**Fellowship CommUnity Group**

**Discussion Guide for Leaders**

*Series: Ruin, Rebuild, Renew*

*Sermon: A Return to Ruin*

*2-3-19*

***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: **In your view, what is the ideal thing to do on frigidly cold days?**

* **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

**Qualities of the People Returning to Ruin**

1) They were real people returning to the temple ruin of Jerusalem.

2) They were a people committed to the worship of God.

3) They were a people with a desire for purity in worship of God.

4) They were a people with a grateful attitude of generosity toward God.

**Four parts to their giving**

**1) They gave spontaneously**.

**2) They gave of their own freewill**.

**3) They gave unequally.**

**4) They gave a lot.**

**Another List**

* Revelation 13:8 …*everyone whose name has not been written before the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb who was slain.*
* Revelation 21:27 - *But nothing unclean will ever enter it [Heaven}, nor anyone who does what is detestable or false, but only those who are written in the Lamb's book of life.*

**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 2:1-2A. *Ask: How does this list of names help to remind us that these were real people with very real lives?* Ezra lists the names of the people by family name in V3-20 and then by town in V21-35. *Why do you suppose he did that?*
2. Ask someone to read Ezra 2:36-42*. Ask: Is it strange to you that the people returning are being categorized and listed by their role in temple worship? Why or why not? Why doesn’t Ezra list any of the trades people who are going to rebuild the temple? Does this list focus on the building itself or what the building will be used for? Why is that important?*
3. Ask someone to read Ezra 2:59-63. *Why does Ezra tell us about those who could not prove their Jewish lineage in V59? Why were some men excluded from the priesthood in V62? What does this say about the people’s desire for purity in their worship?*
4. Ask someone to read Ezra 2:64-67*. Ask: Describe what it must have been like for a group this large to travel 900 miles to Jerusalem. Why are there no details of the trip given?*
5. Ask someone to read Ezra 2:68-70. *Ask: What did the heads of the families do when they arrived on the ruined temple site? What does that say about their attitude toward God? Why did they give so much? What other things could they have done when they arrived?*

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

1. Say: **Let’s move to application and discussion**. *Ask: What is the most significant list of names your name has ever been included on? What list of names has meaning to you in your life?*
2. *Ask: What is God concerned with most in our worship as a church? What is God concerned with most in your worship as an individual?*
3. Ask: *Why is purity in worship so important? What are some things you can do to ‘purify’ your worship before the Lord?*
4. Say: Ezra tells us nothing about the trip back but he tells us what the people do when they arrive at the temple site. *Ask: Why does Ezra make it a point to tell us what the heads of families did when they returned? What can we learn from these ‘heads of families’ about generous giving? What impacts you the most about their giving?*

**Closing Prayer Time**: (10-12 Minutes) **(Leader Say:**) Let’s close with a time of prayer. Let’s ask the Lord to purify our worship and to give us generous hearts of giving. *(Ask someone to open, let people pray as they feel led, and then leader closes.)*