



GROUP DISCUSSION | October 30 | Week 5 | Ezra 6:16-22

SERIES OVERVIEW

This 6-week series addresses what God did for the Jewish people as recorded in the book of Ezra and how He also reclaims and redeems our lives for His purpose in this world.

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE:

Think of this discussion guide as a springboard. Use what's helpful to your group and lean into discussion that's sparked from the insight and input of your group.

CONNECTION

Philip shared that his wait for Christmas music is almost over. What's something you were really looking forward to and waited for lately?

TRUTH

Recap: God's people had finally completed the temple rebuild! Someone read Ezra 6:15-18 and someone else read 1 Kings 8:62-63. What sticks out from those passages? What was similar? What was different? Why was there such a difference and what does that tell us about the people and about God?

Though these two dedications were starkly different, God's people were filled with joy both times. Even though things had changed after the rebuild in Ezra 6, the Israelites celebrated God's faithfulness with another massive dedication.

What's the biggest event or party you've ever been to? (Take time to share.)

Even the largest gatherings we can imagine pale in comparison to an entire nation converging for a dedication. Though the 4th of July marks the beginning of America's nation as a free country, Israel had experienced a rich history of "glory days" that was all stripped away. This "homecoming" of sorts was something they'd hoped for, but now were finally realizing. What's one of the best "homecoming" or "reunited" moments you've experienced?

Shortly after the temple dedication, the Israelites celebrate Passover. Someone read Ezra 6:19-22. We shared how this Passover was different; it was another step in God fulfilling His promise to Abram in Genesis 12:2-3. While "separating yourself" from the unclean ways of Gentiles included a devout process (circumcision included), it was the first time "outsiders" were welcomed as "insiders" to this degree. Why is that significant?

APPLICATION

In this Ezra 6 account, we get a great example of appreciating the past, but not allowing that to damper joy for the present. If you've been in church for a while, what are some things you're grateful for or remember from the "good old days?" (Share)

What are some things you've seen God do or ways He's been at work lately? (Share)

Finally, where do you feel He's at work now and how you can you join Him? (Share)

PRAY

Take time to share something that brings you joy and then close in a prayer of thanksgiving for God's faithfulness.