

king's chapel

Community Group Discussion Guide

Week of January 18th, 2015

This Week's Focus: The people of God face opposition and adversity.

This Week's Text: Ezra 4

*It's like in the great stories, Mr. Frodo. The ones that really mattered. Full of darkness and danger they were. And sometimes you didn't want to know the end ... because how could the end be happy? How could the world go back to the way it was when so much bad had happened? But in the end, it's only a passing thing ... this shadow. Even darkness must pass. **Sam, The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers***

He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in him.

Colossians 2:15

*The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. **Romans 16:20***

Related Texts: 2 Kings 17:24-41; John 16:33, 17:14-19; 1 Peter 2:9-12, 4:12-16; 2 Timothy 3:16-17; Philippians 2:12-13; Ephesians 6:10-13; 2 Corinthians 10:3-6; Romans 16:20; Colossians 2:13-15

Observations and Questions for Discussion:

- What in the text/sermon was most illuminating or helpful? Why?
- Read 2 Kings 17:24-41. How had these adversaries of Judah and Benjamin come into Samaria?
 - Describe their worship.
 - Why were they not allowed to join in the work of the temple?
- How can we discern if cooperating with others crosses the line into spiritual compromise?
- What is the application in our cultural context?

- What are the two teams we are to avoid joining according to Jesus' prayer? Reference John 17:14-19.
- Verses 6-23 forms a parenthesis describing many years of opposition toward God's people.
 - What does that say about God?
 - What does that tell us about opposition and adversity?
- Describe some of the tactics used by the Israelites opponents.
 - What kind of opposition have you faced in your own relationship with the Lord?
 - How did you handle it?
 - How did God work through it?
- How can we know whether a hindrance or opposition is due to the enemy, to God's timing, or to our own doings?
- What lesson can we draw from all of this?
- How can you be more successful in handling these areas of personal and spiritual conflict?
- Read Ephesians 6:10-13. What does this verse tell us about the opposition we face?
 - In what ways does this change the way we approach opposition and adversity?
- Knowing God's will can be a challenge if not specifically given to us in scripture.
 - What are some of the ways God shows us His will?
 - In what ways does this change the way we approach opposition and adversity?
- Read Colossians 2:13-15 and 1 John 3:8.
 - In what ways does the gospel guarantee our final victory?
 - In what ways does the gospel help us face opposition and adversity in a manner that glorifies God?

Gospel Celebration:

- On the cross, our God and Savior defeated the enemy!
- The empty tomb is our guarantee that Christ has forgiven our sins and therefore our greatest enemy, death, has been crushed!
- The gospel is our only hope of winning the battle against our adversaries, for it is where God's love and power are received.

Next Week's Text: Ezra 5 and 6