



# WEDNESDAY EVENING

## AT BETHANY BAPTIST CHURCH

**Title:** Frustrated Purpose

**Passage:** Ezra 4:1-5

**Speaker:** Associate Pastor David Wood

**Introduction:** Ever been frustrated when something suddenly stops your progress, a broken gas pump, a frozen screen, bad directions, or unclear instructions? You're moving forward, and then everything halts. Spiritually, life can feel the same way. Just when things start to grow and God is moving, something steps in to disrupt it. That's exactly what we see in Ezra chapter 4: momentum, purpose, and then opposition. Tonight, we'll look at three truths from this passage to help us keep moving forward when our purpose gets frustrated.

### I. The Enemy's Subtle Offer (Verses 1-2)

God already tells us who our adversaries are, but they do not show up acting like enemies. They show up acting like friends.

Just because somebody talks about God does not mean they are walking with God.

*"And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light." (2 Corinthians 11:14)*

The enemy does not always show up looking dark. Sometimes he looks helpful, spiritual, and just like the answer you were hoping for.

*"Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God..." (1 John 4:1)*



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If the enemy can slip in at the very beginning, he can affect everything that gets built.

## **II. The Leaders Reject Compromise (Verse 3)**

You cannot protect what God is building by compromising what God has said.

*“Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord...” (2 Corinthians 6:17)*

Sometimes the most spiritual thing you can do is refuse to come down.

A lot of fresh starts get messed up. Not because somebody did something really bad, but because they were afraid to say no when they needed to.

*“Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.” (James 4:7)*

## **III. The Enemy’s Relentless Pressure (Verses 4-5)**

If the enemy cannot get inside the work, he will try to wear you down from the outside.

*“And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.” (Galatians 6:9)*

Most believers are not taken out by one big moment. They are worn down over time.

It is not usually the big storm that destroys something. It is the slow, constant erosion. Water dripping over time can wear down solid rock. That is how the enemy often works.

*“Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour.” (1 Peter 5:8)*



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The danger is not usually that you will suddenly rebel against God. The danger is that you will quietly quit.

**Conclusion:** Some of you started strong. You had a fresh start. God was doing something in your life. There was momentum. There was purpose. But somewhere along the way, the wrong voice got too close. A line did not get drawn. And now the pressure has worn you down. The enemy has not changed. But neither has God.

*“Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it...” (Philippians 1:6)*

What God started, He is still able to sustain. But you must guard what He is building. You must separate from what does not belong. You must refuse to quit when the pressure comes. Do not let a frustrated season become a finished work. Get back to the foundation. Get your focus back on God. Draw the line where it needs to be drawn. Take the next step forward. Because what God is building in your life is worth fighting through the frustration.



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**Prayer Focus for Tonight:**

**1. Pray for Discernment**

Help me recognize what is not from You

Help me identify subtle compromise

Keep me sensitive to Your Spirit

**2. Pray for Courage**

Give me strength to say no when needed

Help me stand firm without fear

Help me choose obedience over comfort

**3. Pray for Endurance**

Help me keep going when I feel discouraged

Help me not quit when progress is slow

Help me trust Your timing