

Staying Renewed

A Week-Long
Follow-Up
Devotional Booklet
From Elevate 2010



ELEVATE 2010 is sponsored by the Central District
Student Ministries of the Evangelical Free Church of America



Monday, September 20

Last weekend we studied the life and leadership of Nehemiah. Mark Jones shared with us six steps to *Becoming a RENEWED Leader*. For the next six days we are going to look further at these six steps, spending one day on each step. The first step in becoming a RENEWED leader is to absorb God
absorbed

Review your notes from Session #1.

Ask God to absorb you with himself and his work as the writer of this Psalm was.

Read Psalm 84.

Think:

Have you ever been really, really hungry? Have you ever been so hungry that you started to see shake or feel faint? Think about what that was like. Now, the psalmist is so absorbed with God that he starts to feel faint when he is deprived of spending time with God (vv. 1-2). How do you think the psalmist came to this place of total absorption with God?

What three types of people does the psalmist pronounce blessing upon in verses 4, 5, and 12?

pilgrimage is a long journey to a sacred place. Nehemiah was absorbed with the

What pilgrimage have you felt God stirring your heart toward?

absorbed yourself with God to the point that you are willing to give up temporary earthly comforts in order to obtain eternal rewards which can never be lost? (See Hebrews 11:32-40.)

Write down some practical ways you can get started on your pilgrimage as you pray through this Psalm.



Saturday, September 26

Last weekend we saw that even though Nehemiah was criticized on his path to out to God. And after all of this he decided to keep going for it. How easy is it for you to quit? Do you persevere through difficulties or do you crumble?

Review your notes from Session #3.

Ask God for the courage and strength to keep going for it as you follow his path in becoming a RENEWED leader.

Read Revelation 2:8-11.

Think:

Jesus is commending the church in the ancient city of Smyrna for their perseverance in terrible hardship. They kept going for it. Who does Jesus mention as the real culprit behind their persecution (v. 10)? How do you think these believers had the strength to endure such difficult testing?

Times like these believers in Smyrna were facing make people think about what they really believe about life, faith, and God. When you step out in faith and

cult. As you honestly look at yourself, do you think your faith, tenacity, and commitment to God will sustain you through times of criticism, disappointment, and persecution? Why or why not?

What is the result of deciding to keep going for it even in the midst of difficulties? (See Romans 5:3-
may experience for Jesus as we seek to lead cannot compare to what is in store for us in eternity?

Meditate on Hebrews 12:1-3. Quietly repeat it to yourself. Think on it deeply. Apply it to the leadership destiny you sense God has for you.

Go forth in faith and obedience as a RENEWED leader.



Friday, September 24

Last weekend we saw how Nehemiah was treated when he decided to move forward with criticism from doubters, mockers, complainers, saboteurs, and old sour curmudgeons. His first response was to vent his frustrations to God. We see this venting quite often in the Psalms. Is our first response to get sour? To get angry? To quit? Or to get real with God?

Review your notes from Session #3.

Ask God to unpack any bottled-up doubts, fear, anger, or other emotions that you need to express to him.

Read Psalm 6.

Think:

stances as expressed in this poem? Have you ever vented like this to God? Why or why not?

We saw yesterday that if you decide to go for it, there could be great blessing and victory. But there is also likely to be criticism. Honestly, what could be the downside of going for it? What might people say or do to discourage you? What are they already saying or doing to discourage you? What is holding you back?

Why do we sometimes hesitate to be open with God about how we really feel in vent about to God?

Read Matthew 26:36-44. Here we see Jesus venting to God and his disciples about the intense sorrow he is experiencing. Does it surprise you to see Jesus being this honest and emotional? If Jesus can be this honest about his pain, vent to God as well?

Write your own psalm to God venting to him exactly how you think and feel about the circumstances you find yourself in as you seek to be a leader. This could include bottled-up emotions, hidden sin, regret, or even doubts about God.



Tuesday, September 21

pray focused things that God is most concerned about? Nehemiah prayed about these things and became a RENEWED leader.

Review your notes from Session #1.

Ask that God would focus your prayers and the burdens of your heart on the things that are most important to him.

Read Luke 11:1-13.

Think:

Jesus tells us his priorities for focused prayer in verses 2-

much of your prayer time is spent focusing on what you want? Have you ever thought about praying focused -13).

than anything else. What do you need most in this life, really? What are you praying focused on these things, or are your prayers simply mindless repetitions of the same, boring things? (See Matthew 6:7-8.)

Though Jesus was perfect, he showed us that asking forgiveness from God and forgiving others is a high priority, as is staying away from temptation (v. 4). Is there some habitual, repetitive sin in your life that may be an obstacle keeping

sin that is breaking your prayer focus? What should you do? (See 1 John 1:9.)

In what ways can God be compared to the man in the house in verses 5-8? In what ways can God be contrasted to him? What does this tell you about praying focused?

Write down those things God has brought to your mind that you should be praying about the most.

Practice praying focused on those things.



Wednesday, September 22

happened, instead of getting anxious and panicked he sought to be still. Today we are going to see another leader in the Bible who faced a situation where he

do? Get stressed out? Panic? Or simply be still?

Review your notes from Session #2.

Ask that God would settle your heart and help you to be still in the stormy times of leadership.

Read 2 Chronicles 20:1-12.

Think:

keeping you from being still right now? What did Jehoshaphat do with this fear?

find there that can help you to be still during stormy times of leadership?

In verses 6-

about to help you to be still in the difficult situation you may be facing? (For example, see Psalm 46.)

Jehoshaphat admitted before God and the people that he did not know what to do (v. 12). This takes humility. Do you try to plow through difficult situations on your own? How does God use difficult circumstances in our lives? (See Hebrews 12:7-11.)

Write down the situation or obstacle that is keeping you from being still right now.

Practice silently being still before God for the next 15 minutes.



Thursday, September 23

people from an invading army. Last weekend we saw when Nehemiah faced

he first practiced being still before God, and then he made the decision to go for it anyway. In the process, God was making him a RENEWED leader.

Review your notes from Session #2.

Ask God to give you the courage to go for it in leadership even when

Read 2 Chronicles 20:13-30.

Think:

In leadership, to whom does the battle really belong (v. 15)? How will this fact influence your leadership?

-17 that he gave them a command and a promise, but he did not tell them the details of how his plan would work. Why do you think God left out the details? (See Matthew 14:22-33 for another example of being obedient without having all the details.)

Go for it the details worked out perfectly? If not, what should you do? What did Jehoshaphat do?

and obedient and going for it? What could be the payoff for your obedience in the situation in which God is calling you to step out and go for it?

Write down the specific next step you sense God is calling you to take in your leadership journey.

Commit to going for it will work out yet.

