

ULC Sermon Study Resource
February 25 // Rebuild
Pastor Marcus
2/25/24

Prayer: Begin the study with a prayer, asking for God's presence and guidance as participants delve into His Word.

Icebreaker: Has there ever been something in your life that has or was building for a long time that you are excited to come to its culmination?

Reading: Ezra 3

Rebuilding Right Worship (Ezra 3:1-2)

- The unity of the people in Jerusalem, akin to a team coming together, is not just a physical gathering but a shared purpose. Under the leadership of Jeshua and Zerubbabel, they begin by rebuilding the altar, challenging the conventional order of temple reconstruction.
- In the analogy of renovating a kitchen, the unusual choice to start with the altar emphasizes the centrality of worship in rebuilding. This deliberate act signifies that rebuilding the temple is fundamentally about restoring right worship.
- Question: How can the Church prioritize worship in its rebuilding efforts, ensuring that the foundation is centered on right worship rather than external structures?
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Making Space for Mourning (Ezra 3:8, 10-12)

- As the temple reconstruction progresses, a poignant scene unfolds. While some celebrate and praise God, others who had witnessed the glory of the first temple weep in mourning. This powerful contrast highlights the coexistence of joy in rebuilding and the necessity of mourning what was lost.
- Acknowledging the need for mourning, especially in a culture that often rushes to rebuild, emphasizes the sacred nature of grief. The Church is urged to be both a joyful rebuild and a compassionate space for individuals to mourn their brokenness and the brokenness of the world.
- Question: How can the Church balance the call to joyfully rebuild with creating genuine space for individuals to mourn and reflect on what has been lost?

Being Sustained by God's Word (Ezra 6:14)

- The success of the rebuilding process is attributed to the prophetic words of Haggai and Zechariah, emphasizing the sustaining power of God's Word. The people prosper not merely by their efforts but through God's decree and the support of the king.
- Ezra envisions a community grounded in the Word of God, living and building exclusively by its principles. In a world filled with competing voices, the Church is challenged to be a people sustained by God's Word, drawing strength and direction from His promises.
- Question: How can the Church ensure that it remains firmly rooted in God's Word, allowing His promises to be the guiding force in its rebuilding journey?

Reflection/Application Questions

- In the midst of societal decline and cultural shifts, how does the vision presented in Ezra 3 challenge your understanding of what needs to be rebuilt in the Church today?
- What practical steps can you take to contribute to the rebuilding process within your faith community?

Suggestion for Further Study:

- Deuteronomy 8:3 emphasizes that man does not live by bread alone but by every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord. In the context of rebuilding right worship, this verse underscores the importance of prioritizing God's Word as the foundation of our spiritual nourishment. How can we prioritize God's Word as the foundation of our spiritual nourishment, particularly in the context of rebuilding right worship?

Closing prayer

Guide us as we rebuild our worship, making it centered on You alone. Grant us the grace to make space for mourning, acknowledging our losses and finding comfort in Your presence. May Your Word sustain us through every step of this journey, anchoring us in Your truth and promises. Amen.