



21 DAYS OF PRAYER





DEAR FRIEND,

From the beginning of Ironbridge Church, we've made it a priority to seek God first in prayer. That hasn't changed. In fact, as we continue in this Above & Beyond season, celebrating 40 years of God's faithfulness, launching Ironbridge Christian Academy, and stepping into the future He's calling us to—there's never been a more important time to pray.

This 21-day journey flows directly out of our recent sermon series through the book of Nehemiah. Just like Nehemiah, we are being called to build something that outlasts us. But before the bricks go up, we must first get on our knees. Because building for the future starts by seeking the God who holds it.

Prayer has the power to transform both our hearts and our circumstances. It aligns us with God's will, fuels our faith, and strengthens our resolve. As we unite in prayer for our church, our city, and the future students and families of Ironbridge Christian Academy, we do so with great expectation, believing that God will move, guide, and provide.

Each day will lead you to pray for your personal circle, our church, and our community. We'll seek His wisdom, His presence, and His power to go above and beyond in faith and generosity.

We are praying for you and praying with you. May this be a season where we not only rise to build, but first, Rise and Pray.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Michael', with a stylized, flowing script.

Pastor Michael



HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

For the next 21 days, we invite you to set aside intentional time each day to pray through the Scripture, devotion, and prayer prompts provided in this guide. Each devotion is drawn from the Rise & Build sermon series in Nehemiah, helping us seek God personally, as a church, and for our city.

This season is about more than launching a school or expanding our campus—it's about aligning our hearts with God's vision. As you walk through these daily readings, allow God to deepen your faith, strengthen your resolve, and stir your generosity.

Let this journey of prayer ignite fresh passion and purpose as we trust Him to build something greater than we could ask or imagine.

RESOURCES

As you begin this 21-day journey of prayer and fasting, we want to equip you with tools to help you stay focused and encouraged along the way. Visit **ironbridge.church/21days** for additional resources to support you throughout the next 21 days.

COMMITMENT

Writing down your intentions is a powerful way to begin. Prayerfully consider your commitment for these 21 days.

Sensing God's leading, I commit myself to pray, fast, and abstain from _____ for the next 21 days. During this time, I will concentrate on prayer and knowing God and His Word.

Signed: _____

Date: _____ / _____ / _____



IT STARTS WITH A BURDEN

“When I heard these words, I sat down and wept and mourned for days, and I continued fasting and praying before the God of heaven.” — Nehemiah 1:4 (ESV)

Nehemiah didn't begin with a plan, he began with a burden. When the news of Jerusalem's broken walls reached him, he didn't spring into action. He sat down. He wept. He fasted. He prayed. His response wasn't strategic—it was spiritual. Because every God-sized vision starts with God-shaped sorrow.

Nehemiah shows us that what breaks your heart may be the very thing God uses to build His kingdom. Before the blueprints and the leadership meetings came tears and intercession. The burden moved him—and then God moved through him.

As we begin this 21-day journey of prayer, we find ourselves in a similar place. Ironbridge Church is entering a new season—celebrating 40 years of ministry, launching Ironbridge Christian Academy, and trusting God to provide \$2 million to expand our impact for generations to come. But before we talk strategy, we stop. Before we build, we bow. We begin like Nehemiah did—not with noise, but with a quiet heart fully surrendered to God.

Because this moment isn't ultimately about buildings, milestones, or numbers. It's about people—families, students, neighbors—who need the hope of Christ. And it's about us, allowing God to stir something deep within us that leads to repentance, renewal, and bold faith.

Revival doesn't begin with a loud voice. It begins with a low posture. So today, take time to sit down. Let your heart break for what breaks His. And let this burden become the beginning of something beautiful.

PAUSE & REFLECT: WHERE IS GOD INVITING YOU TO RESPOND TODAY?

Circle. Lord, is there anything in my heart that's broken, complacent, or far from you? Teach me to slow down and seek your presence before anything else.

Church. Father, awaken a burden in our church that leads to deep dependence on You. May our vision be fueled by prayer and sustained by your Spirit.

City. Lord, open our eyes to the brokenness around us—homes, schools, and neighborhoods longing for hope. Help us be a church that steps in with grace and truth.

PRAY AND STEP IN

“O Lord, let your ear be attentive to the prayer of your servant... and give success to your servant today, and grant him mercy in the sight of this man. — Nehemiah 1:11 (ESV)

Prayer wasn't just Nehemiah's first response—it was his ongoing strategy. After days of weeping, fasting, and seeking God's face, he reached a pivotal moment. He had a job to do. A king to face. A risk to take. And before stepping into that moment, he prayed one more time: God, give me success. Grant me mercy in the sight of this man.

Nehemiah served as cupbearer to the Persian king, a position of trust, but not of influence. Speaking up could cost him everything. But prayer gave him boldness. Because when you've been in the throne room of heaven, you're less intimidated by earthly thrones. This is the power of prayer—it doesn't just prepare the way for God to move; it also prepares you to move when He opens the door.

You may not stand before a king today, but God may be calling you to take a bold step. A hard conversation. A sacrificial act. A kingdom investment. Maybe it's a step of generosity toward the launch of Ironbridge Christian Academy. Maybe it's opening your home for a small group. Maybe it's saying yes to a ministry role you don't feel quite ready for. Whatever it is, Nehemiah reminds us: the God who burdens your heart also strengthens your hands.

Courage doesn't come from confidence in yourself—it comes from communion with Him. So today, don't just pray for a miracle. Pray for boldness. Pray for favor. Pray for open doors. And when they open—walk through them, trusting the God who goes before you.

PAUSE & REFLECT:

Where is God asking you to act in faith today?

Circle. Lord, help me not to shrink back from the opportunities You put in front of me. Give me boldness, not for my glory, but for Yours. Use me to be an agent of hope in my home, work, and relationships.

Church. Father, empower Ironbridge Church to be bold in vision and faithful in action. As we step into this next season, give us favor, clarity, and courage to walk through every door You open.

City. God, prepare hearts in our community for encounters with Your truth and love. Open doors for conversations, relationships, and impact that lead people toward You.

WAITING ON GOD'S TIMING

*"And the king said to me, 'What are you requesting?' So I prayed to the God of heaven."
— Nehemiah 2:4 (ESV)*

Nehemiah had been praying for months. The burden hadn't lifted, and the need hadn't changed—but the door hadn't opened. Until one ordinary day, the king noticed his sorrow and asked the question Nehemiah had longed to hear: "What are you requesting?" In that split second, Nehemiah didn't panic—he prayed. Right there, mid-conversation, mid-pressure, he whispered a prayer to the God of heaven.

This moment reminds us: waiting on God isn't passive—it's prayerful. It's staying rooted when answers don't come fast, and preparing your heart for the moment God moves. Nehemiah didn't waste the waiting. He used it to listen, to plan, and to trust. And when the door opened, he was ready to walk through it in faith.

Maybe you're waiting right now—on clarity for your next step, on provision for a vision God has stirred in you, or on confirmation for something you've been praying over for months. Maybe you're waiting for God to move in your family, finances, or future. Whatever it is, Nehemiah's story shows us that delay is not denial. Often, it's divine preparation.

At Ironbridge, we're praying bold prayers right now, but we can't force open doors. Like Nehemiah, we prepare in faith, we pray with expectancy, and we trust God with the timing. That might mean continuing to give faithfully, even if you haven't yet seen fruit. Or staying committed to serve, even when it feels small.

Don't waste your waiting. Use it. Let God shape your heart so that when the opportunity comes, you step into it with courage and clarity—not because you're confident in yourself, but because you've been communing with Him all along.

PAUSE & REFLECT:

Are you trusting God in the waiting, or trying to force something ahead of His timing?

Circle. Lord, help me trust You even when I can't see the outcome. Make me faithful in prayer and ready in spirit so I don't miss the moment when You say "go."

Church. Father, as a church, help us wait on Your timing with faith and not fear. Prepare the right people, resources, and partnerships as we build for the future.

City. God, prepare our community for the gospel. Go before us and soften hearts—so that when doors open, we walk through them with clarity and compassion.

DAY FOUR

REMOVE THE RUBBLE

“The God of heaven will make us prosper, and we his servants will arise and build.”

— Nehemiah 2:20 (ESV)

When Nehemiah arrived in Jerusalem, the path ahead wasn't smooth. Opposition had already started to stir. Sanballat and Tobiah mocked and resisted the idea of restoration from the very beginning. And yet, Nehemiah wasn't shaken. He didn't fight back. He prepared quietly and intentionally. Before casting vision or lifting a stone, he rode out at night to inspect the brokenness for himself. What he saw was worse than expected—decades of rubble that no one had dared to remove.

This is the unseen work of rebuilding: not just laying stones, but clearing debris. Sometimes, before progress can be made, rubble must be faced—rubble in our hearts, our homes, even in the church. It may be unresolved hurt, bad habits, divided priorities, or complacency. And the longer it sits, the more normal it begins to feel. But God can't rebuild what we pretend isn't broken. Nehemiah teaches us to take an honest look and to prepare with faith, not fear.

Then, when the time came, he rallied the people not with hype, but with conviction: “The God of heaven will make us prosper.” His confidence wasn't in his plan, but in God's presence.

You may be facing opposition. You may feel overwhelmed by the rubble. But take heart, God is already at work behind the scenes. What looks like a pile of ruins to us is raw material in His hands. And when we respond with humility and faith, His people will rise and build.

PAUSE & REFLECT:

What “rubble” do you need to remove in order to make room for what God wants to build?

Circle. Lord, show me areas I've ignored or tried to cover up, places in my life that need to be cleared for You to rebuild. Give me courage to face them and faith to act.

Church. Father, help Ironbridge be honest about what needs to be restored, not just in our facilities, but in our unity, our mission, and our hearts.

City. God, as we clear the rubble in our lives, help us model transformation to those around us. Use our stories of healing and restoration to point our city to Jesus.

BUILD WHERE YOU ARE

“Next to him the men of Jericho built, and next to them Zaccur the son of Imri built.”
— Nehemiah 3:2 (ESV)

Nehemiah 3 might seem like a list of hard-to-pronounce names and construction updates—but beneath the surface lies a powerful picture of unity and purpose. One phrase keeps repeating: “next to him.” It’s more than construction logistics—it’s a snapshot of God’s people working shoulder to shoulder, each doing their part in a larger story. No one built alone. No one tried to do it all. Side by side, the wall took shape because each person embraced their place in God’s mission.

Even more striking, many built “opposite their house.” They didn’t chase visibility or status—they started right where they lived. They saw the brokenness in front of them and got to work. That’s still how God builds today. You don’t need a title or a stage. You just need a willingness to start where God has planted you—at your dinner table, in your workplace, in your neighborhood, or in that ministry where help is needed. Small faithfulness leads to big impact.

But not everyone joined in. Nehemiah points out that the nobles of Tekoa “would not stoop to serve their Lord.” It’s a haunting contrast. While others bent down to lift bricks, they stood tall in pride—and missed the joy of being part of God’s work.

The invitation today is clear: Build. Not later. Not alone. But right where you are, side by side with others, for the glory of God. Don’t let pride or passivity rob you of the blessing. The wall didn’t go up because of individual heroes—it rose because the people rose together. And the same is true today.

PAUSE & REFLECT:

Are you building where God has planted you, or waiting for something more “important” to come along?

Circle. God, help me see the opportunities You’ve already placed around me. Give me the humility to serve and the faithfulness to build right where I am.

Church. Lord, unify Ironbridge Church as we step forward together. May no one build alone, and may we honor You by giving our best in the place You’ve called us.

City. Jesus, awaken our community to the power of the church working together. Let our unity speak louder than our differences and draw people toward Your love.

CLEAN OUT THE CLUTTER

“They repaired the Dung Gate... as far as the tower of the ovens.” — Nehemiah 3:14

When we think about building for God, we often imagine the visible, celebrated roles—preaching, leading, teaching, or leading worship. But tucked away in Nehemiah 3 is a man named Malchijah, who was assigned to rebuild the Dung Gate. Not exactly the most glamorous job. Not a platform anyone would line up for. But absolutely essential.

The Dung Gate was how the city removed its waste—how it stayed clean, livable, and holy. Without it, filth would pile up and contaminate everything. And in our lives, the same principle holds true. Before God brings revival, there must be removal. Before we can rise and build, we must clear out what’s been rotting beneath the surface—bitterness, compromise, secret sin, pride. It’s not just about what we’re building for God, but what we’re willing to let go of so He can build something better.

What makes this moment even more powerful is what happens in Nehemiah 12. When the wall is completed and the people dedicate it with songs of joy, one of the processional choirs walks right over the Dung Gate. Think about that. What was once the dirtiest place in the city becomes part of the parade route of praise. That’s the power of God’s redemption—He can turn even your mess into a platform for worship.

So today, let God do a cleanout. Ask Him to search your heart. Don’t hide the broken places—offer them to Him. Because what He wants to build in you is far greater than what needs to be removed. And joy always follows surrender.

PAUSE & REFLECT:

What needs to be cleared out of your life so God can do something new?

Circle. Lord, show me the clutter I’ve grown comfortable with. Give me the courage to confess, the humility to repent, and the grace to be made clean.

Church. Father, help us at Ironbridge to do the unseen work, not just building programs or spaces, but removing anything that distracts, divides, or dishonors You.

City. Jesus, let the church be known as a place of healing and hope, where messy lives are welcomed and transformed. May our neighbors see Your restoring power at work in us.

OPPOSITION WILL COME

“So we built the wall... for the people had a mind to work.” — Nehemiah 4:6 (ESV)

Opposition isn't a sign that you're doing something wrong—it's often confirmation that you're stepping into something right. Nehemiah and the people had barely started rebuilding the wall when the attacks began. Their enemies mocked them, called them weak, and laughed at the idea that they could restore what had been broken for so long. “What are these feeble Jews doing?” they scoffed. “Even a fox could knock down their wall.”

But Nehemiah didn't get defensive. He didn't waste energy clapping back or trying to prove himself. He prayed. And then he went back to work.

There's a powerful lesson here for us: Don't let your critics get more attention than your calling. When God gives you a vision—whether it's launching a school, raising kingdom resources, discipling your family, or simply living with integrity—you can expect resistance. Distraction is one of the enemy's oldest strategies. But Nehemiah models the right rhythm: pray first, then persevere.

He didn't deny the discouragement, but he didn't dwell in it either. He brought it to God and stayed focused on the mission.

At Ironbridge, as we step into this bold new season—celebrating 40 years, launching Ironbridge Christian Academy, and stretching our faith—criticism may come. But if our hearts stay anchored in prayer and our hands stay committed to the work, no voice of discouragement can derail what God has already begun.

Keep building. Keep praying. And remember: the loudest voice isn't the one mocking from the sidelines—it's the whisper of God calling you forward.

PAUSE & REFLECT:

What critical voices have distracted you from what God called you to do?

Circle. Lord, help me not to give power to voices that pull me away from Your purpose. Remind me that You're my defender, and my strength comes from You.

Church. Father, give Ironbridge a mind to work and a heart to pray. Let us not be swayed by opposition, but rooted in Your mission.

City. Jesus, raise up a bold and faithful church in our city, one that's known more for building hope than reacting to critics. Let our focus be firm, and our love loud.

REMEMBER THE LORD

“Do not be afraid of them. Remember the Lord, who is great and awesome, and fight...”
— Nehemiah 4:14 (ESV)

Even with good progress, faithful people still get tired. The builders in Judah had given their all—brick by brick, shoulder to shoulder—but the weight of the rubble and the relentless pressure from the outside wore them down. Eventually, they said what many of us have felt: “We can’t do this anymore.”

Sound familiar?

There are moments in every God-sized mission when your strength feels spent, your prayers feel thin, and your heart wonders if the effort is still worth it. You’ve made progress, but the finish line still feels out of reach. That’s not failure—it’s humanity. But it’s also a pivotal moment, because it’s here that God whispers, “remember.”

Nehemiah didn’t dismiss their exhaustion—he redirected their focus: “Remember the Lord.” Not the wall. Not the rubble. Not the enemy. The Lord. Remember the One who called you, who split seas and broke chains, who turns rubble into revival and breathes life into tired bones.

Discouragement thrives in forgetfulness. But faith is fueled by remembering. When we rehearse the faithfulness of God, our courage is renewed.

If you’re feeling weary today—mentally, emotionally, spiritually—don’t give up. You’re not alone in the fight. Jesus stepped into our ruins, bore our weakness, and rose victorious. He is the strength beneath your labor, the rest in your exhaustion, and the Savior who is still building His church.

The God who called you isn’t finished yet. So pause, breathe, and remember. Your strength may run out—but His never will.

PAUSE & REFLECT:

Where are you weary, and what can you remember about God’s faithfulness?

Circle. Lord, help me remember Your power when I feel weak. Give me the strength to persevere when I feel like giving up.

Church. Father, sustain Ironbridge through every season of building. When we grow tired, remind us of why we started, and Who we’re building for.

City. Jesus, for every weary parent, teacher, or neighbor in our city, be their strength today. Show them You are great and awesome, and they are not alone.

LEADING WITH INTEGRITY

"I took counsel with myself, and I brought charges against the nobles and the officials."
— Nehemiah 5:7 (ESV)

Not all opposition is external. Sometimes the most dangerous threats to God's work come from within. In Nehemiah 5, the wall-building effort suddenly stalled—not because of surrounding enemies, but because of injustice among God's own people. The wealthy were charging excessive interest, taking land, and even enslaving fellow Jews. God's people were breaking each other down while trying to build something up.

Nehemiah was furious—not out of ego, but out of reverence for God and compassion for the hurting. He feared God more than man. He valued people more than personal gain. And he refused to stay silent. But before confronting the nobles, he did something essential: he paused and took counsel with himself. He prayed. He reflected. He responded—not reactively, but righteously.

This is a picture of godly leadership. Whether you're leading a family, a ministry, a business, or simply your own heart, the call remains the same: protect the vulnerable, confront sin, and walk with integrity. Nehemiah didn't gossip or grumble—he took action. He restored what was broken, called for repentance, and led the people toward a healthier future.

At Ironbridge, we want to be a church marked by that same integrity—a community where people are valued over power, unity is pursued over comfort, and leadership is defined by character. Because how we lead reflects who we follow.

If we want to see revival last, it must be built on holiness, not hype. Let's be the kind of people God can trust to not only build walls, but to build well.

PAUSE & REFLECT:

Where might God be calling you to confront an issue or restore a relationship with humility and courage?

Circle. Lord, help me lead with integrity. Give me the courage to speak truth in love and the wisdom to walk in humility.

Church. Father, grow godly leaders at Ironbridge; leaders who serve others, speak truth, and fear You more than they fear man.

City. Jesus, raise up leaders across our city who lead with justice, compassion, and integrity. May our communities reflect Your heart through our leadership.

LEAD WITH OPEN HANDS

“Remember for my good, O my God, all that I have done for this people.”

— Nehemiah 5:19 (ESV)

Leadership is often associated with perks, power, or position, but Nehemiah flips the script. As governor, he had every right to take a salary, receive food allowances, and claim land. But for twelve years, he chose a different path. He didn't take what he was entitled to. He served with open hands and a humble heart. Why? Because he feared God and loved His people.

Nehemiah understood what many leaders forget: it's not about what you can get, but what you can give. He rolled up his sleeves and worked alongside the people. He fed others from his own table. He absorbed the cost so that others could thrive.

That's not just ancient leadership—it's Kingdom leadership. And it's the kind of posture Ironbridge is called to in this season. Whether you're leading a ministry, running a small group, parenting your kids, or helping launch Ironbridge Christian Academy, your leadership matters. It's not about titles. It's about sacrifice.

God is building something lasting here, and it will take all of us. Not everyone can give the same amount, but all of us can lead with open hands. Generosity isn't just financial. It's showing up early. Staying late. Giving time. Praying faithfully. Encouraging others. Leading by example.

Nehemiah didn't ask for applause. His prayer was simple: “Remember me, O my God, for good.” In other words: “God, I did this for You.”

Whatever you're leading, lead with that same heart: serve generously, lead faithfully, and trust God with the results.

PAUSE & REFLECT:

Are you leading for recognition or for God's glory? What can you release into His hands today?

Circle. Lord, help me live and lead generously. Teach me to trust You with the results and to serve with no strings attached.

Church. Father, let our leaders at Ironbridge model sacrificial generosity. May we lead and give not for applause, but out of reverence for You.

City. Jesus, bless our city with generous leaders, people who serve without expecting anything in return. Use our church to be a light in that way.

DON'T COME DOWN

"I am doing a great work and I cannot come down." — Nehemiah 6:3 (ESV)

Sometimes the enemy doesn't show up with a sword; he shows up with a distraction. As Nehemiah neared the finish line, the wall nearly complete, his enemies changed tactics. No more threats. No more intimidation. Just an invitation: "Come meet with us." On the surface, it looked harmless, even reasonable. But Nehemiah had spiritual discernment. He saw through the façade and refused to be pulled away.

His response was bold and clear: "I am doing a great work, and I cannot come down."

That same discernment is needed now more than ever. At Ironbridge, we're walking into a God-given vision—launching Ironbridge Christian Academy, expanding our reach, and building for future generations. But with every great work comes the temptation to settle for lesser ones. Not every invitation is worth accepting. Not every opportunity is aligned with your calling. Some are simply distractions dressed up as doors.

Distraction is one of the enemy's favorite tools. If he can't destroy the work, he'll try to dilute your focus, divide your energy, or delay your obedience. That's why one of the most spiritual things you can do is say no to noise, to people-pleasing, to anything that pulls you from your post.

The work God has called you to matters. In your home, your workplace, your church—He's entrusted you with something eternal. Don't come down for temporary things. Don't trade what's sacred for what's shiny.

Keep your eyes on Jesus. Stand your ground. And remember: you're doing a great work.

PAUSE & REFLECT:

Where am I most tempted to give attention to things that pull me away from what God has called me to do?

Circle. Lord, help me see distraction for what it is. Give me wisdom to discern and courage to stay focused.

Church. Father, protect Ironbridge from false opportunities or spiritual drift. Keep our eyes on what matters most.

City. Jesus, awaken people in our city to resist the pull of what doesn't matter and to discover the greater purpose found in following You.

STAY ON MISSION

“Now when all our enemies heard of it... they perceived that this work had been accomplished with the help of our God.” — Nehemiah 6:16

There’s something powerful about a person who doesn’t quit. Nehemiah faced wave after wave of opposition—rumors, manipulation, fear tactics, and even spiritual deception from someone claiming to speak for God. Yet through it all, Nehemiah stood firm. He didn’t flinch. He didn’t retaliate. He didn’t spiral. Instead, he whispered a simple but powerful prayer: “O God, strengthen my hands.” And then he kept building.

Sometimes the greatest victories aren’t dramatic or dazzling—they’re forged in quiet, gritty faithfulness. They come through showing up when it would be easier to give up. Through continuing the work when you don’t see immediate results. Through trusting God to do what only He can.

In just 52 days, the wall was completed. Not because the people had more skill, money, or manpower, but because they had unity, prayer, and God’s favor. They didn’t give in to distraction or defeat. They stayed focused. And when it was done, even their enemies had to admit: “This could only be the work of God.”

That’s our hope for Ironbridge. As we launch a school, pursue Above & Beyond generosity, and take bold steps of faith, may it be unmistakably clear: God did this. Not by our strength, but by His.

So if you’re tired, don’t quit. If it feels slow, stay faithful. What God starts, He finishes. And when His people stay the course, His glory is revealed.

PAUSE & REFLECT:

Where do I need to persevere in this season, trusting God to finish the work through me?

Circle. Lord, give me strength to keep going even when it’s hard. Help me trust You to complete what You’ve started.

Church. Father, unite Ironbridge Church in faith and focus. May every milestone point back to Your power and goodness.

City. Jesus, let the fruit of our labor in this city point people to the God who builds what lasts.

A HUNGER THAT TRANSFORMS

"They read from the book... clearly, and they gave the sense, so that the people understood the reading." - Nehemiah 8:8 (ESV)

After months of rebuilding walls, the people of Jerusalem realized they needed something more. Bricks could restore their city, but only God's Word could restore their hearts. So they gathered—not for entertainment or an emotional high—but for truth. They said, "Bring the Book," and when Ezra opened it, they listened. Not passively, but with hunger. The kind of hunger that led to clarity, conviction, and change.

Nehemiah 8:8 tells us they didn't just hear the Scriptures—they understood them. The leaders made it clear and gave it meaning. That's what made the difference: not just hearing, but grasping how God's truth applied to their lives.

And the same is true today. In a world full of noise, quick fixes, and spiritual shortcuts, God's Word is still the one voice that brings clarity. But it requires margin. It takes intentionality to sit down, open Scripture, and let it speak to your relationships, your decisions, your anxieties, your finances, and your future.

Maybe for you it's carving out time in the morning before the kids wake up. Maybe it's turning off a podcast and reading Proverbs on your lunch break. Maybe it's opening your Bible with your spouse or discussing the Sunday message with your kids.

Whatever it looks like, don't just skim it. Seek to understand it. Because when we make space for the Word, God reshapes everything.

Let's be people who still cry out, "Bring the Book," and then live like we believe it.

PAUSE & REFLECT:

Where in my life do I need to return to God's Word not just for answers, but for alignment?

Circle. Father, renew my hunger for Your voice. Help me open the Bible each day expecting You to speak—and change me.

Church. Lord, may Ironbridge be built on Your Word. Let the Bible shape our decisions, our direction, and our devotion.

City. Jesus, stir a hunger in our community for truth that sets people free. Use us to bring Your Word to those who are searching.

DAY FOURTEEN

STRANGE OBEDIENCE, UNSHAKEABLE JOY

“And all the assembly... made booths and lived in the booths... and there was very great rejoicing.” — Nehemiah 8:17 (ESV)

When the people read God’s Word, they realized they had been neglecting a feast God commanded—the Feast of Booths. So they responded with surprising obedience. They left the comfort of their homes, gathered branches, and built temporary shelters to live in for a week. It may have looked odd to outsiders, but it was an act of worship—one that reminded them of how God had provided for their ancestors in the wilderness.

Their response wasn’t casual—it was wholehearted. They didn’t just agree with God’s Word; they adjusted their lives to align with it.

That’s what real obedience looks like. Sometimes it seems countercultural. Choosing generosity in a time of financial pressure. Rearranging your schedule to make prayer a daily priority. Saying no to an activity that pulls your family away from spiritual growth. Taking bold steps to raise your kids with a biblical worldview, even when it’s not the easiest path. Obedience may not always make sense to the world—but faith doesn’t follow the crowd; it follows Christ.

And the result? “Very great rejoicing.” Joy didn’t come from comfort. It came from obedience.

When you live in obedience, your life becomes a living testimony—like a booth built in the public square, declaring: “God is faithful.” The world may not understand, but heaven rejoices.

Let’s be a people marked by joyful, even strange, obedience—because the joy of following Jesus is always worth it.

PAUSE & REFLECT:

What is one area of obedience that might look strange to others, but is worth it because God is calling me to it?

Circle. Jesus, give me courage to obey even when it looks unusual. Let my life be a living witness to Your faithfulness.

Church. Lord, may our generosity and sacrifice at Ironbridge point others to You. Let our obedience bring joy and revival.

City. Father, use our “booths”—our visible steps of faith—to show the watching world what it looks like to trust in You.

JOY LEADS TO REPENTANCE

“The Israelites stood and confessed their sins and the iniquities of their ancestors.”

— *Nehemiah 9:2*

True revival is more than emotion—it’s repentance. In Nehemiah 9, the people move from joyful celebration to humble confession. Fasting replaces feasting. Sackcloth replaces celebration. Why? Because when God’s Word truly sinks in, it doesn’t just inspire us—it convicts us. It opens our eyes to what needs to change.

After three hours of Scripture reading and three more in confession and worship, the people weren’t going through the motions. They were owning their sin and realigning their lives. Fasting said, “God, You have my full attention.” Sackcloth revealed that conviction mattered more than appearances. Dust on their heads symbolized deep humility. It wasn’t about looking spiritual—it was about being honest before God.

And they didn’t stop at personal sin. They confessed the failures of previous generations, saying, in essence, “This ends with us.” They weren’t blaming others. They weren’t offering excuses. They were clearing the rubble of sin so that God could rebuild something new.

This is the kind of heart posture God still responds to today.

As we go Above and Beyond—launching a school, expanding ministry, and reaching new families—it’s easy to focus on what’s exciting. But revival never begins with a spotlight. It begins in the shadows of honest confession. Before we ask God to do something great through us, let’s ask Him to do something deep within us.

Where do you need to repent, realign, and return to the Lord? Revival always begins there.

PAUSE & REFLECT:

What is one area in your life or in our church family that needs to be reoriented through repentance?

Circle. Pray for a heart that grieves over sin and is quick to repent. Ask God to help you lead others in grace-filled honesty.

Church. Pray that our church would be a place marked by humility, confession, and freedom, where revival is rooted in repentance.

City. Pray for a spiritual awakening in our city where hearts turn from self to Christ, beginning with us.

REMEMBER WHO HE IS

“But you are a forgiving God, gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love.” — Nehemiah 9:17

The Bible isn't just a collection of inspirational stories—it's a revelation of who God is and how He relates to His people. In Nehemiah 9, after a season of fasting and confession, the people respond not with despair, but with worship. Their prayer walks through generations of history—not to dwell on failure, but to magnify the mercy of God.

They remembered how God created all things, chose Abraham, parted the Red Sea, gave them the Law, fed them with manna, led them by cloud and fire, and forgave them time and time again. Even when they rebelled, God didn't abandon them. Their story wasn't about their consistency—it was about His.

This is the heart of true worship: not just learning new truths, but remembering old ones. Sometimes the most spiritual thing we can do is pause and remember where we've seen God's hand—through provision, forgiveness, protection, or calling. When we trace God's faithfulness in our story, our hearts are stirred toward gratitude, surrender, and praise.

So take time today to look back. How has God carried you? What has He brought your family or this church through? Worship deepens when we remember.

As we look ahead—launching a school, investing in future generations, and stepping out in faith—it's vital that we pause and remember: God has been faithful every step of the way. Our hope isn't in buildings, plans, or numbers. It's in the unchanging, holy, gracious God who is still writing our story today.

PAUSE & REFLECT:

What aspect of God's character are you most in awe of today, and how does it change the way you live?

Circle. Worship God for who He is. Ask Him to help you reflect His mercy, faithfulness, and truth to those around you.

Church. Pray that Ironbridge Church would be known for deep awe of God, our decisions, our vision, and our worship rooted in His character.

City. Pray that people in our city would not just hear about God but truly encounter Him through our lives and ministry.

WE BELONG TO GOD

“We make a firm agreement in writing... to obey carefully all the commands, ordinances, and statutes of the Lord our Lord.” — Nehemiah 10:29

After experiencing revival and renewal, the people of Israel faced a crucial decision: Would this moment mark a spiritual high that faded, or the beginning of lasting transformation? Nehemiah 10 reveals their answer: commitment. They didn’t just confess with emotion; they covenanted with intention. They signed their names to a renewed promise to live differently—as people who belonged to God and to one another.

Their first declaration was foundational: “We belong to God.” In Scripture, a covenant is far more than a contract—it’s a sacred, binding promise rooted in trust and sealed with sacrifice. By entering into this covenant, the people echoed the great covenants of the past (Abraham, Moses, David) and anticipated the New Covenant Jesus would establish by His blood. When we trust in Christ, we are no longer our own—we are His. That identity reorients our priorities, strengthens us in trials, and reminds us that even when we fall short, grace holds us fast.

Their second commitment was relational. They pledged not to marry those who didn’t follow God, not out of elitism, but for spiritual protection. They had seen firsthand how divided allegiances led their ancestors away from wholehearted devotion. In our world, the same principle still applies: our closest relationships either pull us toward God or away from Him. Whether it’s dating, marriage, or even deep friendships, we must ask: Do these relationships strengthen my walk with Christ, or subtly weaken it?

At Ironbridge, we’re entering a season of historic steps—launching a school, expanding our reach, and calling people to bold generosity. But it all starts here: a commitment to belong fully to Jesus. That’s what will anchor us, sustain us, and keep us unified as we follow His leading.

PAUSE & REFLECT:

Does your life reflect a deep sense of belonging to God and His people? What commitments might need to be renewed today?

Circle. Pray for a heart that says, “I belong to You, Lord.” Ask God to shape your relationships and your lifestyle around His love and truth.

Church. Pray that Ironbridge Church would be marked by unity, spiritual commitment, and Christ-centered relationships that reflect covenant love.

City. Pray that our community would see a different kind of belonging in us—one that welcomes, transforms, and points to Jesus.

OBEDIENCE OVER AMBITION

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

Spiritual renewal leads to practical response. After recommitting to God and His Word, the people of Israel didn't stop at confession—they carried their obedience into everyday life: how they worked, how they rested, how they related to others, and how they gave. They weren't content with good intentions. They wanted their lives to reflect their renewed hearts.

They began by aligning their values with God's truth. They promised not to buy or sell on the Sabbath—even when it would have been profitable. They committed to care for the poor and let the land rest every seven years. These weren't just symbolic gestures—they were costly, public declarations that God's way mattered more than personal gain. In a world obsessed with hustle and achievement, they chose obedience over ambition.

They also pledged to give generously, not out of surplus, but firstfruits. The best of their crops, income, and even livestock went to the Lord's work. Why? Because giving isn't just a financial decision; it's a spiritual one. Jesus said, "Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." Firstfruits giving declares, God, You're first. We trust You with the rest.

As Ironbridge Church continues to go Above and Beyond, we follow the same pattern. Not giving out of guilt or obligation, but from renewed hearts and eternal vision. When we sacrifice, we're not losing—we're investing in what lasts forever. Your generosity is shaping homes, impacting generations, and building something only God can complete.

PAUSE & REFLECT:

Is your faith being lived out in your work, your values, and your generosity? Where might God be calling you to take a bold next step?

Circle. Pray for a heart that honors God with your time, your money, and your lifestyle. Ask for grace to trust Him with every area.

Church. Pray that our church would model godly values and joyful generosity, not for show, but as worship to the One who gave everything for us.

City. Pray that our city would be transformed as God's people live out their faith with conviction, integrity, and compassion.

FAITHFULNESS FILLS THE CITY

“The people blessed all the men who willingly offered to live in Jerusalem.”

— *Nehemiah 11:2 (ESV)*

After revival and rebuilding, Nehemiah 11 marks a quieter but crucial moment in the story. The wall was complete. Worship had returned. The people had recommitted to God. But there was one problem: Jerusalem was still largely empty. It needed people—families, workers, priests, and worshipers—willing to move in and bring life back to the city.

So Nehemiah and the leaders set a plan: one out of every ten people would relocate to Jerusalem. Some were selected by lot. Others volunteered. And Scripture says, “The people blessed all the men who willingly offered to live in Jerusalem”(v. 2). These people didn’t do anything flashy. They simply said yes to where God was placing them, and that obedience mattered.

Nehemiah 11 reminds us that revival isn’t sustained by big moments alone, but by ordinary obedience. These names—buried in a list most of us skip over—represent people who quietly stepped into God’s plan without fanfare. They weren’t praised for accomplishments, but for availability. For showing up. For staying faithful.

In this season at Ironbridge, God may be calling you to do something similar. To move toward a place that feels less comfortable. To keep serving when no one notices. To give, stay, show up, or lead in ways that don’t make headlines—but do make a difference.

Your quiet yes matters. Your willingness to live where God plants you may not draw applause, but it draws His blessing. The city is still being built, and God is using people just like you to fill it with faithfulness.

PAUSE & REFLECT:

*Where has God placed me right now?
Am I willing to stay faithful, even when it
feels unseen or ordinary?*

Circle. Lord, help me see the purpose in the place You’ve planted me. Give me joy in faithfulness, even when no one else sees.

Church. Jesus, may Ironbridge be filled with people who say yes to serving, giving, teaching, leading, and living faithfully where You place them.

City. Father, as You fill our city, may homes, schools, and hearts come alive with faith. Use quiet obedience to build something lasting.

FROM CLEANSING TO CELEBRATION

“The priests and the Levites purified themselves; they also purified the people, the gates, and the wall... And the joy of Jerusalem was heard far away.” — Nehemiah 12:30, 43

Before the singing started and the instruments played... before the choirs marched on the wall and the people rejoiced—something crucial happened: they purified themselves. Nehemiah 12 shows us that before the public celebration came personal cleansing. The priests didn't skip this step. They purified themselves first, then the people, and even the physical structures they had built. Because they knew what we often forget—true joy begins with a clean heart.

We live in a culture that chases happiness but avoids holiness. We want the celebration without the surrender. But in God's design, real joy always follows repentance. It's not about pretending to have it all together—it's about bringing your brokenness to the One who can make you whole. First John 1:7 says, “The blood of Jesus... cleanses us from all sin.” Not some. All. That's what makes grace so powerful and joy so real.

And when God makes us clean, He also makes us glad. The people in Nehemiah's day didn't just keep their joy to themselves—it spilled out into the streets. Their worship was visible, vocal, and generous. They sang, they gave, and they celebrated with such passion that “the joy of Jerusalem was heard far away.”

That's the kind of joy we long for at Ironbridge—a joy that begins with repentance and erupts into worship. A joy that's heard in our homes, seen in our giving, and felt in our community. Cleansed people become joyful people. And joyful people become generous witnesses to the grace of God.

PAUSE & REFLECT:

Where have you settled for surface-level joy instead of the deep gladness that comes from being made clean?

Circle. Lord, cleanse my heart and restore my joy. May my worship and generosity reflect the freedom I've found in You.

Church. Father, purify our church and fill us with joy that overflows into worship, service, and generosity.

City. Jesus, let our community hear the sound of grace—lives made new, joy that can't be contained, and generosity that points to You.

OUR ULTIMATE HOPE

“Remember me, my God, for good.” — Nehemiah 13:31

After all the progress, prayer, and promises, Nehemiah’s story ends with heartbreak. The wall stood strong, but the people fell back into old patterns. The temple was misused.

The Sabbath was ignored. Foreign influence crept in. Nehemiah did everything a faithful leader could do, and still, it wasn’t enough. His final words, “Remember me, my God, for good,” feel less like a victory speech and more like a surrender.

It’s a sobering reminder: you can rebuild what’s around you and still be broken within. Nehemiah could restore walls, but he couldn’t restore hearts. He could lead with courage, but he couldn’t change lives. What the people needed wasn’t just a leader—they needed a Savior.

Centuries later, that Savior came. Jesus entered the very city Nehemiah helped rebuild—not to reinforce the wall, but to tear down the one separating us from God. On the cross, He cried, “It is finished.” Not a whisper of defeat, but a declaration of completed victory. And three days later, the tomb was empty. The resurrection became God’s answer to every unfinished story.

As we close these 21 days of prayer, seeking God’s power to launch a school, give above and beyond, and shape the future of Ironbridge Church, remember this: your prayers, your generosity, your leadership, and your faithfulness matter. But they cannot replace the finished work of Jesus. Only He can restore what’s broken, renew what’s dead, and revive what’s been lost.

So, keep building. Keep praying. Keep giving. But do it from a place of surrender, not striving, because only Jesus can do what Nehemiah couldn’t: make us new from the inside out.

PAUSE & REFLECT:

Where do you need to stop striving and start surrendering—trusting Jesus, not your effort, to bring resurrection and lasting change?

Circle. Pray for the humility to release control and trust fully in Jesus’ finished work, allowing Him to restore what feels lost in your life and influence.

Church. Ask God to keep Ironbridge centered on the gospel, that our hope and strength would be found not in ministry success or strategy, but in Christ alone.

City. Pray for those in our community who are striving to fix what only Jesus can heal. Ask God to open doors to share the hope of the resurrection with them.

AS WE LOOK FORWARD IN FAITH, LET’S GIVE, SERVE, AND CELEBRATE THE NEXT 40 YEARS OF WHAT GOD WILL DO THROUGH IRONBRIDGE!

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FORWARD TOGETHER: A FINAL WORD

For 21 days, we've sought God together—reflecting, repenting, rejoicing, and reorienting our hearts around what He's building at Ironbridge. We've journeyed through Nehemiah's story of revival, recognizing that the work God is doing among us is not just organizational—it's deeply spiritual.

We've seen that walls can be rebuilt, but only Jesus can rebuild hearts. That true strength isn't in strategy, but in surrender. That our future isn't secured by effort alone, but by the finished work of Christ.

Now, as we step into this next season—launching Ironbridge Christian Academy, giving above and beyond, and preparing to celebrate 40 years of God's faithfulness—we do so with clear eyes, full hearts, and unwavering trust in the God who still moves stones and raises dead things to life.

Let this be more than a prayer season—let it be a launching pad.

Let us be people of the wall and people of the cross.

Let us build what will outlast us.

Let us live with hearts fully surrendered, hands ready to serve, and voices lifted in praise.

We are the people of God, called to go above and beyond, because our Savior already did.

CLOSING PRAYER

HEAVENLY FATHER,

Thank You for meeting us in these 21 days of prayer. You've reminded us of who You are, of who we are in You, and of the great work You've called us to do—not by our strength, but by Your Spirit.

We lay our plans, our resources, our hopes, and our hearts before You.
We ask You to continue rebuilding what's been broken—within us and around us.
We surrender our sin, our shame, our striving—and receive Your grace.
May Your Word shape us, Your joy sustain us, and Your power work through us.

Bless Ironbridge Christian Academy.
Bless our Above and Beyond giving.
Bless the families, the students, the volunteers, the dreamers, and the faithful servants of this house.

And above all, Jesus, build Your Church—for Your glory, for the good of the next generation, and for the name above all names.

We are Yours.
Amen.

