

Restoration

Howell Ferguson (adapted)

The books of Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther are generally categorized as part of Hebrew History, yet there are many rich lessons that apply to us today.

The key theme of the book of Ezra is restoration. This book and are about God restoring His people back to their land. Because the covenant religiously and morally, God delivered them into the hands. After long years in captivity, Israel had learned the hard lesson of covenant violation. They were ready to come back home. Looking at Ezra portrays God restoring the heart of a Christian or even a church sinner.

Zerubbabel, a descendant of King David and Ezra, a descendant represent the need both of the king and of the priest in accomplishing the decree of the Persian king Cyrus (Ezra 1:1-5), Zerubbabel led the first return of Jews to rebuild the temple (Ezra 1-6). Ezra led the second return of Jews to restore religious and social order in Jerusalem (Ezra 7-10). Generally speaking, the work of the king is to build—or, in this case, to rebuild. The work of the priest is to cleanse. Spiritually speaking, both of these are essential in the work of restoring someone who has fallen into a sinful condition.

Of what, then, does spiritual restoration consist? It is simply giving back the control of our lives to God through the lordship of Jesus Christ. It is the renewed recognition of God's right to own us and direct our lives. But spiritual restoration also involves cleansing. The penitent soul is cleansed by our great High Priest who, upon a confession of sin, washes away the guilt and restores the fallen back to a place of fellowship and blessedness.

The great lesson, then, is that Jesus Christ our Lord and High Priest knows the way to lead His people back home when they fall astray. Regardless of how far we may have wandered away, Jesus, who is "*the way, the truth, and the life*" (John 14:6) is ready to guide and cleanse us from every stain. "*If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness*" (1 John 1:9). What a blessing it is to know that He is both ready and able to provide this restoration; all He asks us to do is obey His will in seeking it.

Happy Birthday this week to:

- Bradford Durham—9/24
- Lyn Shrader—9/25
- Ivy Bush—9/25
- Ed Mickens—9/25

Happy Anniversary this week to:

- Gene & Nancy Benefield—9/23
- Herb & Shirley Baker—9/23
- Paul & Yvette Mays—9/25
- David & Hazel McFalls—9/26



WOW

The next regular meeting will be on October 12th at 10:30.

WOW Bus Trip

Please sign up for the September 25th Hillbilly Hideaway. Seating capacity on the bus is 54. Giving your money to Don or Mitzi reserves your seat. Other congregations will be invited to enjoy this trip.

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Daniel Ceglowski, Leah Durham's boyfriend, is at basic training for the Army National Guard.

Ty Stricklin has received his orders to Afghanistan in November.

Angela Halling is currently stationed in Korea.

BUNCO KICK-OFF

The new BUNCO game kick-off will be October 15th at 7:00 pm in the fellowship hall. Come learn how to play. Sign up sheet is posted. See Amanda Brown for more details.

REJOICE!!

We have a new brother in Christ, Justin Maio. His address is 206 East Hill Court, Salem, VA. 24153. Phone # is 540-491-1280.

West Side Youth

**9/17—9/19 Rush Weekend—FHU
Sunday, 9/19—TBS at Teen Center**



TEAMS

Please let the office know of any plans for upcoming team events.

CONGRATULATIONS

Fred and Sandra Altizer became grandparents for the 2nd time as Jacob Scott was born Saturday, Sept. 11.

Marguerite Charles became a great grandmother for the 20th time to Elijah James Charles, son of Don Charles.

“POWERFUL PROMISES”

Turn, Turn, Turn speakers this year are: Donna Faughn, Sandi Stilwell, & Elizabeth Bailey. It will be on Saturday, October 2, at West Side from 8:30a—2:00p. Breakfast and lunch will be provided at no charge. Register one of these ways: www.westsidecofcsalem.com, give your name and email address to Jeanny, or call the church office at 540-389-9139.

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SEPT. ITEMS FOR THE STAFFORDS:
“Snack pack” 100 calorie snacks (Cheetos and Ritz Mix), sliced pepperoni.
Give your items to Jeanny and she will ship them over!

For Your Information

TUESDAY NIGHT TALENTS

Tuesday Night Talents continues this week. Bring your dinner and join us for the work!

LADIES' NIGHT OUT

Our first Fall LNO will be September 30th at 6:30 pm at Frank's Pizza on Brambleton Avenue. Sign up sheet is posted.

TEACHERS' MEETING

The first Teachers' meeting of the new session is scheduled for September 26th at 4:30 with the Cradle Roll teachers providing snacks. Come with any needs, suggestions or ideas that you might have and give these to Josh prior to the meeting.

ATTENTION TEACHERS

Your help is needed by the TTT planners. Please look through your material for pictures for women of the Bible. Be sure to put your classroom information on the back of the picture so it can be returned to you. Give this material to Lori Cook or Sandra Neighbors.

TTT DECORATIONS

TTT planners are needing clocks to use as decorations on October 2nd. If you have an unusual clock or sundial that can be borrowed for that date please see Rebecca Durham or Lori Whitlow.

GREAT SMOKY MOUNTAIN MARRIAGE RETREAT

The Retreat is scheduled for February 16-19, 2011. at the Pigeon Forge Holiday Inn Conference Center. Registration is limited to the first 500 couples. For details see www.smokymountainmarriage.com or call (256) 435-9356. More details are posted on the board.

AREA GOSPEL MEETINGS

Pulaski gospel meeting is Sunday, Sept. 19-22 with various speakers. Dale Ridge meeting with Garland Elkins will be October 17-20. Collinsville meeting is October 24-27 with Steve Canup. Also, an area-wide sing is scheduled for October 2nd from 6:00-8:00 pm at the Harrisonburg, Va. church. More details for these events is posted on the board.

SYMPATHY

Our sympathy is extended to the families of Teresa White, friend of the Gearharts; Stephen Kosswig (20's), soldier & friend of Leah Durham's boyfriend, who died last week; J.D. Barnett, a gospel preacher who baptized Michele Nikkel.

We just learned of the passing of our friend and brother in Christ, Larry Phillips, on Thursday. Arrangements aren't known at this time. Also Stephanie Stafford's father, Paul Aultman, died Friday. She was able to get a flight from Tanzania to be with her family in Mississippi on Saturday.

Senior Servants

Lynn Anderson
Norma Miller
Betty Buckner
Marguerite Charles
Jim Dorsett
Al Farrow
Collin Gregory
Walter & Betty Jenkins
Martha Keith
Margaret Kratz
Miriam Majors
Jo Musgrove
Grace Myers
Evelyn Scott
Elsie Smith
Ruth Stanton
Evelyn White
EV Wimmer
WJ Wood

9-10
20-07



- Kelli Railey (47), sister of John Gay, has been diagnosed with terminal cancer.
- Annette Shrader is continuing to recover at home.
- Don Pettit is having some tests and would appreciate our prayers.
- Garland Bargis, Jo Ann's daughter-in-law's grandfather, has been diagnosed with cancer. His condition is serious.
- Bethel Haller (85), friend of Bonnie Mellon, is suffering from dementia and cancer.
- Erica Register (20's), friend of Lori Cook, had a bone marrow transplant. Address is on the board.
- Naola McCormick will have cataract surgery 9/22.

Continue in prayer: Ruth & Glenn Hartman, Claude Crowe, Shannon VanRavestein, Lori Whitlow, Brooke Nicholls, Natalie Valentine, Collin Gregory, Don Pettit, Willard Campbell, Darlene Caldwell, Dale Janosik, Marguerite Charles

Announcements Danny Guard

Song Leader (AM) Jeff Durham

Opening Prayer (AM)

- 9/5 Charlie Gwaltney
- 9/12 Herb Baker
- 9/19 Adam House
- 9/26 Glenn Hartman

Preside at Communion: Wayne Dixon

Serve Table

- Fred Altizer, Sam Valentine
- Bobby Martin, Jerry Anderson

Closing Prayer

- 9/5 Ethan Rogers
- 9/12 Jack Cook
- 9/19 Gene Benefield
- 9/26 David Brown

Song Leader (PM) David Brown

Opening Prayer (PM)

- 9/5 Marc Laplante
- 9/12 Jeremy White
- 9/19 Eric Earnhart
- 9/26 Josh Whitlow

Scripture Reader Andrew Gibson

Closing Prayer (PM)

- 9/5 Glenn Gabbard
- 9/12 Mitch Jearls
- 9/19 Jim Bush
- 9/26 Greg Edwards

Serve Table (PM)

- Nathan Pelfrey, Bradford Durham

Song Leader (Wed) Bob Garby

Prayer (Wed)

- 9/1 Roger Mays
- 9/8 A. C. Janney
- 9/15 Adam House
- 9/22 Tom Richardson
- 9/29 Jim Harrington

Open/Close Bldg Jerry Anderson

Greeters Pettit/Peverall

Nursery Attend Sondra Tyler

Jean Argabright (PM)

Ushers Curtis Oakes/Tom Rogers

Handouts M. Brooks, Chandler Jearls

Prepare communion

- Melissa Rogers/Wanda Martin

Care of Bapt. Garments- Jo Ann Edwards

Cards/Pencils - A. Whitlow./Kevin Mickens

Last weeks attendance 9/12 & 9/15/10

Bible Class— 117 Worship Service—153

Sunday Eve.— 133 Wednesday Eve.—153

Contribution—\$4370

“But God...” (18)

The continuation of our look at some of the 44 times in which this phrase is found again finds us in the book of First Corinthians. As we have seen in our study, the phrase “but God” shows a contrast in what was done by or to others and what was done by God. What God accomplished was, of course, far superior to anything done by another or any outcome that might otherwise have been achieved. Let’s note a passage from the second chapter of First Corinthians, a chapter dealing with the message.

Paul declared that their faith should not stand in man’s wisdom but in God’s power (I Cor. 2:5). He revealed that the wisdom of God was spoken by inspired men in that day (I Cor. 2:7). He quoted Isaiah in support of his message: “Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him” (I Cor. 2:9; cf. Is. 64:4). Having thus stated that man had not had the mystery revealed, he then states, “*But God* hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God” (I Cor. 2:10). If God had not revealed the mystery to those inspired men, it would still be a “mystery” even today. That revelation was made known by the Spirit of God.

He further stated that it is only through the revelation of the Spirit that God’s mind, thus His will, is made known (I Cor. 2:11, 12). Those matters, made known to those men in that day, were then put into words and expressed in understandable fashion for all to know. The Spirit, through Paul, expressed it in this manner: “Which things also we speak, not in the words which man’s wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual” (I Cor. 2:13). The word “things” of verse 9 is picked up again in verse 13. So, those “things” which man had not been able to comprehend prior to that time were now being spoken (revealed by the Holy Spirit) through those inspired men. Were it not for this matter of “but God,” man would be without His word and hopelessly lost.

-Eddy

- Eddy