

## Accountability Questions

- **Did you spend 5 minutes a day at least 5 days last week reading the Bible?**
- **Did you share a God story with a non-believer this week?**
- **Did you have spend time alone with God this week?**
- **Have you kept your New Years spiritual goal?**
- **What is the Holy Spirit saying to you?**



# **Christian Faith Fellowship**

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- We are not a perfect church**
- We are not a perfect people**
- We are here because we know we need God's help and He has provided this help through Jesus Christ our Lord!**

- **Last week we looked at the Promise of God to bring His people back & rebuild the Temple in Jerusalem**
- **We looked at the prophetic writings of both Isaiah and Jeremiah and how God specifically said “70 years of captivity” - also - how God declared Cyrus would be used to return the people 150 years before Cyrus was king.**
- **We looked at the celebration of the foundation of the Temple being laid and how the older generation wept while the younger celebrated!**

- **We were looking at this historical event to learn several things for ourselves:**
- **To see that God is good to His word! He keeps His promises!**
- **To see how we can lose sight of God by seeing the worship stuff - as important as God Himself.**
- **To see that God can do something NEW and it doesn't have to look like it did before!**
- **Today, we will look further at this critical event in history and look at what we can learn in the process that is applicable to our lives!**

**Ezra 3 11...Then all the people gave a great shout, praising the Lord because the foundation of the Lord's Temple had been laid. 12 But many of the older priests, Levites, and other leaders who had seen the first Temple wept aloud when they saw the new Temple's foundation. The others, however, were shouting for joy. 13 The joyful shouting and weeping mingled together in a loud noise that could be heard far in the distance.**

**• Sorrow for what was -Excitement for what will be**

- **There is NO question God is in this!!**
- **The people are living exactly what God said He would do! They were living IN the Promise of God! In the promise is a great place to be!!!**
- **So – when you are living IN the promise of God living in the promised word – how does that go?**
- **Does living IN the promise = smooth sailing? Successfully completing everything in front of you right now?? (We often interpret it this way!)**

**Ezra 4 1 The enemies of Judah and Benjamin heard that the exiles were rebuilding a Temple to the Lord, the God of Israel.**

**• Obedience also means - awakening the opposition!**

**4 Then the local residents tried to discourage and frighten the people of Judah to keep them from their work. 5 They bribed agents to work against them and to frustrate their plans. This went on during the entire reign of King Cyrus of Persia and lasted until King Darius of Persia took the throne.**

- **A legal battle and a harassment of the people of God continued and the building stopped!**
- **This challenging experience for God's people continued – going back and forth and it took 20 years for the Temple to finally be complete!**
- **YES it was God's promise and plan for the Temple to be rebuilt and YES there was opposition that caused delays, discouragement, challenge, lack of focus, and at times a lack of faith that God was actually in this!**

**Ephesians 6 10 A final word: Be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. 11 Put on all of God's armor so that you will be able to stand firm against all strategies of the devil. 12 For we are not fighting against flesh-and-blood enemies, but against evil rulers and authorities of the unseen world, against mighty powers in this dark world, and against evil spirits in the heavenly places. 13 Therefore, put on every piece of God's armor so you will be able to resist the enemy in the time of evil. Then after the battle you will still be standing firm.**

- **We have read many devotionals, heard teachings, sermons, & prophetic words on these verses! As well we should!!**
- **However, in such things we can lose the significance of what it means in my daily life!**
- **The accusations against you among family, at work, the neighborhood, yes – even the church...**
- **You see – our obedience to God brings us into the light and in so doing the darkness begins to attack in whatever way necessary to put out the light!**

- **This moment in our lives, this moment in this churches history, this time in our country etc.**
- **We are being challenged to HOLD ONTO THE PROMISES OF GOD and be strong in our faith!!**
- **To see thru what God is doing to completion!!**
- **We must NOT hold God to our timeframe - hold Him to our schedule – to our agenda - to our dreams - to our history!**
- **We must believe God for what He is doing and hold fast to our faith in the face of opposition, discouragement, battles and struggles!**

**James 4 6 And he gives grace generously. As the Scriptures say, “God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.”**

**7 So humble yourselves before God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. 8 Come close to God, and God will come close to you. Wash your hands, you sinners; purify your hearts, for your loyalty is divided between God and the world.**

- It is time for the people of God to act upon the promises of God – resist the devil – draw near to God and do it with an undivided heart! ALL IN!**

## Action Steps

- What or Who is the enemy using in your life to bring doubt, confusion, discouragement, etc. to your faith?
- What was the last thing you stepped out in faith to do for God?
- Are you still pursuing it? Is it God's plan or yours? Do you know the difference? (Will it bring glory to God or you - yours)
- Do you recognize the current spiritual battle you are in? Have you humbled yourself before God in light of this battle?