**Fellowship CommUnity Group**

**Discussion Guide for Leaders**

*Series: Ruin, Rebuild, Renew*

*Sermon: Confession Before Worship*

*2-10-19*

***Group Leaders & Host Homes*** *: Thank You for your service to the Lord and to your group by faithfully opening your homes and through leading the groups in discussion. May God richly bless you as you continue to participate in this disciple making ministry.*

1. **Getting To Know Each Other** Opening Question: **Which of these construction tasks would you prefer best to be involved with? Demolition, Rebuilding, or Creating. Pick only one.**

* **Opening Prayer**. (Either leader, host home or someone who is willing to pray out loud)

*(Notes from message for reference only – use only as needed)*

**\*\***Use Sermon notes bulletin insert

**The People’s Approach to Rebuilding**

* 1) The people gathered with single-minded unity.
* 2) The people were influenced by clear God-centered leadership.
* 3) The people overcame fear and pursued confession and sacrifice.
* 4) The people resumed the ceremonial feasts and sacrificial offerings prescribed by God.
* 1st day of the 7th month was the **Feast of Trumpets**, the 10th day of the 7th month was the **Day of Atonement**, the 15th day of the 7th month began the week-long **Festival of Booths or Tabernacles**.
* **What is the main point to the people’s approach to rebuilding?**
* > The people engaged in confession and sacrifice before worshipping Holy Almighty God.
* **> Present yourself to God as a living sacrifice**.

**Into The Text** (15 Minutes) (Leaders: This time is not meant to be application yet, this is time in the Word, before we seek to apply truth, we need to understand the truth. The section after this one will focus on application.)

1. Ask someone to read Ezra 3:1-2. *Ask: What does it mean that the people ‘gathered as one man’? Why is that significant? What role did Zerubbabel and Joshua play in this initial rebuilding?*
2. Ask someone to read Ezra 3:3*. Ask: What does it mean that the altar was set in ‘its place’? Why were the people fearful? Why did they start the rebuilding effort with the altar? Discuss the significance of the altar to Israel? What is a burnt offering?*
3. In order to better understand the feasts of Israel let’s read what the Lord commanded Israel in Leviticus. Ask someone to read Leviticus 23:23-38. These are the feasts the exiles wanted to begin celebrating again. *Ask: Why did the returned exiles in Ezra refrain from celebrating the feast of trumpets and the day of atonement? What does that say about their approach to worship?*
4. Ask someone to read Leviticus 23:42-43, then have someone read Ezra 3:4-6. *Ask: According to Leviticus 23, why was the Feast of Booths celebrated? Why were these exiles able to so easily identify with their ancestors who had been rescued from the bondage of Egypt? Discuss the significance of v4, ‘they kept the Feast of Booths as it is written’.*
5. Ask someone to read Ezra 3:6B*. Ask: Why is that verse so important to this passage? What does it signify?*

**Application & Discussion** (15-20 Minutes)

1. Say: **Let’s move to application and discussion**. *Ask: What does the OT sacrificial system of worship teach us about our relationship to God?* (God is holy, we are sinful) Discuss.
2. Ask someone to read Hebrews 13:10-16*. Ask: Do believers today need a physical altar? According to Hebrews 13, what kind of altar do believers today have? What kind of sacrifice does Hebrews 13:15 ask for? What sacrifices are pleasing to God according to V16?*
3. Ask: *Why do we need to pass through the altar of the work of Christ on the cross to worship God? Will this altar ever need to be rebuilt? Do you typically think about cleansing yourself through confession before coming to God in worship?*
4. *Ask: In what way can you offer yourself to God as a living sacrifice?*

**Closing Prayer Time**: (10-12 Minutes) **(Leader Say:**) Let’s close with a time of prayer. Let’s thank Jesus for making a way for us to go directly into the presence of God. Let us also confess our sins. *(Ask someone to open, let people pray as they feel led, and then leader closes.)*