

GROUP DISCUSSION

Questions for facilitating dynamic discussion

Origins

Week 4: Overcoming Discouragement
Ezra 4:1 – 5:2

Week of August 28, 2022
(Jeff Griffin, Senior Pastor)

The rebuilding of the temple started with much enthusiasm, but the momentum did not continue. Frustration and discouragement drained the workers of their will to continue. From their experience we can learn how to persevere through our own difficulties.

Kicking It Off: Jeff talked about the Bears' new head coach (Matt Eberflus). If you were going to coach, which sport would you choose?

Discussion:

1. Reread Ezra 4:4-5 ***The peoples around them set out to discourage the people of Judah and make them afraid to go on building. They bribed officials to frustrate their plans.***

The Jews in Jerusalem were dealing with 1) Discouragement, 2) Fear, 3) Frustration. Which of these three negative emotions are you dealing with most these days? Why?

2. Reread Ezra 4:24 ***The work on the house of God in Jerusalem came to a standstill until the second year of the reign of Darius king of Persia.***

The people gave up on their dreams of rebuilding the temple for fourteen years. Can you think of a time you were inclined to give up? Willing to tell the group about it?

3. Reread Haggai 1:2 ***These people say, "The time has not yet come to rebuild the Lord's house."***

Their frustration led them to conclude that construction must not be God's will. Why do many Christians assume that when they follow God's guidance, things will progress smoothly?

4. Reread Haggai 1:3-4 ***Then the word of the Lord came through the prophet Haggai: "Is it time for you yourselves to be living in your paneled houses, while this house remains a ruin?"***

How do these verses apply to our lives?

5. Reread Zechariah 4:6 ***This is the word of the Lord to Zerubbabel: "Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit, says the Lord."***

Why was this verse encouraging to Zerubbabel?

6. Reread Galatians 6:9 ***Let's not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.***

Can you think of a time that you experienced the truth of this verse? Tell the group about it.

Wrapping It Up: Pray that God would give you the fortitude to persevere when obedience gets tough.