

Restoring Foundations

Restoring Holiness: Ezra 10:1-44

This Bible study lesson is developed to use in preparation for Pastor Jared's sermon on Ezra Chapter 10.

1. From Pastor Steve's sermon on Chapter 9 & 10, how does Ezra's example help us to confront God's holiness and show us our need to deal honestly with our sin?
2. Read Ezra 10:1-2 with 1 John 1:8-9. What was Ezra doing in front of the Temple and how did many of the Israelites respond? What did Shecaniah confess on behalf of himself and the people and what truth regarding sin did he acknowledge?
3. Read Ezra 10:3-4 with Deuteronomy 7:1-4 and Ezra 7:1-6 & 25-26. What is the ultimate problem with the Israelites marrying foreign women and what does Shecaniah recognize should be done? What is the basis for his suggestion and why do you think he calls on Ezra to carry it out?
4. Read Ezra 10:5-9. How does Ezra respond to Shecaniah's suggestion and who does he put in charge of the process? Apart from the rain why do you think the people were greatly distressed? How do you react when confronted with your own sin?
5. Read Ezra 10:10-15 with Genesis 21:1-14. What does Ezra say the people are guilty of and what solution does he give them for reconciliation with God? What affect did the opposition have on Ezra and his plan? Why did God tell Abraham to send away Hagar and Ismael and how are the two circumstances similar and how are they different?
6. Read Matthew 5:13-16. How is God calling GracePoint to be separate from the culture around us and for what purpose? What happens as individual believers and as the church when we lose our distinctiveness (saltiness)?
7. Read Ezra 10:16-44. How many men had married foreign wives? How hard would it have been for all those women and their children to be sent away and what would the scene of their departure have looked like? What had these women and children done and what does this tell you about how our sin impacts those closest to us?
8. Read Ezekiel 18:25-32. Does obedience to God seem harsh to you at times? Why or why not? How does God view disobedience to his commands and his word? Are there any ways in which you personally or we at GracePoint have failed to fully obey God's word? What should we do to right the situation and when should we do it? What are the consequences for knowing but failing to act to correct our disobedience?