

Exile and Return: "The God who Speaks"

Nehemiah 8:1-12

I. God's people gather together around His Word. (Nehemiah 8:1-2)

Deuteronomy 31:11-12 - "When all Israel comes...before the Lord your God...you shall read this law before all Israel... Assemble the... men, women, and little ones, and the sojourner within your towns, that they may hear and learn to fear the Lord your God, and be careful to do all the words of this law..."

1 Timothy 4:13 - "...devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to exhortation, to teaching."

2 Timothy 4:2-3 - "Preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching...

For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions."

1 Corinthians 1:21 - "...God was well-pleased through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe."

II. God's people worship God based on His Word. (Nehemiah 8:3-6)

Worship is knowing, enjoying and proclaiming the worth of Jesus Christ.

John 5:39-40 - "You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness about me...come to me that you may have life."

III. God's people joyfully disciple others from His Word. (Nehemiah 8:7-12)

Acts 20:20 - "I did not shrink from declaring to you anything that was profitable and teaching you in public and from house to house."

1 Thessalonians 2:8 - "...we were ready to share with you not only the gospel of God but also our own selves, because you had become very dear to us."

John 15:11 - "Jesus said, '...I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full.'"

John 16:24 - "Jesus said, 'Until now you have asked nothing in my name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full.'"

Romans 14:17 - "For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking but of righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit."

Reviewing this Past Sunday with Family and Friends

1. Outside of a church gathering or Christian event, when have you been a part of a public event that felt special and unified? What can the church learn from these events? What do we need to watch out for with these events?
2. When have you lately experienced the power of God's Word?
3. How can you tell if a church is centered on the proclamation of God's Word or centered on something else? Give some answers and then look up these verses. (Acts 20:26-27, 2 Timothy 2:15, 3:16-17 & 4:1-5)
4. Why is gathering to hear God's Word on Sunday and during the week so important for believers? Answer and then read these scriptures. (John 15:10-11, 17:17, Romans 10:14, Ephesians 4:11-16, Colossians 3:16-17, 1 Thessalonians 2:8, James 5:16-17 & Hebrews 10:24-25) Pray for one another.