

Community Group

Study Guide

The Necessity of the Word in Restoration

Ezra 7

Main Idea

God's Word accomplishes ultimate Restoration

1. Investment in God's Word and restoration always go and in hand
 - a. Ezra is a man of the Word (7.6, 10, 11, 21)
 - b. Restoration of people of God is impossible apart from faithfulness to God's Word
 - c. Ezra "set" (established), his "heart" (whole being) to:
 1. Study the Word
 2. Do the Word
 3. Teach the Word
 - d. Because he was studied in the word he had these "fruits"
 1. He was a Reformer
 2. Hand of God was upon Him (7.6, 10, 28)
 3. He knew God's steadfast love
 4. He had courage
2. God's Word exposes the need for atonement
 - a. Artaxerxes provides materials by the prompting of God
 - b. He offers silver, gold, and animal sacrifices in order to appease God's wrath, though he didn't know God
 1. We see the universal principle that all of mankind knows they don't measure up and see their need to repay God for their wrong doing
 - c. God provides an atonement for us, His Word
 - d. The Word that was with God and was God...the Word that became flesh...Jesus Christ
 1. The faithfulness of the Jesus to the Word that allows us to be faithful to God and have atonement for our sins

Application: We must work hard at studying the word, then doing the word, then teaching the word all the while looking to the Word that became flesh. The perfect life, substitutionary death, and victorious resurrection of Jesus Christ, the ultimate word, enables us to be faithful as we taste Restoration in our own lives, in our church, in our community, and in the world.

Question

1. What is it that keeps us from studying God's Word? What does that say about our love for God?
2. How can we learn from the life of Ezra in terms of how he was used given his devotion to studying, acting upon, and teaching God's Word?
3. Knowing that we all desire to have favor from God, how can we also experience that same favor of God? How does that look exactly?
4. When we think about our often wanting to appease God or atone God by our good works, what does that say about our hearts? How is it the atonement of Christ speaks to the wrath of God on our behalf? What does that mean for our daily lives?