

Restoring Foundations

Restoring Resolve: Ezra 4:1-24

This Bible study lesson is developed to use in preparation for Pastor Jared's sermon on Ezra Chapter 4.

1. From Pastor Jared's sermon on Chapter 3, what are the things we need to put first in order to be restored?
2. Read Ezra 4:1-2 with 2 Kings 17:21-33. *Note: The enemies of Judah are believed to be the people of Samaria.* What is the history of those living in Samaria? What were their beliefs? Why were they described as enemies and why were they interested in rebuilding the temple?
3. Read Ezra 4:3-4 and 2 Kings 17:34-41. How did Zerubbabel respond to the offer of help? What reason would Zerubbabel have for his response? How does the reaction to being excluded reveal the Samaritan's unworthiness to participate?
4. Read 2 Corinthians 6:3 & 6:14-18. What is the context of Paul's teaching not to be yoked with unbelievers? What does it mean for believers not to be yoked to unbelievers? What is a present-day example of the request and reaction that Zerubbabel received? In what things do you think God is calling the church to remain separate from the world? What are the consequences if we do not?
5. Read Ezra 4:5 & 24. From the chart below, how long did the people of Judah experience the initial opposition? What was the result of that opposition? What do you think made the people of Judah stop their work on the temple?

Ezra	King	Date
4:1-5	Cyrus	559 – 530 BC
4:24	Darius	522 – 486 BC
4:6	Xerxes	486 – 465 BC
4:7-23	Artaxerxes	465 – 424 BC

6. Read Ezra 4:6-23. Looking at the chart above, how long did the Israelites experience opposition? What charges did the men of Trans-Euphrates make against the Israelites? To what concern of the king did these men appeal? How do you see similar arguments and appeals made against believers today?
7. Read Joshua 1:7-9, John 15:18-19, John 16:32-33, Romans 8:17-18 & 28, James 1:2-4. What should we expect from the world as followers of Christ? How should you view that kind of reception? What hope do you have when you face opposition?
8. Read John 17:13-19. How should we view our relationship to the world? As a body of Christ, how are we remaining separate from the influences of the world and where are we compromising? How do you think God views those compromises? What impact does our willingness to compromise impact the effectiveness of our ministry to a lost world? What will you do with your personal compromises today?