



## RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD – April 29

**Nehemiah 8:13–18 (ESV)** — 13 On the second day the heads of fathers' houses of all the people, with the priests and the Levites, came together to Ezra the scribe in order to study the words of the Law. 14 And they found it written in the Law that the LORD had commanded by Moses that the people of Israel should dwell in booths during the feast of the seventh month, 15 and that they should proclaim it and publish it in all their towns and in Jerusalem, "Go out to the hills and bring branches of olive, wild olive, myrtle, palm, and other leafy trees to make booths, as it is written." 16 So the people went out and brought them and made booths for themselves, each on his roof, and in their courts and in the courts of the house of God, and in the square at the Water Gate and in the square at the Gate of Ephraim. 17 And all the assembly of those who had returned from the captivity made booths and lived in the booths, for from the days of Jeshua the son of Nun to that day the people of Israel had not done so. And there was very great rejoicing. 18 And day by day, from the first day to the last day, he read from the Book of the Law of God. They kept the feast seven days, and on the eighth day there was a solemn assembly, according to the rule.

**Read & Examine** – In your own words, what is the main idea of this *passage*? Of the *sermon*?

**Apply** – Consider how God intends to use his Word to shape *your* heart and life now.

- What does it mean to *respond* to God's Word?
- Why and where do you resist change? What are you afraid change will cost you?
- Would you engage the Bible differently if you became more convinced it was essential for daily life and joy? What expectations would you have reading it each day?
- Can you relate to settling for pious "hearing" of God's Word instead of joy-filled "doing"?
- Think of how you use your time, money and relationships. Do you live more aligned with God's revealed means for experiencing joy and satisfaction, or by your own methods?
- The Israelites took intentional action to obey God's Word (v.16) in this passage. Is there something you need to "go out" to do with a heart of gospel-motivated obedience?
- What help do you need to do that?

**Pray** – Approach the Father in confidence in Christ, confessing what you lack, asking for what you need, and waiting on him to respond.