

GROUP DISCUSSION

Questions for facilitating dynamic discussion

Origins

Week 3: Becoming an Optimist
Ezra 3:12

Week of August 21, 2022
(Jeff Griffin, Senior Pastor)

Many of us experience disappointment and discouragement when we compare our lives with those who seem to have everything going their way. Comparison is nothing new. We see comparison raise its ugly head in the book of Ezra. In God's Word, we also find His solution to overcoming comparison's detrimental effects.

Kicking It Off: Jeff confessed his passion for eating pomegranates. Do you enjoy them?

Discussion:

1. Reread **Ezra 3:12** *Many of the older priests and Levites and family heads, who had seen the former temple, wept aloud when they saw the foundation of this temple being laid.*

If you were to make a case that their tears were appropriate, what would you say? If you were to make a case that their tears were inappropriate, what would you say?

2. Can you think of a time that comparison made you discontent? If so, tell the group about it.
3. Reread **Haggai 2:3-4** *"Who of you is left who saw this house in its former glory? How does it look to you now? Does it not seem to you like nothing? But now be strong, Zerubbabel," declares the Lord. "Be strong, all you people of the land, and work. For I am with you."*

How does the promise of God's presence relate to their disappointment with the new temple?

4. Reread **Zechariah 4:10** (NLT) *"Do not despise small beginnings, for the Lord rejoices to see the work begin, to see the plumb line in Zerubbabel's hand."*

How can we apply this verse to our lives?

5. Reread **Haggai 2:9** *"The glory of this present house will be greater than the glory of the former house."*

In what way was the second temple more glorious than the first?

6. How would you counsel a Christian friend who was bemoaning that their life was pathetic when compared to others?

Wrapping It Up: Pray that your eyes would be opened to see God's goodness and grace in the mundane moments of everyday life.