**Restoration**

Ezra 7:11-28 (Cyclical Deductive Form)

Purpose: The listeners will restore faith by worshipping sincerely and practicing a God-centered life

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| Intro  ILL | Hello, how are you today?  Usually we say fine or good even our conditions are not so good.  It is okay but sometimes, we feel that broken, useless, alone… |
|  | What would you do if your window cracked?  This picture show us the powerful result of Windshield Repair. We can fix the cracked glass. After repair, still we can see small marks but not big deal.  If you don’t like any marks, you can change to new window. |
| T | How about broken relationship with others? |
| Raised Needs | Did you experience difficult time due to relationship issues?  Actually many people get tough because of relationship issues. Between husband and wife, parents and children, also between company colleagues or business partners.  Are you good at handling or repairing weaken or broken relationship?  If you have broken relationship with a loved one or an important person, then you may feel no hope in life.  Usually broken relationship give a lot pains and it need quite long time to heal the wound. |
| Cont | Which relationship is the most dear to your heart?  Which relationship affects you most?  We all know that the relationship with others are really important. Also we know that the relationship with God is the most essential. |
| T | Today I speak how we can restore the faith in order to have intimacy relationship with God.  Restoring the relationship with God is impossible without restore the faith.  Do you have intimacy relationship with God? |
| Need | God wants you to have the authentic faith and to practice your faith in your daily life. |
| Subject | In order to restore our faith, what should we do at first? |
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| Bkg.  Cont. | Let me explain background a little bit.  Ezekiel prophesized Israel’s return back to Jerusalem. (Ezekiel 39:28-29).  “they will know that I am the LORD their God, for though I sent them into exile among the nations, I will gather them to their own land” (Ezek. 39:28)  Ezra chapter 1-6 says that the first return from Babylon to Israel was led by Zerubbabel in 538 BC.  The rebuilding of the temple was of vital importance for this group.  Although the people rebuilt the physical temple, they were still in poor spiritual condition. God chose Ezra.  God provided Zerubbabel to rebuild the literal temple. And God chose Ezra to begin to restore the spiritual temple, a remnant of Judah. |
| Preview | Through Ezra 7:11-28, let's see how we can restore our relationship with God.  Ezra 7 tells two things to do. One is to be a true worshiper and the other one is to practice God-centered life.  Today’s passage Ezra 7:11-28 explains how Israelites could come back to Jerusalem. We can divide the passage 7:11-28 to three arts.  First past is v 11: explain that following passage is the king’s letter to Ezra  Second part is v 12-26: Contents of letter written in Aramaic.  Last part id v 27-28: Ezra praised Lord for God moved the king’s heart  Now God used Persians king Artaxerxes to provide necessary needs to return back to Jerusalem and help to worship in temple. |
| T | From the passage, we could learn two basic principle to restore the relationship with God. |
| MP I | First one is that believers should be a true worshipper. We all should be true worshippers.  How does it relate to the letter of the Persian king? |
| Explain | God led the king to support Ezra to worship in temple  v12. Call Ezra as a priest. Ezra was born in Babylon and live up to now. And temple is in Jerusalem. Is he a priest? I think purposely called as a priest to emphasize his job to restore temple worship.  v13. Allowed to go Jerusalem with Israelites. Here also separately mentioned priest and Levites. Actually priest and Levites include Israelites but to emphasize temple worship. Without priest and Levites, how they do temple worship? v15. Gave silver and gold to the God of Israel. Here clearly mentioned the purpose of supporting. Purpose of financial supporting is to offer to God. v16. Support freewill offering for the temple v17. Order to buy bulls, rams, mail lambs, and grain to sacrifice on the altar of the temple. Here clearly mentioned the sacrificial law. v19. Gave back the utensils of worship for the temple. v20-22. Promised to support the needs for temple. v24. The priest, Levites and temple workers were not be taxed. |
| Cont. | The document explained in detail what Ezra should do. The mission of Ezra is restore the temple worship. The king clearly mentioned why he provided the financial support to Ezra. They needed specific people like priest and Levites to do temple worship and should use specific animals, grains, and materials. What the king mentioned here is to command Judean to worship correctly in the Jerusalem temple. The king is not the descendent of Israel but Persians. God moved the king’s heart to support the authentic temple worship. |
| Cont. | Why the king is so generous to Ezra?  V 23, Why should his wrath fall on the realm of the king and of his sons?  The king afraid of coming the God’s wrath to his country. |
| Cont. | Why God sent Israelites to Babylon? Because they worshiped Canaanites gods also. They lost the importance of worshipping God. Restoring authentic worship is the most important at the moment also. God seeks true worshipper.  Worship must be restored. Temple was completed a few decade ago but still Israelite had a problem.  To proper worship in temple, they needed priests and Levites. Someone must know how to sacrifice animals and grains. This person should be expert in the Law. They needed like Ezra who was a priest and expert of Law. |
| T | Same as what God wanted Judea to worship Him truly, God wants us to do same thing. |
| App | You should prepare to worship sincerely  23 Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in the Spirit and in truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. 24 God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in the Spirit and in truth." (Jn. 4:23-24 NIV)  Become a true worshiper. Church need worship leader and preacher. Be a worshiper before becoming a leader in the church. Do you experience God's grace in all worship times? Do you feel God’s love and righteousness in the worship service? Worship service is the expression of the relationship with God. |
| App | What is the most important things among you are doing now? Studying, or worshiping? To serve in the church, you need to get knowledge but more important thing is your attitude and character before God and people. You should be a true worshiper. You should not forget what you study  Some seek the beautiful song, humorous and encouraging sermon? Important thing is that the worship is to glorify God joyfully, not to satisfy ourselves.  Focus on attitude of worshipper, not worship style  Attending the worship service and worship God are totally different.  God seeks the authentic worshipper. We should worship in truth and spirit.  “Stop bringing meaningless offerings! Your incense is detestable to me. New Moons, Sabbaths and convocations-- I cannot bear your worthless assemblies” (Isa. 1:13 NIV) |
| Cont. | Church is not a club of those who have same hobby.  It is not a place for socializing. It is not a place for business.  People come to church with many different reasons. Some need to get information and some are for friendship, or for business opportunity, for spiritual issue. Church should embrace all different reasons but you should tell what is church for and teach them about what God wants to them. |
| Cont. | Some did not worship God with whole heart. You know the difference between buying a good Christian book and reading it. I like buying books but many of them are on the book shelf and I did not read them.  Going to church on Sunday and do not going to church are much different. Actually they are totally different. Do you think going to church is enough? We know that some worship God in church and some others listen/watch services. |
| App | You should be a member of a church.  And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, 25 not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another-- and all the more as you see the Day approaching. (Heb. 10:24-25 NIV)  Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it. (1 Cor. 12:27 NIV) He is the head of the body, the church (Col. 1:18 NIV)  Many people do not attend any church service, but listen or watch church service using internet. If you are under certain circumstances which you could not go to church, it may be okay. Recently in Korean, many people say they are believers but do not attend church services. I am sure they will be distance from God and other believers very soon. There is no perfect church but we can enjoy many benefits if we become a member of local church. Every people need to attend a Christian community to experience God’s love and have chance to help others and also chance to get help from other believers.  Be a member of a local church and tell this to others. |
| T | From the passage, we could learn two basic principles. First one is that believers should be an authentic worshipper. |
| MP II | I will talk about second one. Second one is that believers should practice a God-centered life. You should practice a God-centered life.  Daily life should be different from non-believers.  Is the king's document to return to Jerusalem really related to the restoration of the daily lives of the Israelites who believe in God? |
| Explain | In the verse 25-26, God moved the king and give Ezra the authority of teaching the Law and judging those who do not obey the Law.  Gave authority Ezra to administer justice to all the people.  Give authority to punish who do not obey the Law. Give authority to appoint the judge who know the Law. |
| Cont. | Simply say that Ezra should appoint magistrates and judges to administer justice to all the people, and to tech any who do not know the law of God. Punish whoever do not obey the law of God and law of king.  Ezra should teach how people should do according to law of God and let them to obey it.  God wanted the people to keep the law in their daily life. It must include what can eat and what can’t eat, how deal the conflict with others. It is according to the Moses law. |
| Cont. | Why God sent Israelites to Babylon? Because they not only worship foreign gods but also they followed the Canaanites life style which God prohibited to do. They oppressed needy people and boasted what they had. They even scarified human.  Returned Israelites from Babylon, they needed to change their life style according to Law.  God prohibited several things before going to Canaan. But they didn’t obey God.  Command Ezra to teach the law and make people to obey the Law.  Historically, how many Northern Israel kings and Southern Juda kings tried to make his people to obey the law? Not many. Even God sent many prophets to them but they did not listen and persecuted the prophets. What the prophets proclaimed? Authentic worship and godly life.  Now, God use Persian king and Ezra, and to restore Israel’s faith. God keeps his promise to restore his people after 70 years exile. |
| T | Listening to many sermons, leading small groups are really good. More important thing is that how much are you trying to obey God's Word?  Ezra had studied the Word well and practice them and teach them. .  We come to seminary school to learn. We also study and practice in our life what we learn before teaching. |
| App | The importance of following law is not changed. We should follow the biblical principles. If we follow the biblical principles, our life will be God-centered life.  God-centered life is very simple. It change the priority from me to biblical principle.  It is to change from thinking and acting in the center to the Bible centered Jesus center.  God will be the center of all life including family, relationship, work, financial, hobby, study, church, etc.  The question “Is God pleased with me?” will be the decision standards.    People know God’s command is love God and love neighbor.  If someone do not love their neighbor, can we say they still love God?  If we live God-centered life, we can be a 24/7 Christian.  Most of Church member work or study from Monday to Friday, and come to church on Sunday. They know how to worship and how to serve in Church. But many of them do not know how to deal issues and treat people in the work places and schools and homes as Christian.  One of reason is that church only emphasizes congregation to come to church and to have personal devolution time.  But God want Christian to live like sault and light in the world.  We should devote to God not only Sunday but also 24 hours and 7days.  When you are home with your family or in schools or in work places, at the coffee shops with friend, you should speak and act as a Christin.  God really want you to be a 24/7 Christian.  Please do not forget why do you study and what do you want to do after graduation?  Whatever you do including studying, eating, serving, playing, or dating, think what God want me to do right now?  Check yourself your speaking or acts are helpful to expend the kingdom of God? |
| App | Live in a manner worthy of the Good News  Whatever happens, conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ (Philippians 1:27)  There are many bible verse that we should not do somethings because we believe Jesus Christ and temple of God. Judging, lying, etc.  Before decide anything, you should ask to yourself that is it good for the sharing the gospel?  Is it good to help the needy?  We should be an example of authentic worshiper, and  also should be an example of serving, helping, caring others.  Honestly working and fairly competing. Actually it is not easy in the serious completion environments but we should follow biblical principles than small benefits.  What to wear, What to speak, Which website frequently visit?  How to deal anger? How to manage money and time?  Whatever you do, think what would Jesus do? |
| Con.  MI | I spoke two things what we can learn from Ezra 7:11-28. Do you remember?  Restore your faith by worshipping sincerely and practice God-centered life |
| Restate | To restore your faith, first, be an authentic worshipper, second, practice a God-centered life. |
| Summary | What would you do if you feel that your relationship is not same as before with loved one?  I am sure you will try to fix or repair, and spend time and energy to do it. Because it is important to you.  How about relationship with God, do you care of it importantly compare to any others?  We should set the priority to God and think God whatever we do. We should do whatever to glory of God.  Judean might simply want to go back to homeland Jerusalem but God wanted Judean to restore the faith and practice their belief in their daily life.  God also want us to same things.  We should be a good example of worshipper and practice what we learnt from Bible and live God-centered life.  The result which we can see and the relationship with people are very important to all of us. But our first priority should be the relationship God. In order to make good relationship with God, we should be an authentic worshipper and practice a God-centered life. |
| Ending | To the Judean, their physical return back to homeland is important but more important things is to restore the broken relationship with God. So the author of Book Ezra wrote that how they return back to Jerusalem. We are living among the many temptation like money and power, reputation. Most of us want to go up to the higher position and to be respected by others.  Remember, whatever your position or title will be, and wherever you will live, you should be a true worshiper and practice the God-centered life. This is God’s will upon all of us. May God bless you. |
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