

Connect Group Study Guide - 9

Title: Don't Rebuild What Broke You

Text: Ezra 9:1–5, 8

Theme: The danger of revisiting what God delivered you from and the grace that meets us in conviction

Series: Brick by Brick

Session Objectives

- To help participants identify where quiet compromise might be creeping back in
 - To encourage honest reflection — looking in the mirror rather than pointing the finger
 - To celebrate the grace that meets us even when we find ourselves back in the rubble
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Scripture Reading – Ezra 9:1-5,8

(1) After these things had been done, the leaders came to me and said, “The people of Israel, including the priests and the Levites, have not kept themselves separate from the neighboring peoples with their detestable practices, like those of the Canaanites, Hittites, Perizzites, Jebusites, Ammonites, Moabites, Egyptians, and Amorites. (2) They have taken some of their daughters as wives for themselves and their sons, and have mingled the holy race with the peoples around them. And the leaders and officials have led the way in this unfaithfulness.” (3) When I heard this, I tore my tunic and cloak, pulled hair from my head and beard and sat down appalled. (4) Then everyone who trembled at the words of the God of Israel gathered around me because of this unfaithfulness of the exiles. And I sat there appalled until the evening sacrifice. (5) Then, at the evening sacrifice, I rose from my self-abasement, with my tunic and cloak torn, and fell on my knees with my hands spread out to the Lord my God (8) “But now, for a brief moment, the Lord our God has been gracious in leaving us a remnant and giving us a firm place in his sanctuary, and so our God gives light to our eyes and a little relief in our bondage.

Sermon Recap

Pastor Cole reminded us that rebuilding doesn't just happen with bricks and walls — it happens with the small decisions we make in secret places too. In Ezra 9, the people had been restored and the temple was standing, but they quietly started to compromise again. On the surface, everything looked fine, but underneath, they were rebuilding what once broke them.

Pastor Cole showed us:

- Compromise feels small but leads to big trouble;
 - You can't heal what you won't see — you have to look in the mirror; and
 - Even when we're back in the rubble, God's grace meets us there.
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Discussion Questions

Compromise Feels Small, But It Starts Big Trouble (Ezra 9:1–2)

1. Why do you think the people started repeating the same patterns that once led them into exile?
 2. What does “quiet compromise” look like in everyday life today?
 3. Where do you sense the Holy Spirit might be warning you about small compromises right now?
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You Can’t Heal What You Won’t See (Ezra 9:3–6)

4. Pastor Cole talked about how easy it is to look out the window at other people’s mistakes instead of in the mirror at our own. Why do you think real repentance is so hard?
 5. Which “sticky notes” are the hardest for you to admit are still there?
 6. Read James 1:22–25. How does looking into the mirror of God’s Word help us see ourselves clearly?
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Grace Meets You in the Rubble (Ezra 9:8)

7. Ezra said, “But now for a brief moment, the Lord our God has been gracious to us.” How does grace give us hope even when we feel stuck?
 8. Pastor Cole said that grace interrupts our sin — it doesn’t ignore it. Where do you need to let God’s grace interrupt an old pattern or rebuild in your life?
 9. What is one area where you feel God is calling you to “rise from it” instead of rebuilding it?
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Until Next Time

- **Mirror Check:** Take a few minutes this week to stand in front of a mirror and pray: *“Lord, show me what I’ve been ignoring — and give me the courage to change.”*
- **Sticky Note Release:** If you wrote a note, keep it as a reminder to pray about it each day. Ask God for grace to remove what’s blocking your view.
- **Grace Reminder:** Put up a simple note somewhere you’ll see daily: *“I’m too free to go back.”*