

THE PLAN

23. The Temple II (Ezra-Nehemiah) February 13, 2022

Story Coordinates (Ezra 1:1-6)

People (Who is the story about?)

Place (Where is their home?)

Presence (How can they meet with God?)

Purpose (What did God tell them to do?)

(Deuteronomy 30:1-3)

The Story

- The Jews rebuilt the temple, but God's _____ didn't _____. (Ezra 6:15-18)
- They forced all the Jews with _____ wives to get _____. (Ezra 9:1-2, 10:10-11)
- They renewed the old, broken covenant with a new emphasis on _____ purity and _____-keeping. (Nehemiah 10:28-31)

- They rebuilt the walls around Jerusalem and _____ all the _____. (Nehemiah 13:1-3)

- In spite of their efforts, the Jews ended up still in _____ and no better at _____ the Covenant. (Nehemiah 13:28-31)

- In their passion for enforcing the _____, the Jews lost sight of God's plan to reach the _____.
(Deuteronomy 7:1-3, 10:18-29; 1 Kings 8:41-43; Ezra 9:1; Nehemiah 13:3; Isaiah 56:7; Jeremiah 12:14-16, 31:31-34)

The Morals

- God gives _____ to his people to help them fulfill their role in his _____.
- It is possible to follow those _____ in a way that interferes with God's _____.
- True repentance means following God's _____, not just his _____.

Spoiler Alert

- Jesus established the new _____ that can truly _____ us. (1 Corinthians 11:23-25)

Small Group Questions

1. Getting Started:

- What did you find most interesting about the sermon this week? The most helpful, eye-opening, or troubling?
- Have you ever seen someone (or maybe it was you?) who followed a rule in a way that totally undermined it?

2. Into the Bible (Matthew 12:1-14)

- What is the meaning of Jesus' argument in v. 3-6? What do those examples show us?
- What *do* the words in v. 7 mean, "I desire mercy, not sacrifice"? What is Jesus' point here?
- What is the meaning of Jesus' argument in v. 11-12? Why is it okay to heal on the sabbath?

- How do Jesus' arguments in this passage fit with the lesson of the sermon? How is Jesus focusing on God's plan? How are his critics missing God's plan?

3. Going Deeper

- How do Christians today follow God's rules in ways that interfere with his plan?
- How can we discern God's plan behind his rules? What guidelines do we have?
- How does the New Covenant enable us to follow God more faithfully? Have you experienced that?

4. Prayer

- Pray that God would guide each of your group members as you discern how to follow God's plan in your life.