

# BETHANY BIBLE STUDY & DISCUSSION



## NEHEMIAH CHAPTER 8 PART-8

KJV

9.03.2025

### BUILDING ON A STRONG FOUNDATION: GOD's WORD

**READING OF GOD's WORD (1-8):** How can we say there was hunger for God's Word? Who took the lead in reading God's Word? What was read to the people? Why was there a need for translation?

**RESPONSE TO GOD's WORD (9-12):** Did people understand the Word of God? What was the initial response to God's Word? How was the response changed?

**MORE OF GOD's WORD (13-18):** Who met for extended study in God's Word? What did they do in response to God's word? What was the result of such a response?

*REFLECTION*



# NEHEMIAH

## Chapter 8, Part-8

September 3, 2025



# READING & UNDERSTANDING OF GOD'S WORD (1-8)

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. <sup>2</sup> 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.

<sup>3</sup> 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.

<sup>4</sup> 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.

<sup>5</sup> 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: <sup>6</sup> 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.

<sup>7</sup> 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. <sup>8</sup> So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading.

# TIMING

Wall built in record time in 52 days (6:15)

People settled in the city (7:73)

Gathered together **as one** to celebrate the **feast of trumpets**, first day of the 7<sup>th</sup> month (1)

*Leviticus 23:24* Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, In the seventh month, in the first day of the month, shall ye have a sabbath, a memorial of blowing of trumpets, an holy convocation. <sup>25</sup> Ye shall do no servile work therein: but ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the Lord

# EZRA RETURNS IN NEHEMIAH 8

(AND NEHEMIAH TAKES A  
BACKSEAT UNTIL  
CHAPTER 12).

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## EZRA'S Ministry in EZRA 9 & 10

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Grieved by sin of unequally yoked  
marriages

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Ezra mourns with fasting and prayer

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Calls on people to repent and divorce  
their foreign wives who refuse to convert

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Most people obey leading to corporate  
repentance

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EZRA CHOSEN  
TO READ GOD'S  
WORD,  
NOT NEHEMIAH

Ezra, a scribe and priest.

Teaching was the focus of Ezra's ministry after he returned to Jerusalem

**Ezra 7:10** For Ezra had prepared his heart to seek the law of the Lord, and to do it, and to teach in Israel statutes and judgments.

Ezra would have been teaching upto the days leading to the rebuilding of the walls.

His teachings instrumental in Nehemiah's ability to secure cooperation of people in rebuilding efforts

# EZRA CHOSEN

Nehemiah knew teaching was Ezra's calling, and not his.

He did not cause confusion by trying to grab someone else's calling/ministry.

We should also abide in our calling!

*Mathew 7;21* Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. <sup>22</sup> Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? <sup>23</sup> And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.



# WHY WAS THERE A HUNGER FOR GOD'S WORD?

Word of God likely **neglected** during the rebuilding of walls

People would have **missed the spiritual nourishment** of God's word

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Psalm 42:1 “As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God”

**Do we also hunger for God's Word?** How much time do we devote to reading and studying God's Word?

# READING OF GOD'S WORD

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Location: around the water gate

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Read from an elevated pulpit of wood, specially prepared (infrastructure such as technology is important for effectively delivering God's Word)

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Surrounded by 13 Levites

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Read for about 6 hours

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Read from the book of Law (first 5 books of the Bible)

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People were attentive (sign of hungry and prepared hearts)

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People stood up (sign of reverence)

# BEFORE READING THE WORD

<sup>6</sup> 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.

Ezra blessed the Lord, the Great God!

People joined by saying “Amen”

People prayed by lifting hands

People bowed their heads and  
Worshipped

We must ‘prepare ourselves’ to meet the Lord and to hear from His Word.

# READING + UNDERSTANDING

Focus is on understanding the scriptures (2, 3, 7, 8, 12, 13)

13 Levites used to explain/communicate the Word

Law written in Hebrew under different historical context.  
(Aramaic language replaced Hebrew language after the captivity)

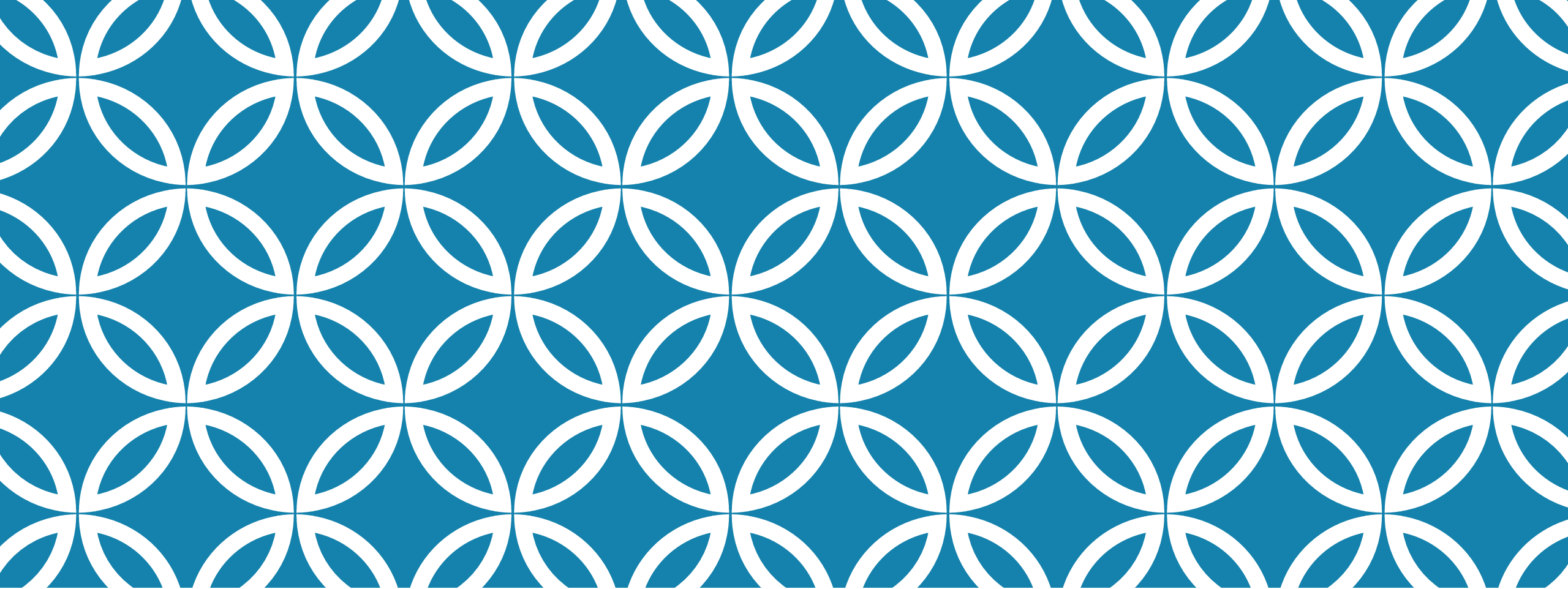
# READING + UNDERSTANDING

Reading without understanding IS NOT beneficial

Understanding without applying WILL NOT benefit us

**Philip and Eunuch** Acts 8:30 And Philip ran thither to him, and heard him read the prophet Esaias, and said, Understandest thou what thou readest? <sup>31</sup> And he said, How can I, except some man should guide me? ...<sup>38</sup> and he baptized him

**Road to Emmaus** Luke 24:27,<sup>32</sup> And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself. <sup>32</sup> And they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?



# RESPONSE TO GOD'S WORD

9-12

# RESPONSE TO GOD'S WORD

<sup>9</sup> 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. <sup>10</sup> 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.

<sup>11</sup> So the Levites stilled all the people, saying, Hold your peace, for the day is holy; neither be ye grieved. <sup>12</sup> 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.

RESPONSE TO  
GOD'S WORD

Weeping  
&  
Joy



# RESPONSE TO GOD'S WORD: WEEPING

FOR ALL THE PEOPLE WEPT,  
WHEN THEY HEARD THE WORDS  
OF THE LAW.

**WEEPING** triggered by conviction of sin

## GODLY SORROW

II Corinthians 7:10 For **godly sorrow worketh repentance** to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death.

# FEASTS ARE FOR REJOICING, NOT WEEPING

<sup>11</sup> SO THE LEVITES STILLED  
ALL THE PEOPLE, SAYING,  
HOLD YOUR PEACE, FOR  
THE DAY IS HOLY;  
NEITHER BE YE GRIEVED.

Feasts meant for community to come together, share, and celebrate, except the day of atonement

# HOW CAN WE REJOICE IN SIN?

Bible offers **HOPE** even in our sinful and fallen state

**Romans 5:20** But **where sin abounded**, grace did much more abound:

**ISAIAH 1:18** Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.

**I John 1:9** But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.

# TIME TO REJOICE!

Once we have  
repented and received  
forgiveness for sins

A light blue downward-pointing arrow with a subtle gradient, connecting the first box to the second.

we must not continue  
in guilt or regret

A light blue downward-pointing arrow with a subtle gradient, connecting the second box to the third.

it is time to REJOICE!

# WEEPING TURNED TO JOY

<sup>10</sup> 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.**

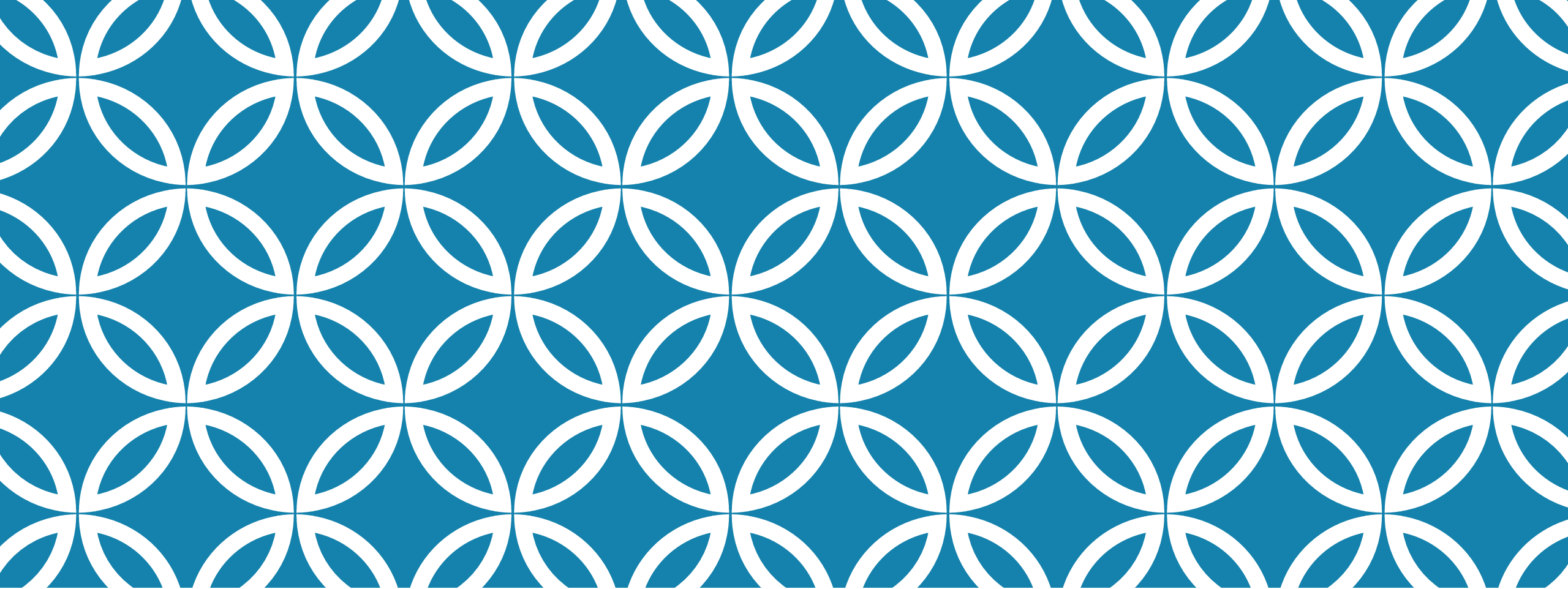
## UNDERSTANDING OF GOD'S WORD BRINGS JOY

<sup>12</sup> 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.

Went home to celebrate with joyful meal, share with with those who do not have!

IF WE DO NOT UNDERSTAND GOD'S WORD,

WE WILL NOT BE JOYFUL CHRISTIANS



# MORE OF GOD'S WORD

13-18

# MORE OF GOD'S WORD

<sup>13</sup> 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. <sup>14</sup> 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:

<sup>15</sup> 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. <sup>16</sup> 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.

<sup>17</sup> 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. <sup>18</sup> 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.

# MORE OF GOD'S WORD

The Gathering: The chief of the fathers of all the people, the priests, and the Levites

Purpose: To understand the words of the Law

Discovery: Need to celebrate 'festival of tabernacles' or 'feast of booths' to remember with gratitude God's presence and provision during wilderness journey

**Leviticus 23:42** Ye shall dwell in booths seven days; all that are Israelites born shall dwell in booths: <sup>43</sup> That your generations may know that I made the children of Israel to dwell in booths, when I brought them out of the land of Egypt:



# MORE OF GOD'S WORD

Set up booths in the roofs, courts of the house and house of God, and in the streets.

Sukkott (Booth) = temporary shelters (to remember time in wilderness)

Kept the feast for 7 days

Continued daily reading of God's Word and celebrated as instructed by the Word.

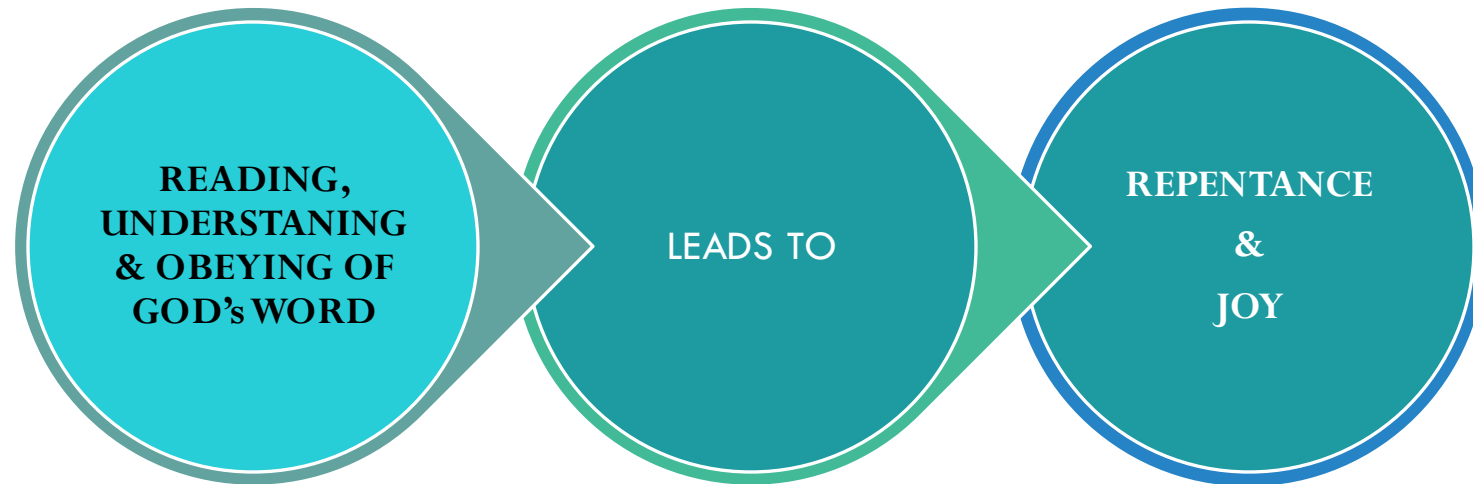
# GREAT GLADNESS

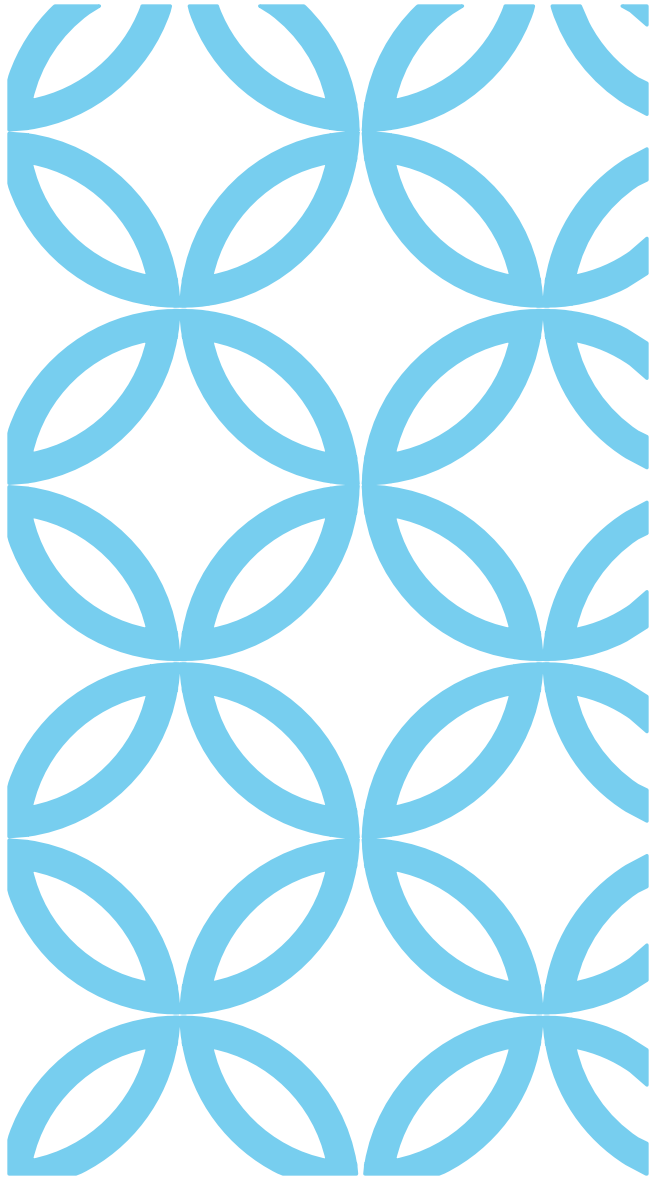
OBEYING GOD'S WORD LEADS TO 'GREAT GLADNESS' (17)

Word of God is profitable

(II Timothy 3:16 ... All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness)

# SPIRITUAL REVIVAL BEGINS





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# REFLECTIONS

# #1 WORD OF GOD IS AT THE HEART OF REVIVAL

## HOW DOES REVIVAL COME?

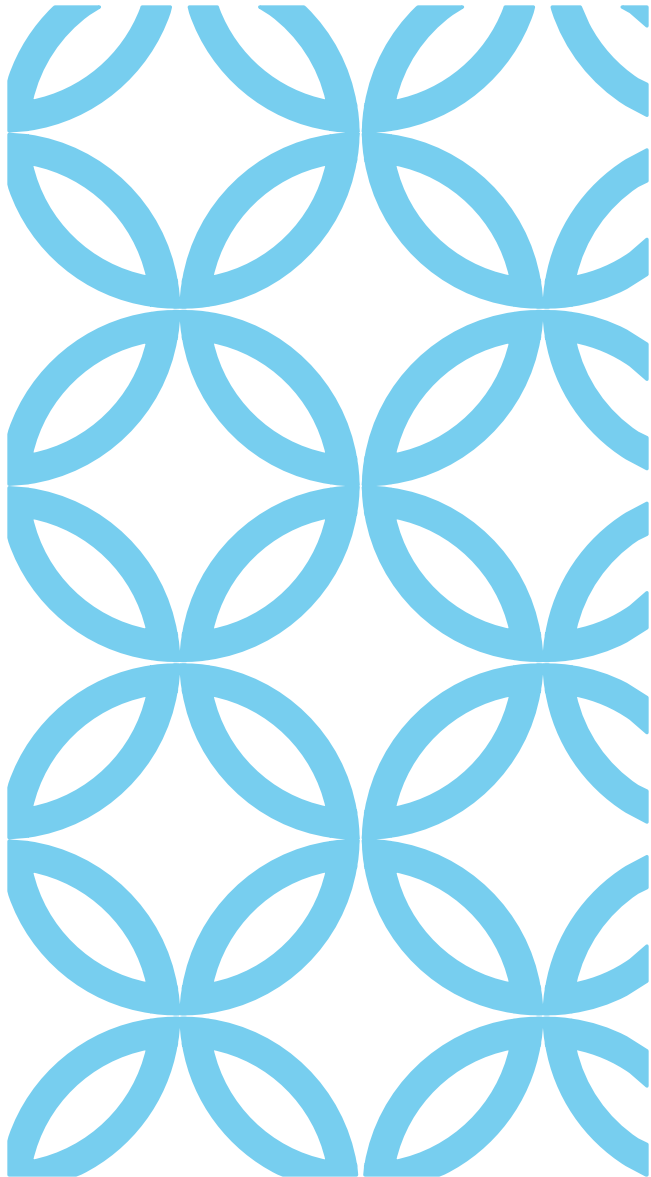
Not from grand man-made programs (Let us not be fooled by big crowds at “revival” meetings)

but Through prayer & Word of God

Only when hearts are touched is there a true revival

Only the Lord can touch our hearts

**Acts 2: 37** Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? <sup>38</sup> Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized. <sup>41</sup> Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls.

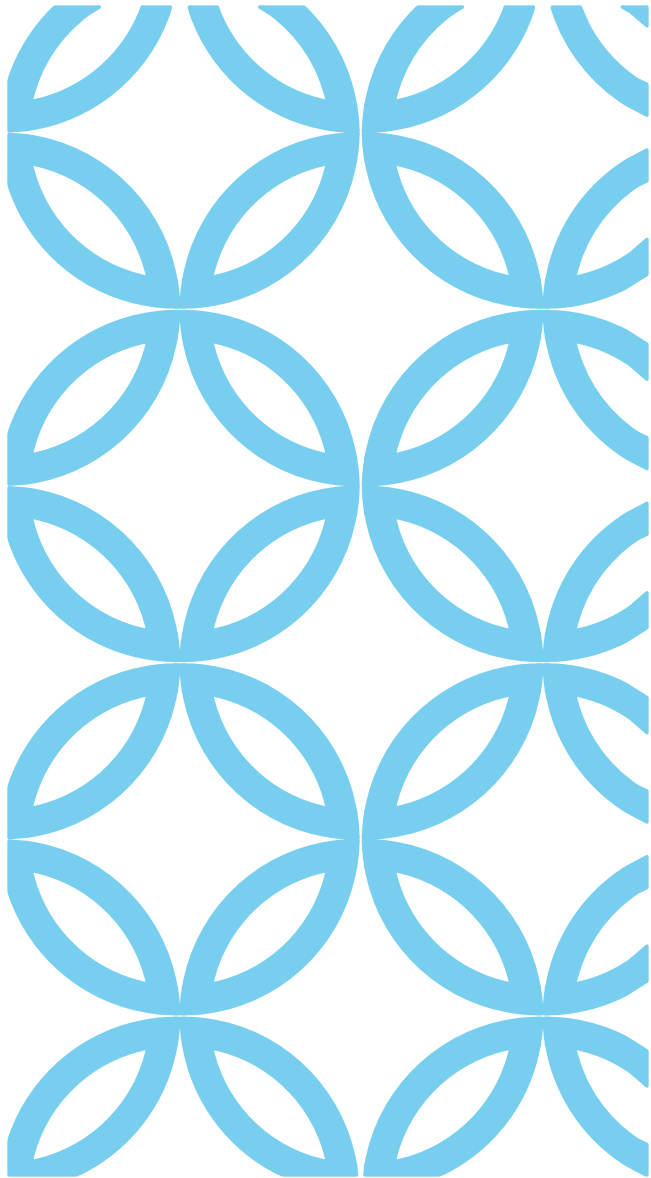


**Mathew 7:24** Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: <sup>25</sup> And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock.

A nation, family, an individual built on the word of God will not be shaken!

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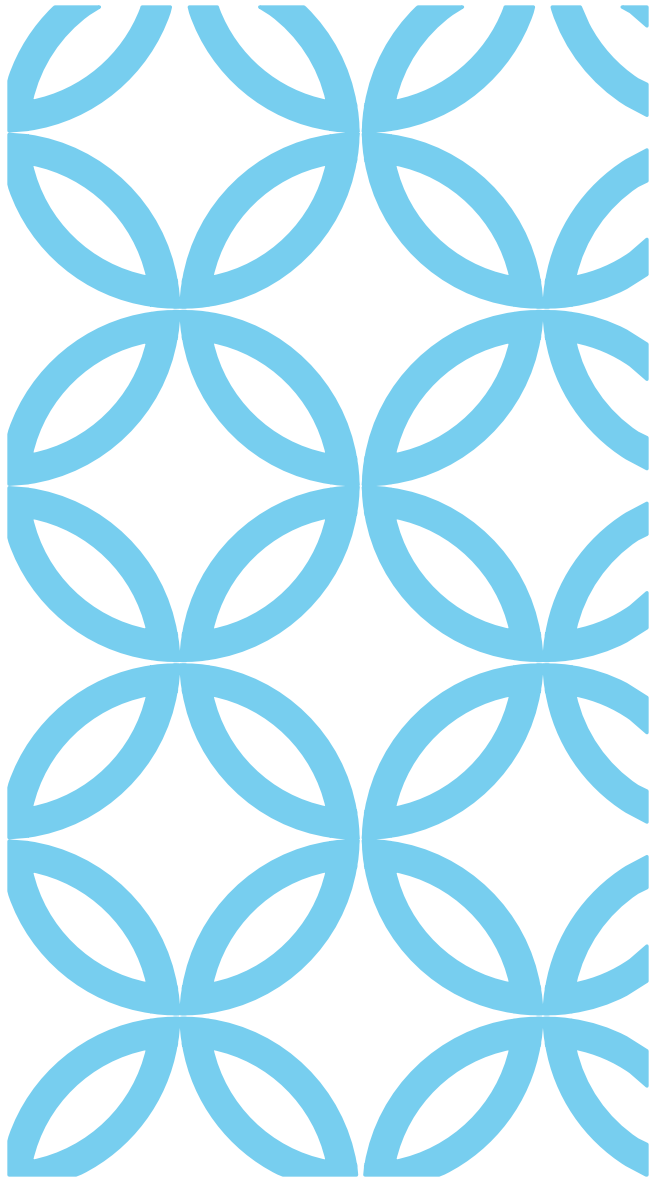
## #2 WORD OF GOD IS ESSENTIAL FOR STRONG FOUNDATION



Not to entertain but to edify  
Not to glorify self but glorify God  
To enable listeners to understand  
To speak the truth  
To connect passage to other passages  
To apply the truth to daily life  
To inspire listeners to obey  
To practice & believe, before preaching to others

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## #3 THE PREACHER'S ROLE



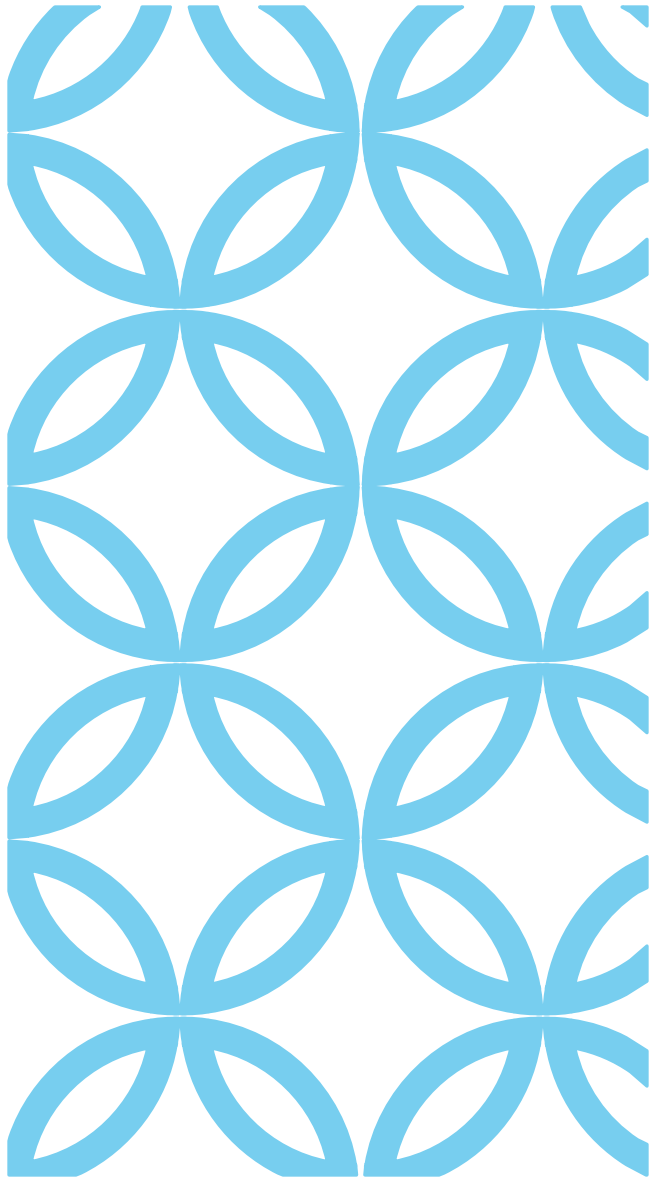
**I CORINTHIANS 2:1-7** And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. <sup>2</sup> For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified. <sup>3</sup> And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling. <sup>4</sup> And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, **but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power**: <sup>5</sup> That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God. <sup>6</sup> Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect: yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world, that come to nought: <sup>7</sup> But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory:

**I CORINTHIANS 1:23** But **we preach Christ crucified**, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness; <sup>24</sup> But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.

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## PREACHING ... PAUL'S EXAMPLE

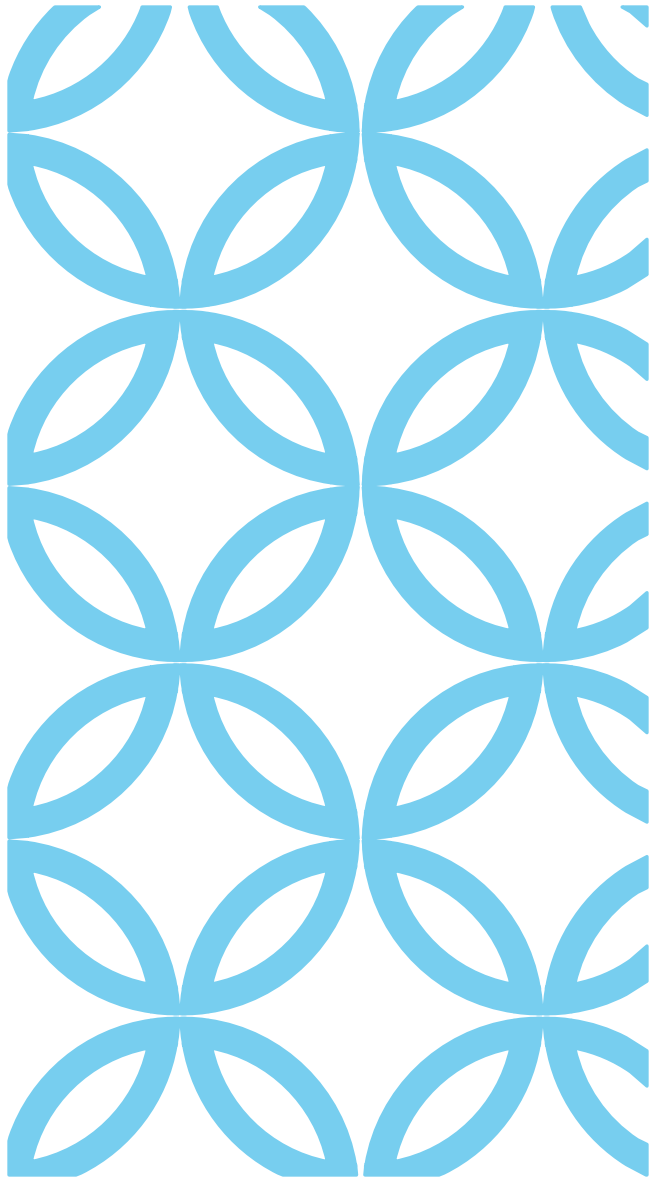




Isaiah 55:11 ... So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.

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**#4 WORD OF GOD WILL NOT BE IN  
VAIN**



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**#5 WHAT MUST WE DO WITH THE  
PRECIOUS WORD OF GOD?**