

Community Group Study Guide

The Surety of Opposition Ezra 4

Overview

Main Idea: We must be faithful to God and God alone, but in our faithfulness we can expect opposition though we can also expect Christ to be with us for He knows what it means to be opposed and He was faithful.

I. Adversaries (or enemies)

Though they confessed that they worshiped as the Israelites did, these people were enemies of God and God's people because they simply added God to their other religions

1. We must be certain that those who confess Christ and want to help us in our ministry are indeed sons and/or daughters of God
2. We must be certain that opportunities that come our way that seem as though they are God ordained are indeed God ordained

II. Response of God's people to the offer of the "adversaries"

The Israelites fresh off of being disciplined for their disobedience were beginning to walk in obedience (see chaps. 1-3) and therein they maintained their purity as God's people and refused the help of the people who simply added God to their other religions (2 Kings 17)

1. God is an exclusive God and He demands to be exclusively worshiped
2. Jesus Christ taught He was the only way unto salvation

III. Consequences of following God according to HIS ways

Persecution came in the form of the enemies frustrating the building of the Temple, the city, etc. by the enemies making threats against the Israelites and by the enemies appealing to Kings. This persecution goes on for centuries.

1. We can be confident that every work of God will be opposed in some manner
2. God is not most interested in our comfort, but our holiness

Questions

1. How can we be certain if people or decisions that seem "for" Christ are indeed for Him and therein best for your life?
2. Why does God desire to be worshiped exclusively? Is this arrogant of God?
3. Why does our culture want to "coexist" and therein rebuke such "arrogant" claims against Christians to worship Him through Christ alone?
4. How can we cultivate a life of holiness verses only thinking of our comfort?
5. Why does God allow persecution in the midst of faithfulness?