



## Ezra 4,5,6,

### Looking back:

#### Care

How was your heart moved in worship this week? Share with your group how you praised Jesus in new ways this week.

#### Loving Accountability

Did you continue to praise in the storm this week? This may look like sharing: how you felt close to God at a certain time, a struggle you've been facing, a spiritual discipline that you've discovered or rediscovered, or anything else you learned about your relationship with God.

### Looking up:

#### Practice

Have someone share what they recall from Ezra 4-6. Feel free to also share what you remember from the sermon, or any other biblical resource that you've read about the text.

#### Learning to obey Jesus

##### **1. Read Ezra 4:1-6, 4:21-24, Zechariah 4:6.**

- When the exiles rejected the request of “the adversaries” to join them in rebuilding the Temple, what did the adversaries do to make the exiles afraid? How long did this opposition last?
- Zerubbabel is an important figure in rebuilding the Temple. He received an empowering message from the Lord (*Zec 4:6*) that likely influenced how he approached rebuilding the Temple. What does this verse mean to you?

##### **2. Read Ezra 5:1 - 5, Haggai 1:12-15, John 10:2-4, John 14:26**

- What did the exiles risk by starting to rebuild the Temple once again?
- What gave the Israelites the motivation they needed to start rebuilding again?
- The prophets are people who convey God's message to His people. What role does listening prayer have for God's people and the church today?

##### **2. Read Ezra 6:1 - 12, 16, Ezra 3:12-13, Daniel 6:24 - 26.**

- How did God honour the risk that the exiles took to rebuild the Temple? How did God provide for the calling He placed on the exiles?

- Compare the mixed reactions of joy and sadness when the exiles laid the foundation of the Temple in Ezra 3 with the dedication of the Temple in Ezra 6. How do the exiles respond this time? What do you think turned the sadness of the older priests and Levites to joy this time?
- What happens when we courageously obey God (Daniel 6:24-26)?

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### Looking forward:

#### Spiritual Growth Assignment

In order to fulfill God's will here on earth, we need to know what it is. Suggest some practical ways that we can make time to listen to God this week.

#### **Spiritual Discipline: Spiritual Breathing**

Just as we need to breathe air to live, so spiritual breathing is important to our spiritual health. Spiritual breathing means that we "exhale" our sin through confession. After exhaling, we can then "inhale" and surrender afresh to God. Having a posture of confession and surrender helps keep our hearts and minds open to Him.

We know that when we confess our sins to God, that He will forgive and cleanse us from *all* unrighteousness (1 John 1:9). We do not need to have a "probation period" after we sin, we can approach Him right away because we know that there is no condemnation for those in Christ Jesus (Romans 8:1). We are assured in the Bible that we can be confident that God welcomes us to approach Him (Hebrews 4:16).

#### Prayer

*Lord, You do not call a perfect people to be Your hands and feet. We, Your church, are your plan A, Your only plan to redeem the lost. Thank you that every person has been endowed with a spiritual gift and that every member is important to You and to the body of Christ.*

*Lord, You are speaking to us. You desire for us to hear You. Give us a hunger and thirst for Your Word and for prayer, and help us to hear You during these times. When we face opposition and obstacles, and when we feel discouraged or weary, help us to turn to You and remember that it is not by power nor by might, but by Your Spirit that we overcome. You are God, our Provider. Thank You that You will provide what we need to fulfill Your calling and mandate. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.*

Have questions about the sermon?  
Email us: [sermonquestions@sanctuschurch.com](mailto:sermonquestions@sanctuschurch.com)

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— CHURCH —

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