

Rebuild Don't Relax, Part 2

Steve Berger January 29, 2017

Review

by way of an overview, of our new study — **Rebuild Don't Relax**

- Rebuild Don't Relax, 2500-year-old story of Cyrus the Great and Jewish nation
- Jewish Nation had been in Babylonian captivity for 70 years, Cyrus the Great, king of Medo-Persian Empire allows return to Israel, and permission and provision to rebuild the city, walls, and Temple. Ezra 1
- Ezra 2. 50,000 returned and rebuilt; 100,000 stayed behind and relaxed. What *could* have happened in a short time, took 90 years. TRAGIC!
- 50,000 recognized miraculous activity of God, worked with a highly unlikely leader, and took the opportunity provided
- Cyrus' un-kosher, Medo-Persian, background didn't keep them from engaging with him, when he offered to do things that were in-line with their kingdom desires for their nation

Two important points

- These spiritual principles about rebuilding your life are right and timely *regardless* of what's happening in national politics — they supersede politics completely! I am sure they will better prepare you for what is coming the churches' way in the next few years. We need to prepare our hearts now — for proper action later
- This isn't some read-between-the-lines endorsement of all things Trump — it's not. If you think I'm ignoring or approving of the troubling behavior we've all seen... then you don't know me. I'm choosing to look at the bigger picture, discern the times, respond prayerfully and actively — just like we have at other times in our nation's history — with other imperfect leaders

“There are times in human history when God does unusual things with unusual people for the benefit of His people, there are times when spiritual winds and political winds converge so that epic, historic, miraculous things can happen... but God's people must seize the day with courage, rebuild their own lives, strive to rebuild the lives of others, and work to make the entire spiritual, biological and national family better, that time is now, let's rebuild, let's not relax!”

The Foundation of a Re-Built Life!

...picking up our story in Ezra Chapter 3

- **Ezra 3:1-7**

And when the seventh month had come, and the children of Israel were in the cities, the people gathered together as one man to Jerusalem. Then Jeshua the son of Jozadak and his brethren the priests, and Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel and his brethren, arose and built the altar of the God of Israel, to offer burnt offerings on it, as it is written in the Law of Moses the man of God. Though fear had come upon them because of the people of those countries, they set the altar on its bases; and they offered burnt offerings on it to the LORD, both the morning and evening burnt offerings. They also kept the Feast of Tabernacles, as it is written, and offered the daily burnt offerings in the number required by ordinance for each day. Afterwards they offered the regular burnt offering, and those for New Moons and for all the appointed feasts of the LORD that were consecrated, and those of everyone who willingly offered a freewill offering to the LORD. From the first day of the seventh month they began to offer burnt offerings to the LORD, although the foundation of the temple of the LORD had not been laid. They also gave money to the masons and the carpenters, and food, drink, and oil to the people of Sidon and Tyre to bring cedar logs from Lebanon to the sea, to Joppa, according to the permission which they had from Cyrus king of Persia.

The foundational components of a rebuilt life...

I. They committed to being a part of a unified community.

- verse 1 — the children of Israel gathered together as one man to Jerusalem
- perfect starting point to rebuild — we need one another — 40 “one anothers”

- **Hebrews 10:25**

...not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.

**The rebuilding of your life isn't a solo mission,
God designed the Body for this.**

- **Ephesians 4:16**

...the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love.

Application — Rebuilding requires community!

2. They committed to being people of prayer. They built the altar for sacrifice.

- altars are places of confession of sin, and communion with God — places of prayer!

- Exodus 27:1-8, altar burnt offering; Exodus 29:38-46, morning and evening sacrifices
 - **Exodus 29:42** — altar place of communion and prayer
“I’ll meet and speak with you there.”
- ***In their mind***, “Because God blesses, gives life and vitality... because Enemy steals, kills and destroys... we’re going to stay right with God, and stay close to God through confession and communion with Him. We’re going to be people of prayer!”
- I love their urgency and emphasis on prayer — they built altar, sacrificed, and prayed like the Temple was there, when it wasn’t. They didn’t wait for the Temple, they got after confession and communion, they got after prayer!
 - **Colossians 4:2**
Continue earnestly in prayer, being vigilant in it with thanksgiving

**The rebuilding of your life isn’t going to happen
apart from a vibrant prayer life.**

Application — Rebuilding requires prayer!

3. They committed to being people of the Word.

- verses 2,4 — “as it is written in the law of Moses,” that was the Word of God!
- committed to hearing AND doing — NOT hearing and rejecting = captivity!
 - **James 1:22-24**
But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man observing his natural face in a mirror; for he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was.
- “the Bible will keep you from sinning, sinning will keep you from the Bible.”

**The rebuilding of your life isn’t going to happen
apart from doing the Word!**

Application — Rebuilding requires doing the Word!

Picking up the story —

- **Ezra 3:10-13**
When the builders laid the foundation of the temple of the LORD, the priests stood in their apparel with trumpets, and the Levites, the sons of Asaph, with cymbals, to praise the LORD, according to the ordinance of David king of Israel. And they sang responsively, praising and giving thanks to the LORD: "For He is good, for His mercy endures forever toward Israel." Then all the people shouted with a great shout, when

they praised the LORD, because the foundation of the house of the LORD was laid. But many of the priests and Levites and heads of the fathers' houses, old men who had seen the first temple, wept with a loud voice when the foundation of this temple was laid before their eyes. Yet many shouted aloud for joy, so that the people could not discern the noise of the shout of joy from the noise of the weeping of the people, for the people shouted with a loud shout, and the sound was heard afar off.

4. They committed to being people of passionate worship.

- apparel, trumpets, cymbals, singing responsively, “He is good, His mercy endures forever toward Israel.”
- praising — shining, raving, acting foolishly
- giving thanks — hands held up and out
- shouting — to split ears, send alarm, make joyful noise
- weeping — remembering what was and seeing what is
- shouting great shout — battle cry for joy — hopeful future
- heard afar off — what happened in and through them was far-reaching!

**The rebuilding of your life isn't going to happen
apart from passionate worship!**

Application — Rebuilding requires passionate worship!

Very interesting observation —

5. The physical foundation of the Temple came as a result of the spiritual foundation of the people.

- the spiritual preceded and produced the natural — that's the order we need if we are going to rebuild. Too often we give natural ways more credence, power and opportunity to solve our problems than we do spiritual ways... backwards!

**The rebuilding we're needing will come when we submit
to the spiritual principals of the gospel of Jesus Christ —
over the natural ideas of man!**

*They committed to —
Community, Prayer, Word, Worship —
what a foundation!*

A word from Jesus on the importance of our spiritual foundation...

- **Luke 6:47-49**

Whoever comes to Me, and hears My sayings and does them, I will show you whom he

is like: He is like a man building a house, who dug deep and laid the foundation on the rock. And when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently against that house, and could not shake it, for it was founded on the rock. But he who heard and did nothing is like a man who built a house on the earth without a foundation, against which the stream beat vehemently; and immediately it fell. And the ruin of that house was great.

As we'll see next week, our rebuilding isn't going to go unchallenged, floods of opposition will rise, streams of attack will beat vehemently on your spiritual house — your life must be built upon the sure foundation of The Rock, Jesus Christ, the Chief Cornerstone of our foundation. Then we will not be shaken, then we will not fall, then we will not be ruined! Then we will be rebuilt!

COMMUNITY PRAYER WORD WORSHIP
great foundation to build your life upon

Discussion Questions

1. What are some of the physical events that you can foresee happening that we need to prepare our hearts for now?
2. In what ways are you currently, actively part of unified Christian communities?
3. What can you do to make your personal prayer life become more intense and intentional?
4. Does “hearing and understanding” the Word equal “doing” the Word? Why or why not?
5. How can what happens in passionate worship be “far-reaching”?
6. Can any of these four principles be left out when building a spiritual foundation?