the house of God, and in the street of the water gate, and in the street of the gate of Ephraim. 17 And all the congregation of them that were come again out of the captivity made booths, and sat under the booths: for since the days of Jeshua the son of Nun unto that day had not the children of Israel done so. And there was very great gladness. 18 Also day by day, from the first day unto the last day, he read in the book of the law of God. And they kept the feast seven days; and on the eighth day was a solemn assembly, according unto the manner." (Nehemiah 8:1-18 KJV)

In the above chosen passage from the book of Nehemiah, the people of God after they returned from exile and after they settled down, they gave priority to the Word of God. **The same should be for you; God's Word has a real impact and importance in your life because it reveals God's thoughts and His good plans and will in your life.**

Reading God's Word is God speaking to you: When God's Word has the priority and the first place in our heart and mind, we can find God's presence in a profound way in our life. Let us then put God first in our life by honoring His Word in the following way:

1. Bring the Bible: *"1 And all the people gathered themselves together as one man into the street that was before the water gate; and they spake unto Ezra the scribe to bring the book of the law of Moses, which the LORD had commanded to Israel."* (Nehemiah 8:1 KJV) **Wherever you go or move, in a car or bus or in office or in a market, you need to take your own Bible with you so you can bring it out and read it whenever God is speaking to you or the Holy Spirit is reminding you to read.** They asked Ezra to bring the book of the Law of Moses, and he brought it to them: *"2 And Ezra the priest brought the law before the congregation both of men and women, and all that could hear with understanding, upon the first day of the seventh month."* (Nehemiah 8:2 KJV) **In the same way, you need to be ready with your Bible, that wherever you go it needs to be with you, that when the people will ask you or the Holy Spirit will ask you to bring it out then you are ready with your own Bible.**

2. Open the Bible: *"5 And Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people; (for he was above all the people;) and when he opened it, all the people stood up:"* (Nehemiah 8:5 KJV) Many among us have been always busy opening and checking their mobiles, email boxes, facebook, instagram, tutor, chat boxes, etc., looking for new messages. But they are not even concerned enough to open their Bibles. **You need to learn to open your Bible frequently and read God's Word and promises that can strengthen you and encourage you in times of grief, direct you in times of troubles and can build you up each day.** The Word of God has power and authority and a real impact in people's lives. Ezra, as **he opened the book, all the people stood up.** The people stood up when Ezra opened the Bible in honor to God because the Bible contains treasures, the precious promises of God, and we can obtain all these treasures only

when we open our personal Bible and read. The people stood up as Ezra opened the Bible as if he was opening a treasure box and the people stood up to look what is inside. **Let us have that same thought of mind, that every time we open our Bible, we are going to receive a precious treasure from God.**

3. Bless God by agreeing with His Word: *“6 And Ezra blessed the LORD, the great God. And all the people answered, Amen, Amen, with lifting up their hands: and they bowed their heads, and worshipped the LORD with their faces to the ground.” (Nehemiah 8:6 KJV)* When Ezra opened the Bible the people said Amen, Amen, raised their hands and bowed their heads and worship God as signs that they will agree in what is written in the Bible. *** In the same way let us bless God by agreeing to His Word and willing to submit to the ordinances of his Word. * Before you start to read your Bible make a point that you will agree with the content of what you are going to read. * Before you read your Bible you pray that you will understand what God want you to know while you are reading.**

4. Read the Bible: *“3 And he read therein before the street that was before the water gate from the morning until midday, before the men and the women, and those that could understand; and the ears of all the people were attentive unto the book of the law.” (Nehemiah 8:3 KJV)* Reading the Bible daily should be a priority. You should keep a time every day to read the Bible. Not that you read the Bible when you have time but make a time to read the Bible. Your reading should be in sequence, starting from the beginning, the book of Genesis; you should also be consistent, reading regularly at least 3-4 chapters per day, advancing verse by verse, chapter by chapter, and book by book, until you finish to the very end of the book of Revelation.

Now answer these questions: Do you have your own Bible? Do you read your Bible? Do you carry or bring your Bible wherever you go? Do you read your Bible daily? Do you read your Bible in sequences from the beginning to the end? Do you read daily adequately 3-4 chapters? Do you use the right version of the Bible? The best available now is King James Version.

Ezra read the Bible from daybreak till noon. Let us read the Bible frequently and give good and adequate time for reading. **Put in your mind that reading one page or one chapter or one passage daily will not give you enough food for your soul to go on well in your life.**

Ezra read the Book of the Law *before the men and the women, and those that could understand; and the ears of all the people were attentive unto the book of the law*, even the children in addition to the adult will listen and understand the Word of God. **Similarly let us take every opportunity to read the Bible not only for ourselves but for others who are around us who may will know and understand the Bible.**

“13 Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine.” (1 Timothy 4:13 KJV) Let us also be the Timothy of Paul and devote ourselves to read the Scripture publicly and to teach and preach the Word of God especially to our children and the rest of our family members. *** Your children must have their own Bible and should be taught**

how to read the Bible first before any other book. * Let us teach our children to put God first by reading the Bible daily over other things like electronic games, mobiles, internet and gadgets that destroy minds and eyes of young children and adults.

5. Ask for Bible study: *“1 And all the people gathered themselves together as one man into the street that was before the water gate; and they spake unto Ezra the scribe to bring the book of the law of Moses, which the LORD had commanded to Israel.” (Nehemiah 8:1 KJV)* The people themselves asked Ezra to bring out the Word of God and read to them and explain to them the message of God. **You should have the initiative to come and ask for Bible study. You must have the inner and the deep desire to know more of God and His Word. The church has teachers given by God to teach, and we are more than ready to teach you God’s Word.**

6. Listen and be attentive to the Word of God: *“3 And he read therein before the street that was before the water gate from the morning until midday, before the men and the women, and those that could understand; and the ears of all the people were attentive unto the book of the law.” (Nehemiah 8:3 KJV)* When someone is reading the Bible or you are reading the Bible you need to listen attentively to God’s Word and meditate upon the message so you can understand and apply in your life. We can read in the book of Joshua the following: *“8 This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success.” (Joshua 1:8 KJV)* *** This book of the law, that is the Bible, should not depart from your mouth, you should read it, and in addition you need to meditate day and night on what you read; meditation means you need to think deeply how to use what you listened or what you read in your life. * In obeying the commands and the instruction that are included in the Word that you read, and in such a way you will be prosperous and have success and you will be blessed as you obey the Word of God.**

7. The Word of God need to be honoured: *“4 And Ezra the scribe stood upon a pulpit of wood, which they had made for the purpose; and beside him stood Mattithiah, and Shema, and Anaiah, and Urijah, and Hilkiah, and Maaseiah, on his right hand; and on his left hand, Pedaiah, and Mishael, and Malchiah, and Hashum, and Hashbadana, Zechariah, and Meshullam.” (Nehemiah 8:4 KJV)* The Word of God should have the highest place in our lives and in the life of the church. Let us honor the Word of God by upholding God’s message each day. *** The church and everyone in the church should be under the Word of God, and the Word of God should be above all. * The Word of God should be above the rich, above the poor, above young and above the old, above the leaders and above the littlest in the church. Ezra the scribe stood upon a pulpit of wood, which they had made for the purpose;** the pulpit was made so that the Word of God would be placed over all who are going to listen, even above Ezra.

8. Understand and explain the Word of God: *“7 Also Jeshua, and Bani, and Sherebiah, Jamin, Akkub, Shabbethai, Hodijah, Maaseiah, Kelita, Azariah, Jozabad, Hanan, Pelaiah, and the Levites, caused the people to understand the law: and the people stood in their place. 8 So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading.” (Nehemiah 8:7-8 KJV)* The Word of God should be clearly delivered and understood in order to be put into practice. After the reading there must be adequate explanation to outline the application of God’s Word. That is what usually we do in

each and every Bible study and in each sermon in the church to cause the people to understand as the people of God understood through the explanation of the Levites.

*“7 Also Jeshua, and Bani, and Sherebiah, Jamin, Akkub, Shabbethai, Hodijah, Maaseiah, Kelita, Azariah, Jozabad, Hanan, Pelaiah, and the Levites, caused the people to understand the law: and the people stood in their place. 8 So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading.” (Nehemiah 8:7-8 KJV) * All the workers, the pastors and the leaders of the church are responsible and commissioned to explain and expound adequately the Word of God they receive, to our new brethren and the young believers in Christ.*

9. Repent of your sins: *“9 And Nehemiah, which is the Tirshatha, and Ezra the priest the scribe, and the Levites that taught the people, said unto all the people, This day is holy unto the LORD your God; mourn not, nor weep. For all the people wept, when they heard the words of the law.” (Nehemiah 8:9 KJV)* Oftentimes God’s message will lead us to repentance and reconciliation with Him. Then the wonderful plan of God, his love, and His good, pleasant and perfect will in our life is revealed. The people wept as they heard the words of the law because when they heard the Word of God they were convicted of their sins and they grieved of what they did and as they repented they started to cry and got the joy of God. It is a sacred day that when you realize your sins and come back to the Lord in repentance.

10. Reading God’s Word will end you up with joy, relief, encouragement, comfort and strength from the Lord: *“10 Then he said unto them, Go your way, eat the fat, and drink the sweet, and send portions unto them for whom nothing is prepared: for this day is holy unto our LORD: neither be ye sorry; for the joy of the LORD is your strength. 11 So the Levites stilled all the people, saying, Hold your peace, for the day is holy; neither be ye grieved. 12 And all the people went their way to eat, and to drink, and to send portions, and to make great mirth, because they had understood the words that were declared unto them.” (Nehemiah 8:10-12 KJV)* The time that you dedicate to read and study the Word of God will end up in joy, revival and comfort that comes upon you from God by the Holy Spirit or by the brethren in Christ and the church that are there to comfort you and receive you, as we had read here, after they repented and renounced their sins and the grievances that they caused to God.

** How you get the joy? That is when you focus on Christ and on His Word, and not on other things. Some they say I am not happy in the church, that is because they are not focusing on Jesus, but they have other expectations which was not met, which are out of Christ’s will.*

** Truly the joy of the LORD is your strength. When you start to read your Bible you might be grieving but later you will end up with joy and fullness, and as you reconcile with God as you read your Bible, and as you repent while you listen to the message, the joy of the Lord will give you the strength to go on in life and to serve Him.*

11. Share the blessings of God’s Word to others: *“12 And all the people went their way to eat, and to drink, and to send portions, and to make great mirth, because they*

*had understood the words that were declared unto them.” (Nehemiah 8:12 KJV) * When you start to read you might be grieving, doubting, sad, anxious but later you will end up with joy and fullness, and your gladness of receiving the message will lead you to go forward to share with others and refresh them with the good things that you received. * Evangelism is the power of God’s Word when we clearly understand the message from God.*

12. Be the more eager to understand the Word of God so you will also understand better the good plan that God has for you: *“13 And on the second day were gathered together the chief of the fathers of all the people, the priests, and the Levites, unto Ezra the scribe, even to understand the words of the law. 14 And they found written in the law which the LORD had commanded by Moses, that the children of Israel should dwell in booths in the feast of the seventh month: 15 And that they should publish and proclaim in all their cities, and in Jerusalem, saying, Go forth unto the mount, and fetch olive branches, and pine branches, and myrtle branches, and palm branches, and branches of thick trees, to make booths, as it is written.” (Nehemiah 8:13-15 KJV)* Here when they finished the first day of reading and expounding and explaining God’s Word, in the second day they were more eager to hear more of God’s Word. They came to Ezra to understand more of God’s Word and truly they came to know about the feast of the tabernacles that they had neglected to do. ** When you come to study more of God’s Word, you will discover clear goals that God sets before you to achieve and more better details about the good plan that God has for you. * When you come to know more of God’s Word you will discover that you are observing false days and traditions like now what the churches are doing in observing New Year, Christmas, Santa Claus, the tree, Halloween, Valentine, Father Day, Mother Day, etc., that these days and tradition are not in the Bible but are copy and paste from the world, while they are neglecting the more serious things of God and had put God’s Word aside to observe man’s tradition. * You may ask what are the dangers of doing such? First you will loss God’s blessing as these idols blocks the blessings of God and second, you will be directed with such toward hell.*

Who came to Ezra asking more of God’s Word? *“13 And on the second day were gathered together the chief of the fathers of all the people, the priests, and the Levites, unto Ezra the scribe, even to understand the words of the law.” (Nehemiah 8:13 KJV)* *the chief of the fathers of all the people, the priests, and the Levites,* those are the important people of the congregation, but they were humble to come and ask for more teaching to get more understanding in God’s Word. *In the same way, be humble and do not be ashamed to come and ask of more teaching and of more revelation from God’s Word.* Humble down and come and ask for Bible study to understand the Word of God.

13. Apply the new things that you learn from God’s Word in your life and apply that in the life of the church: *“16 So the people went forth, and brought them, and made themselves booths, every one upon the roof of his house, and in their courts, and in the courts of the house of God, and in the street of the water gate, and in the street of the gate of Ephraim. 17 And all the congregation of them that were come again out of the captivity made booths, and sat under the booths: for since the days of Jeshua the son of Nun unto that day had not the children of Israel done so. And there was very great gladness.” (Nehemiah 8:16-17 KJV)* Here from the Scriptures they understood that they need to celebrate the feast of the tabernacles. For us as a church from studying the Scriptures we understood that we need to do lot of things

in our lives and in the life of the church and we are bound to do such as we commit ourselves to enter through the narrow gate and walk in the narrow way that Jesus taught us to pass through.

14. Gather in order to read, study and expound the Word of God: “18 Also day by day, from the first day unto the last day, he read in the book of the law of God. And they kept the feast seven days; and on the eighth day was a solemn assembly, according unto the manner.” (Nehemiah 8:18 KJV) What the Israelites did during the days of the feasts? The main thing that they did is reading the Word of God. Ezra was reading and the Levites were taking the message to the people and explaining and expounding the Word of God to them and how to apply them in their lives. The feasts of the Jews were not about food or entertainment or games or sports, but about reading and expounding and benefiting from Word of God. They were gathering three times a year, in the Passover Feast, in the Feast of the First fruit and in the Feast of Tabernacles in order to read and expound the Word of God. The crowds that were following Jesus they were receiving from Him the Word of God. In the same way our feasts as Christians when we come together is not about food or entertainment but about reading and expounding and benefiting from Word of God.

My dear and beloved:

Realize now the importance of God’s Word and reading the Bible daily in your life.
Realize now the importance of having your own Bible.
Realize now the importance of daily reading the Bible in good amount and in sequence.
Realize now the importance of carrying your Bible wherever you go.
Realize now the importance of meditating and applying what you read in your daily life.
Realize now the importance of obeying God’s word to bring you prosperity and success.
Realize now the importance of God’s Word to discern and see the details of God’s plan for you.
Realize now the importance of God’s Word to reach others and share the good news with them.
Realize now the importance of God’s Word to grasp the right thing and to throw the wrong things and to achieve new things for the Church as God ordained

My Prayer: *Father God I come before you in the name of Jesus who died on the Cross for my sins and rose from the dead to give me eternal life. Lord thank you for your Word that showed me clearly that I need to put you first by putting first your Word in my life.*

Confess your sins and renounce them. Lord I confess and renounce the following sins _____ . Lord I confess and renounce the following wrong principles and wrong priorities that came from lacking of reading God’s Word _____ . Renounce facebook, You Tube and Instagram and chats and gossips that takes you from God’s Word.

Lord I commit myself to the principles that I learned from this message. Lord I commit myself to read daily my Bible and in sequence and in good amount. I commit myself to meditate and to obey what is written in God’s Word. I commit myself to share what I

learn with others who are far away to bring them the good news of Jesus. Lord help me to continue to go through the narrow way, Lord protect me from evil doers and provide all my needs. Lord give me the fruit of the Holy Spirit, love, joy, peace, humility, self-control, patience, perseverance, long suffering, faith and faithfulness to go on and serve you in a better way reflecting the character of you Jesus in my life so others my see you while I am helping them in their troubles who need hands, efforts, and prayers.

Lord, I pray for us as a church to help us, protect us, and provide for us to go on in serving you and do your work and your will and applying your Word in full in our lives. Lord fills us once again with the Holy Spirit and enables us to evangelize and to reach new people with the Gospel of Jesus Christ and with the Word of God.

Lord, we pray that you will enable us to plant new Bible studies and new congregations for the church and to reach out new people and new places. Lord bless us, enlarge our territory, let your hand be with us, and free us from harm so that we will not feel pain. May the grace of the Lord Jesus and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all in Jesus’ name, Amen.

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