IT'S TIME TO MOVE FORWARD

It is time for the people of God to forget about past failures and move forward to fulfil God's ordained purpose for their lives.

KEY POINTS

- To move forward is to revive, re-establish, and reignite the principles of worship and consecration in our lives; pressing forward, allowing God to use us in mighty ways to fulfill His purpose for our lives.
- God promised Israel's forefather Abraham that He would give him land and make him the father of many nations. And God fulfilled these promises, though after many trials and tribulations (i.e. slavery in Egypt, etc.).
- The children of Israel were promised blessings if they obeyed God's commandments. However, judgement would follow if they disobeyed.
- The nation of Israel continually disobeyed, in spite of many warnings from prophets sent by God.
- Eventually, they were conquered: the northern kingdom, Israel, by Assyria in 721 BC; Judah, the southern kingdom, in 586 BC by the Babylonians.
- While Judah was captive in Babylon, Jeremiah prophesied that they would be restored back into the Promised Land (Jeremiah 29: 10-14).
- God still had a purpose for His people, even after their disobedience and His judgement.
- We are not living in this specific generation by coincidence (cf. Esther 4:14). God has a divinely appointed destiny for each of our lives.
- So, regardless of our current circumstances, it is time to move forward. We should not allow past failures to limit our potential for future success.
- Ezra and Nehemiah are separate books in our modern Bible but were originally a unified book believed to have been written by one author.
- They tell of the rebuilding of the Jerusalem temple, the restoration of the Jewish community to Jerusalem, and the reconstruction of the wall of Jerusalem, after the Babylonian captivity.
- Each time God opened a door for those who returned from Babylon to move forward and progress with the rebuilding of the temple or the walls of Jerusalem, they encountered opposition.
- Likewise, the apostle Paul experienced that "…a great and effectual door is opened onto me, but there are adversaries" (1 Corinthians 16:9).
- The children of Israel overcame the opposition they faced and moved forward to rebuild the temple of God (Ezra 3:10-12).

KEY SCRIPTURE:
Nehemiah 2:17-18

- Paul moved forward to accomplish the work of God (2 Timothy 4:7).
- In order to achieve God's intention for our lives, we also need to overcome the challenges and opposition we face.
- We need to take time out to worship and celebrate what God has already done in our lives, even before we have attained our ultimate goal.
- We need to "fight the good fight of faith" (1 Timothy 6:2) and recognize that "the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty through God" (2 Corinthians 10:4).
- There are going to be nay-sayers who lack faith and will be critical of how we are trying to please God (Haggai 2:3-9). You yourself may say, "I'm not equipped to serve in the kingdom of God."
- God's divine plan for our lives cannot be fulfilled by our ability only; it will require the power of God (Zechariah 4:6-7).
- So let's move forward and fulfil God's purpose for our lives (Romans 3:12-14).

DISCUSSION/REFLECTION TOOLS

1. Why do you think God allowed the Babylonians to destroy Jerusalem and the temple?
2. List some of the oppositions that we face as Christians. How can we overcome them?
3. Define how faith in God assists in the process of overcoming challenges.
4. Explain what you believe God was trying to communicate in Haggai 2:3-9.
5. How does Romans 3:12-14 help us to move forward to fulfill God's ordained purpose for our lives?
6. Describe some specific actions you can take that are consistent with the

Prayer Time

Lord, please help me to forget about past failures and move forward to fulfill your divine destiny for my life.

L.G. ice-Breaker: What is the most frightening thing you have done? Would you do it again?

WEEK OF SUNDAY, MARCH 18, 2018

NOTES

Meditate as you read through/listen to this week's message. If it helps, use symbols for your notes.

(Reminds me/Confirms) (New idea) (Think about)

(Do this) (Speaks to my heart) (Must share)

PRAYER NEEDS/THANKSGIVINGS