



Growth Group discussion questions for Nehemiah 8
Week of Nov. 11-14, 2018

1. Scripture memory: Memorize, meditate on, and be ready to recite Ephesians 2:1-9 (adding v. 9).
2. The book of Nehemiah covers the remarkable successes of the Jewish people to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem in only 52 days under the leadership of Nehemiah (chapters 1-6). The rest of the book (chapters 7-13) tells of a more significant process - the spiritual restoration of the people who lived behind the walls. Read and meditate on Nehemiah 8.
3. Verses 1-2 mention Ezra, the scribe and priest, who had been ministering in Jerusalem. Read Ezra 7:10. How was Ezra qualified to preach and explain God's Word to God's people? Do you prepare yourself, like Ezra, to communicate Scripture to those God gives to you?
4. What role did the Levites play in communicating Scripture in verses 7 and 8? How was this more than translation from Hebrew for the Aramaic speakers? What does this tell you about the role of expository preaching and teaching in the Christian's life? What strategies or tools are available to you to understand Scripture?
5. What was the attitude of the people of Israel toward the Scripture? (Reference verses 3, 6, 9, and 17). How does each of the following New Testament passages reflect the attitude we should have towards God's Word?
 - 1 Thessalonians 2:13
 - 2 Timothy 3:16-17
 - Hebrews 4:12
6. Read Deuteronomy 31:10-13. The reading of the law before the whole assembly was required at the Feast of Tabernacles in the Jubilee year (every 7 years). It had been ignored since Israel had

been taken into captivity in Babylon. How does that shed light on the importance of this moment? Have you had periods of neglect of God's Word? What safeguards can you put in place to guard against apathy towards God's Word?

7. If you were a non-Christian who continually met Christians who rarely read the Bible and were largely ignorant of its content, what would you think of them? What would be your impression of Christianity?

8. Notice in the passage that knowledge of the demands of the law brought grief (c.f. verse 9-11), why? Why did the Levites try to turn the people's grief to joy? How is this an Old Testament picture of the Gospel? Why should joy be connected with understanding God Word?
(See Proverbs 8:34; Luke 11:28, 24:32)

9. Is your heart glad as you gather with other believers to hear God's Word preached and taught? Why or why not? After considering this passage of Nehemiah, what would you say to the Christian who claimed "*I don't need to gather with other believers; I can worship God and read His Word on my own*"?

10. How can you emulate the response of the Israelites in Nehemiah 8 in your life? What changes in your relationship to the Word of God should you begin to change this week?

PRAY IN THE GROUP: Pray for those in our church and in your life who are struggling with their love for God's Word. Pray for those who flounder in living their lives according to God's Word. Pray for the families who have a family member who is rejecting the call of God's Word in their life. Pray that a joy for reading and studying Scripture will bloom in the people of our church.