

Church community in a time of rebuilding

Nehemiah 8

Nehemiah 8:10

- Go and enjoy choice food and sweet drinks, and send some to those who have nothing prepared. This day is holy to the Lord your God.
- Do not grieve, for the joy of the Lord is your strength.

Four main themes in Ezra/Nehemiah

1. Rebuild temple and *restore worship at heart of city and nation*
2. Teach the Torah and re-establish the law in the lives of the people *to develop the unique character of the 'called out people of God'*
3. Rebuild the walls so that the exiles can return and a *city community can be established in safety*
4. Act to ensure people are known for *mutual support and generosity rather than each family living for itself*. John Goldingay 2012

Rebuilding the Community in Jerusalem: the Foundations

- The Word of the Lord
- The Joy of the Lord
- Obedience

Word of the Lord

- People asked for the word to be read
- Listened
- Responded

Joy

- Then Nehemiah the governor, Ezra the priest and teacher of the Law, and the Levites who were instructing the people said to them all, 'This day is holy to the LORD your God. Do not mourn or weep.' For all the people had been weeping as they listened to the words of the Law. Nehemiah 8:9
- ...Do not grieve for the joy of the Lord is your strength. Nehemiah 8:10b

Joy

- The joy of the Lord is your strength
- Leaders told people not to weep but to be joyful.
- Why?

Obedience

- Feast of tabernacles
- Not trust in walls but in God
- Worked out in relationships:
Go and enjoy choice food and sweet drinks, and send some to those who have nothing prepared. This day is holy to the Lord your God. Nehemiah 8:10a

**REBUILDING: FRESH START OR
PRESERVE THE PAST?**





Rebuilding Woody: the foundations

- The Word of the Lord
- The Joy of the Lord
- Obedience

1 John 3:23

- ‘And this is His command: to believe in the name of his Son, Jesus Christ, and to **love one another** as he commanded us.’

Obedience in building real relationships

- **Nehemiah’s values for rebuilding community:**
- Vision
- Courage
- Honesty
- Sacrifice
- Generosity
- Effort

To take away

- What do I want out of church?
–What does God think of that question
...and my answer?
- How can I demonstrate the love of Christ to someone in Woody?
- “The joy of the Lord is your strength!”