

GOD HELP US FIGHT OUR ENEMIES!

Ezra 4

PAT NEMMERS

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The questions below are designed to be used by Saylorville Church Community Groups as they meet during the week following the Sunday morning message at Saylorville. The intent is not for groups to answer every question, but for leaders to use the questions as a guide as they tailor the discussion to the unique needs of their group. The Sunday message and these questions can be found each week at www.saylorvillechurch.com/sermons.

CONNECT WITH YOUR GROUP (10-15 MINUTES)

- Do you love history? What are some of your favorite stories from the history books?
- Ezra is a historical book that points readers ahead to Jesus. For context, remember this simple outline of the Book of Ezra:
 - Ezra Chapter 1-6: The first return. Led by Zerubbabel. The Temple foundation was laid. ~ 536 BC
 - Ezra Chapter 7-10: The second return. Led by Ezra. Spiritual life was restored. ~ 458 BC

APPLY THE BIBLE (45-60 MINUTES)

- **Remember** what you talked about last time. Is there anything you need to **follow up** on this week?
- **Review** your Sermon Notes together. What is **one thing** that sticks out to you about what you learned?
- **Read** this week's passage together. In his message, **Pastor Pat taught us how to respond when opposition rises up against us.**

Intro:

- Pastor Pat said, "Whenever I take a stand for God, Satan will take his stand against me." Can you think of a time when you stood up for truth, did what was right, or followed Jesus and you faced opposition? What kind of opposition was that? How did you respond in the face of opposition?

What and How to Fight as a Christian:

1. **Fight compromise with conviction (Ezra 4:1-3)**

- As a group, can you think of some areas in which Christ followers might be tempted to compromise? What are some passages you could refer to in order to speak to those issues?
- What are some theological areas that are core to our beliefs at Saylorville? Why is it important to be unified in these specific areas?

2. **Fight your enemy as a conqueror (Ezra 4:3)**

- Enemies come in all varieties. What are some enemies you are struggling to defeat right now?
- Christ's resurrection gives us assurance that we can overcome our enemies with His strength (see Romans 8:37). If we are conquerors, why does it seem like we so often fail?

3. **Fight the lies of man with the Truth of God (Ezra 4:4-5)**

- In this passage, the enemies of God's people were able to "discourage" them (literally, "weaken their hand") through their words. As a group, look at Proverbs 15:4; 15:4; 18:21 and talk about the importance of how we use our words.
- Read Proverbs 14:15. Are you prone to believe everything you read on social media, hear on the news, or are told by someone around you? What might you do to combat this in the future?

4. **Fight the fear of man with the fear of God (4:24)**

- Vs. 24 shows us that the fear of man won over against the fear of God. The work on the walls, the city, and the temple stopped abruptly. Can you think of some areas of growth that God wants you to take, but are afraid to take? What if you took your eyes off your enemies and put them on God?

PRAY TOGETHER (5-15 MINUTES)

- Pray that your group would identify your enemies, and then fight them with God's strength together!

