

Ezra 10:1-8 – 20 March 2016

Introduction –

In Ezra 7-8 – We met Ezra and learn of his Godly character

In Ezra 9 – We learn of the people's sin (marrying foreigners and serving their gods) and Ezra's great prayer for the people.

In Ezra 10 – We began to examine the benefits of breaking ungodly commitments that we've made.

Better to enter heaven without a hand, then to enter hell whole.

B/c people will always remind us of our stump hand, we have to remember the benefits of breaking ungodly commitments.

- 1. 1st benefit is: No more distraction from serving God.**
- 2. 2nd benefit is: A restored testimony before people.**

3. 3rd benefit is: Opportunity to have Godly fruit and offspring.

Today, we look at “How to break ungodly commitments”.

Chapter 10:1-11

1. Interaction: Blind man headed for a cliff.
 - a. Would you stop him?
 - b. Why?
2. **1st way to break ungodly commitments is to call each other to confession.**
 - a. Do you know what it takes to call other to and to confess sin...great belief in God’s love.
 - i. If you believe God loves you, you will keep his commandments.
 - ii. Read I John 5:1-5
 - b. Story: Kept telling my kids a 1 word sermon, “Love”....then one day Samuel gave it back to me.
 - c. Examples
 - i. Peter called Ananias/Sapphira to confess

- ii. Paul called Peter to confess
- iii. Nathan called David to confess
- d. Story: A Christian Lt Col pilot at work I had to call out.

Look back at Chapter 10:1-11

- 3. Interaction: Anyone ever taken an oath?
 - a. Oath of office or for military.
 - i. Why do it? What's the meaning?
 - b. Anyone ever say the pledge of allegiance?
 - i. Why was it created this way?
- 4. **2nd way to break ungodly commitments is to covenant w/ God before man to accept God's ways. (Vs 3)**
 - a. Do you know what it takes to covenant with God...great belief in God's Sovereignty.
 - i. If you believe God is sovereign over your life, you will want to be on His side, and not to be against him.
 - ii. Read Jos 5:13-15

- b. Make a covenant or compact. Be in a confederacy or league.
- c. Have you confessed your commitment to Christ before people? How many, one?
- d. Story: Lay Renewal Journeys
 - i. Briefly explain a weekend.
 - ii. One of the best parts was the testimonies.
- e. What does God require in our covenant?
 - i. Read Psa 51 - David

Chapter 10:12-19

- 5. Interaction: Anyone ever made a New Year's resolution, and then found it hard to keep?
 - a. How did you keep it?
 - b. If you fail, what would it have taken to be able to keep it?
- 6. **3rd way to break ungodly commitments is to continue thru the craving to capitulate.**
 - a. Do you know what it takes to continue thru...great belief in God's power.

- i. If you believe God is powerful, you will be able to use his strength to endure, not counting on yourself.
- ii. Read 2 Tim 1:6-8 & 2:10-13
- b. Story: When first saved, I would throw my friends smokes in the trash so I wouldn't be tempted.
- c. Even more towards the end times, we'll be tempted to fall out of league with the Lord, but endure thru it!
 - i. Read Matt 24:11-13

Conclusion –

All good authors want to end with an enduring thought and Ezra is no exception. However, this is unlike American authors that wouldn't end with a story of confession of wrong and commitment to God.

There is just something eternal about God's call for us to :

- 1) Call each other to confession
- 2) Covenant with Him before men
- 3) Continue thru the craving to capitulate