

A READY SCRIBE

EZRA 7:6-10

Text: Ezra 7:6, 10

Ezra 7:6

⁶This Ezra went up from Babylon; and he *was* a ready scribe in the law of Moses, which the LORD God of Israel had given: and the king granted him all his request, according to the hand of the LORD his God upon him.

Ezra 7:10

¹⁰For Ezra had prepared his heart to seek the law of the LORD, and to do *it*, and to teach in Israel statutes and judgments.

Introduction:

In the midst of civil and religious ruin, harsh living conditions and spiritual apathy Ezra is used by God to revive Israel as he demonstrates the basics of being a consecrated believer.

Notice:

1. A DESIRE TO KNOW GOD'S WILL

A. Ezra had prepared his heart to seek the law of the Lord.

B. Ezra's motivation to know God's will and direction was a matter of the heart.

Heart is used in Scripture as the most comprehensive term for the authentic person. It is the part of our being where we desire, deliberate, and decide. It has been described as "the place of conscious and decisive spiritual activity," "the comprehensive term for a person as a whole; his feelings, desires, passions, thought, understanding and will," and "the center of a person.

Note

Matthew 15:8

⁸This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with *their* lips; but their heart is far from me.

The reason that we see so little lasting fruit from decisions is that so many decisions are shallow decisions and not decisions made from the depth of the heart.

Illustration:

An example of how out of kilter our priorities can get is seen in the story of a person who attended the Super Bowl. Surprised to see an empty seat at the Super Bowl stadium, the diehard fan remarked about it to a woman sitting nearby. "It was my husband's," the woman explained, "But he died." "I'm very sorry," said

the man. “Yet I’m really surprised that another relative, or friend, didn’t jump at the chance to take the seat reserved for him.” “Beats me,” she said. “They all insisted on going to the funeral.” - Coffee Break

2. A DETERMINATION TO DO GOD’S WILL

A. Ezra had prepared his heart to seek the law of the LORD, and TO DO IT.

B. Ezra was not only concerned to get knowledge of the will of God, but to put it in practice, to habitually exercise God’s will in his life.

C. Ezra was committed to walk the walk. Too few are willing to make any commitment to Christ.

Today, Christianity seems to be less a matter of commitment and more a matter of convenience. How often we hear, “I’ll come to church and gladly serve Christ, but I can’t commit to be in church every Sunday or at every meeting.”

What if you told your employer, I intend to work for your company but I can’t commit to be at work every workday? I’ll try to be there on time and as often as possible... that is unless I get company, or there’s a game or concert I want to attend ... or the company down the road is having open house” How long do you really think that you would work for that company?

What if a man said to his fiancée – I will make you the most important thing in my life except during football games, hunting season, the World Series, or when my Mom calls? How long do you think he would be engaged?

Listen, we make commitments every day – to our jobs, to clubs, to social and civic organizations, to sports and hobbies – to everything but Christ and His church!

Note:

Luke 9:57-62

⁵⁷ And it came to pass, that, as they went in the way, a certain *man* said unto him, Lord, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest. ⁵⁸ And Jesus said unto him, Foxes have holes, and birds of the air *have* nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay *his* head. ⁵⁹ And he said unto another, Follow me. But he said, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father. ⁶⁰ Jesus said unto him, Let the dead bury their dead: but go thou and preach the kingdom of God. ⁶¹ And another also said, Lord, I will follow thee; but let me first go bid them farewell, which are at home at my house. ⁶² And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.

Commitment is a foundation for successful Christian living. The Lord is going to stand behind His promises- He is committed to what He has said and done. For the Christian there can be nothing less. Commitment is an absolute necessity.

3. A DEMONSTRATION OF GOD'S WILL

A. ...Ezra had prepared his heart to seek the law of the LORD, and to do it, and to teach in Israel statutes and judgments.

B. Ezra determined not only to know God's will but that he should also act according to that will, so that by his example, as well as by his instructions, he might teach others to live in accordance with the will of God.

Ezra 7:10

¹⁰ For Ezra had prepared his heart to seek the law of the LORD, and to do it, and to teach in Israel statutes and judgments.

The word "teach" literally means to goad or incite. By word and by example Ezra sought to provoke or stimulate Israel into obeying God.

Remember:

Hebrews 10:23-25

²³ Let us hold fast the profession of *our* faith without wavering; (for he *is* faithful that promised;) ²⁴ And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: ²⁵ Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some *is*; but exhorting *one another*: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.

Titus 2:7

⁷ In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine *showing* uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity,

2 Corinthians 3:2-3

² Ye are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read of all men: ³ *Forasmuch as ye are* manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart.

Example is a lesson that all men can read.

What are you writing by your life? What do men read as they read your life?

Someone once wrote:

My life shall touch a dozen lives before this day is done;

Leave countless marks for good or ill, ere sets the evening sun.

This is the wish I always wish, the prayer I always pray:
Lord, may my life help other lives it touches by the way.

Close:

What is your hearts desire today?

If you are honest with yourself, are you more committed to the things of this life than you are to Christ?

How committed are you?

Are you sold out for Christ or have you sold out Christ for temporal matters?

What exactly are you teaching by your example?

Is the Body of Christ being enriched, encouraged, or enlarged by your life?