

Small Group Questions

Week of Sunday, April 28th, 2024

God Strengthens His People for His Kingdom's Work (EZRA 7-8)

1. Recall a time when you had a particularly strong calling to do something...for church, family, work, etc. Was God part of your decision-making process? Why or why not?
2. Why would the pagan kings of Persia (Cyrus, Darius & Artaxerxes) bend over backwards to give Zerubbabel and Ezra everything they needed to rebuild the temple and restore God's Word and commands in Judah/Jerusalem? (See Ezra 7:21-23)
3. What was the significance of Zerubbabel's inclusion and participation in bringing God's people back to Judah and rebuilding the temple in Jerusalem? (See 2 Samuel 7:12-16; Matthew 1:12-13 and Luke 3:27.)
4. Why would Ezra have been ashamed to ask King Artaxerxes for an armed escort to protect Ezra and his traveling companions as they brought tons of gold, silver and silver vessels back to Jerusalem? After all, the king was determined to give Ezra whatever he needed to succeed. (See Ezra 8:22)
5. How does God strengthen us through:
 - Prayer?
 - His Word?
 - Relationships?
 - Our trials and sufferings?
 - The indwelling of His Holy Spirit?
6. Read Matthew 22:39 on the second greatest commandment. Now read John 13:34 and John 15:12 regarding the new commandment that Jesus gives. What is the difference between the two? What does it look like to love as Jesus loves?
7. Where do you attempt to find strength apart from God?
8. What is God strengthening you to do for His Kingdom? (Be specific)