



# PRAYER CALENDAR

## **MONDAY / FEB. 18**

**READ:** Nehemiah 4:14

**PRAY:** Father, help me to be aware of the opposition that we face in serving you but help me also to be aware that you are great and glorious, and that you give me the strength to fight for my family and my city.

## **TUESDAY / FEB. 19**

**READ:** Titus 2:7-8

**PRAY:** Help me to always act according to your teaching. Help me to be above reproach in all that I do and serve you as an example to everyone in every circumstance.

## **WEDNESDAY / FEB. 20**

**READ:** Proverbs 3:5-8

**PRAY:** Even when things are difficult, help me to be faithful in seeking you first, and help me to trust increasingly every day in your wisdom and not my own.

## **THURSDAY / FEB. 21**

**READ:** Hebrews 6:11-12

**PRAY:** God, show me how to love others, in good times and in bad times. Keep my spirit aware of your leading and show me others around me who are good examples of faith in you, and of endurance in their walk.

## **FRIDAY / FEB. 22**

**READ:** Galatians 6:9-10

**PRAY:** Father, give me your strength and an endurance that overcomes every obstacle. Help me to look ahead to your promises and be an example of love and generosity to all.

# DRIVE IT HOME

*What did you learn about facing challenges from Nehemiah's life? Try to come up with as many synonyms for "endurance" as you can in 60 seconds. What makes you first think of giving up on a project? What inspires you to endure?*

## **Discuss as a Family:**

Nehemiah had to overcome obstacles and challenges as he worked to fulfill his God-sized dream. There are many obstacles and challenges that we can face as a family when trying to be generous with our time and money.

- What does it mean to be generous? Look up the definition of generosity.
- What is easy for you or your family to be generous with?
- What is hard for you or your family to be generous with?
- What are some obstacles we face with showing generosity with our time and money?
- What are ways we are already generous with our time and money?
- As a family, what are some specific ways we can be more generous with our time and money?

**Photo Shoot:** Take a photo of your family and post it to social media using #unimaginable and share how your family plans to be more generous.

## **Prayer:**

Lord, Help us endure in your mission even when it is hard.

## **When... Not If**

The question isn't if you'll face hardship. It's just a matter of when, what, and how the challenges will present themselves.

Even when you have engaged in a God-honoring mission, you should expect to encounter someone or something that opposes you.

Jesus is our example of staying true to the most important mission even when Satan put obstacles and temptations in front of him. Because he endured, he is able to aid us when we face hardships.

Say a bold, "Yes!" as you partner with God in his mission. Plan for opposition to come and trust Jesus to help you stay on course.

# LIFE GROUP STUDY

**Series Big Idea:** When Jerusalem’s city walls were crumbling and the hearts of the people were failing, God raised up a group of determined believers. Through Nehemiah’s story, we learn that when we stay united on a mission with a spirit of endurance, the results are oftentimes unimaginable.

**Pull Together.** Even the work of God faces obstacles. When you partner with God for his mission in our generation, don’t be surprised by how intense the challenges are. Tell the others about a time you nearly gave up in the face some great challenge but chose to persevere. Who encouraged you? What adjustments did you make to accomplish the task?

## Reflect on the Biblical Story

## Nehemiah 4:6-15

What do you learn about the workers in Nehemiah 4:6 as they reached the mid-way point of their work?

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In what forms did the opposition seek to undermine the rebuilding of the walls and gates? (See verses 4:1-3, 7-9, and 11.) How did Nehemiah respond to this challenge (see verses 4:4-5, 9)?

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What adjustments were made to address the opposition (Neh. 4:9, 13)? What does this say about the leaders' and people's determination to complete the restoration of the walls?

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What motivated the people to stay on task with the project in spite of opposition they faced (Neh. 4:14)?

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**Discuss together these implications:**

- Great projects will surely experience opposition from somewhere. Plan for opposition!
- The significance of our investment in God's work, whether financial or physical, is not diminished by opposition. Hold on to the dream!
- When opposition arises, a few wise adjustments can keep the dream on track. Embrace the adjustments!

## Responding to God's Story

1. What kind of motivation and encouragement is most beneficial to you when you are starting a project? What kind of motivation is most beneficial in the middle or end of a long project?

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2. Have you considered that your commitment to the God-sized dream should prompt sacrifice at some level in your lifestyle as well as your bank account? How can you increase your sacrifice in an effort to complete God's mission? Pray about making your best possible commitment.

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3. How have you been responding to the opposition (from outside and inside) that is threatening your commitment to God's mission?

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**Prayer:** Lord, you are not discouraged or surprised by the opposition we face. Help me stay committed to the mission of helping people find their way back to you, even when it is hard. Help us to make a courageous faith commitment to the mission you have for First Christian.