



Ezra ... Preparing for God's Purposes

NorthRidge Church

Dr. M. David Myers

September 13, 2026

For Ezra had set his heart to study the Law of the Lord, and to do it and to teach his statutes and rules in Israel. – Ezra 7:10 ESV

This life-changing sequence mirrors the biblical mandate of Ezra, who set his heart to study, practice, and teach God's law. Preparation precedes purpose; you cannot give what you do not possess. When internal devotion aligns with external obedience, personal transformation naturally explodes into public impact.

God at Work ...

- I. _____ (Ezra 7:1-10)
Cp. Prov. 4:23; Ps. 119:10; Daniel 1:8; 2 Tim. 2:15; Ja. 1:22

- II. _____ (Ezra 7:11-26)
Cp. Ezra 1:1; 6:22; Prov. 21:1; 2 Cor. 9:8; Phil. 4:19; Rom. 8:28

- III. _____ (Ezra 7:27-28)
Cp. Prov. 3:3-4; Ezra 7:6, 9; Ps. 5:12

So What ...

- Set your _____ on the Word of God
- Determine to move from _____ to _____
- Let _____ what He is Teaching You
- Never underestimate _____
- Learn to _____ and _____ God's Hand

Appointment with God – Prayer Focus

How do you handle deep and personal prayer needs? Possibly a loved one who is a drug addict, an estranged adult child, or ongoing financial issues. God gives us two powerful strategies.

STRATEGY 1: Pray for God to change hearts. The deepest prayer needs are often caused by ignoring principles and relationship laws set forth by God. Changes in our behavior CAN be made by willpower and effort. However, the behaviors that heal relationship distress are only maintainable if there has been a HEART change. If we don't love the priorities God sets for our relationships, we don't maintain them. Pray that we HEAR the Lord's voice and turn to Him. Pray He blesses us by turning us away from our iniquities. [Acts 3:19-26] Pray for a new heart and a new spirit. [Ez. 36:26]

STRATEGY 2: Fight and contend for faith when your hope falters. [1 Tim. 6:12, Jude 3] Contend for your faith by meditating on the works of the Lord. Meditating on God's works brings our focus to God's POWER, His LOVE, His FAITHFULNESS! [Is. 46:9, Ps. 143:5]

A Story That Illustrates Both Strategies...

Years ago, a NorthRidge family was fully active in the life of the church. Their lives appeared to be picture-perfect until the adult son was arrested for drugs and other charges. The parents met the devastating news with grief, and with faith and prayer. They did all they could, including paying for several rehab treatments. Their son continued to self-destruct, going down the path of drug use, theft, and other offenses. Rehab, jail, family interventions provided no changes. Church and God didn't interest him. The parents made the tough-love decision to tell their son that he could no longer come home.

Several years later, the father died. The son couldn't attend the funeral because he was in jail. Time passed. The son asked to come home. "I have changed, Mom." Initially, the mom told him no but later opened the door for his homecoming. The son sat in his dad's recliner reading the Bible and crying for nine months. He started going to the church that wasn't good enough for him earlier and started teaching the SS class for elderly men. He loved the men and they loved him. This was the Lord's doing! His life had TRULY turned around. What a powerful testimony of God's love!

1. It is THE LORD who changes hearts and draws us close to Him.
2. Remembering what God has done strengthens our faith for today!

CHALLENGE: Examine YOUR Hard Thing.

- What is it that only God can do? How is He leading you to pray?
- What stories and testimonies can strengthen your faith and endurance to pray and not give up hope while God works?



Ezra ... Preparing for God's Purposes

NorthRidge Church

Dr. M. David Myers

September 13, 2026

For Ezra had set his heart to study the Law of the Lord, and to do it and to teach his statutes and rules in Israel. – Ezra 7:10 ESV

This life-changing sequence mirrors the biblical mandate of Ezra, who set his heart to study, practice, and teach God's law. Preparation precedes purpose; you cannot give what you do not possess. When internal devotion aligns with external obedience, personal transformation naturally explodes into public impact.

God at Work ...

I. Preparation (Ezra 7:1-10)

Cp. Prov. 4:23; Ps. 119:10; Daniel 1:8; 2 Tim. 2:15; Ja. 1:22

II. Providence (Ezra 7:11-26)

Cp. Ezra 1:1; 6:22; Prov. 21:1; 2 Cor. 9:8; Phil. 4:19; Rom. 8:28

III. Praise (Ezra 7:27-28)

Cp. Prov. 3:3-4; Ezra 7:6, 9; Ps. 5:12

So What ...

- Set your **Heart** on the Word of God
- Determine to move from **Information** to **Obedience**
- Let **God Use** what He is Teaching You
- Never underestimate **Preparation**
- Learn to **Trust In** and **Depend Upon** God's Hand

Appointment with God – Prayer Focus

How do you handle deep and personal prayer needs? Possibly a loved one who is a drug addict, an estranged adult child, or ongoing financial issues. God gives us two powerful strategies.

STRATEGY 1: Pray for God to change hearts. The deepest prayer needs are often caused by ignoring principles and relationship laws set forth by God. Changes in our behavior CAN be made by willpower and effort. However, the behaviors that heal relationship distress are only maintainable if there has been a HEART change. If we don't love the priorities God sets for our relationships, we don't maintain them. Pray that we HEAR the Lord's voice and turn to Him. Pray He blesses us by turning us away from our iniquities. [Acts 3:19-26] Pray for a new heart and a new spirit. [Ez. 36:26]

STRATEGY 2: Fight and contend for faith when your hope falters. [1 Tim. 6:12; Jude 3] Contend for your faith by meditating on the works of the Lord. Meditating on God's works brings our focus to God's POWER, His LOVE, His FAITHFULNESS! [Is. 46:9; Ps. 143:5]

A Story That Illustrates Both Strategies...

Years ago, a NorthRidge family was fully active in the life of the church. Their lives appeared to be picture-perfect until the adult son was arrested for drugs and other charges. The parents met the devastating news with grief, and with faith and prayer. They did all they could, including paying for several rehab treatments. Their son continued to self-destruct, going down the path of drug use, theft, and other offenses. Rehab, jail, family interventions provided no changes. Church and God didn't interest him. The parents made the tough-love decision to tell their son that he could no longer come home.

Several years later, the father died. The son couldn't attend the funeral because he was in jail. Time passed. The son asked to come home. "I have changed, Mom." Initially, the mom told him no but later opened the door for his homecoming. The son sat in his dad's recliner reading the Bible and crying for nine months. He started going to the church that wasn't good enough for him earlier and started teaching the SS class for elderly men. He loved the men and they loved him. This was the Lord's doing! His life had TRULY turned around. What a powerful testimony of God's love!

1. It is THE LORD who changes hearts and draws us close to Him.
2. Remembering what God has done strengthens our faith for today!

CHALLENGE: Examine YOUR Hard Thing.

- What is it that only God can do? How is He leading you to pray?
- What stories and testimonies can strengthen your faith and endurance to pray and not give up hope while God works?