

king's chapel

Community Group Discussion Guide

Week of May 17, 2015

This Week's Focus: Some of the returned exiles moved into the holy city of Jerusalem, using their gifts and talents to advance the kingdom, dedicating the walls and worshiping God.

This Week's Text: Nehemiah 11 and 12

Truth without emotion produces dead orthodoxy and a church full or half full of artificial admirers. On the other hand, emotion without truth produces empty frenzy and cultivates shallow people who refuse the discipline of rigorous thought. But true worship comes from people who are deeply emotional and who love deep and sound doctrine". **John Piper**

As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace: whoever speaks, as one who speaks oracles of God; whoever serves, as one who serves by the strength that God supplies—in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ. To him belong glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen. **1 Peter 4:10-11**

Related Texts: Proverbs 16:33; Psalm 48 1-3; Revelation 5

Observations and Questions for Discussion:

- What about this week's text/sermon was most illuminating and why?
- What is the story unfolding in Nehemiah 11-12?
- The four groups of people listed in these two chapters are the leaders of Israel, the people who volunteered to live in the city of Jerusalem, the people who remained in other towns, and the priests and the Levites.
 - Why might Nehemiah have made the effort to list the names of the people? What principles or applications can we draw from Nehemiah's reasons?

- Nehemiah 11:1 states that the people “cast lots to bring one out of ten to live in Jerusalem the holy city.” What does this mean? Were they leaving the decision to chance? Reference Proverbs 16:33. Why don't we use this method today?
- The city of Jerusalem held a significant place in the plan of God during the time of Nehemiah. Why? Reference Psalm 48. Why then, would many Israelites have chosen not to live in Jerusalem?
- Explain the following statement: “The tighter we hold onto something, the greater the pain when God must rip it away.” How is God calling you to leave your comfort zone for the sake of advancing his kingdom in the world? Discuss how the Gospel motivates the desire to live sacrificially for the fame of God's name.
- Name at least three gifts of service that are mentioned in chapter 11. Reference verse 1, 3, 9, 16, and 19. Discuss why it was important that everyone in Israel use his/her abilities, gifts, and talents.
- What are spiritual gifts, who possesses them, where do they come from, and what are they for? Reference 1 Corinthians 12, Romans 12:3-8, 1 Peter 4:10-11. How has God gifted you? How can you use it for the edification of the church at King's Chapel and for the glory of God?
- According to Nehemiah 12:27-47, the dedication of Jerusalem's walls and temple service was saturated with worship. What is the character of Israel's worship? Reference words such as praise, gladness, thanksgiving, rejoice, joy, etc. Explain how a right understanding of the nature of God affects our worship. Discuss how the Imago Dei (being made in the image and likeness of God) helps us understand the human need to worship.
- What is the significance of the people worshiping atop Jerusalem's walls? Reference verse 43. Discuss the witness/evangelistic aspect of worship.
- According to Nehemiah 12:47, the people of Israel financially supported the singers, gatekeepers, and Levites. Discuss how genuine worship results in the financial support of the mission of God.
- Read and meditate on Revelation 5.
- How do Nehemiah 11 and 12 point to Jesus and the mission of his Church?

Next Week's Text: Nehemiah 13