
Restored from Ruins:
“Fruit in Keeping With Repentance”
Nehemiah 10: 1-39

Thoughts to Shape and Spark Discussion:

“Remember the story in the *Imitation*, how the Christ on the crucifix suddenly spoke to the monk who was so anxious about his salvation and said, “If you knew that all was well, what would you, today, do, or stop doing?” When you have found the answer, do it or stop doing it. You see, one must always get back to the practical and definite. What the devil loves is that vague cloud of unspecified guilt feeling or unspecified virtue by which he lures us into despair or presumption. “Details, please?” is the answer.” - C.S. Lewis

“Repentance unto life is a saving grace whereby a sinner, out of a true sense of his sin and apprehension of the mercy of God in Christ, doth, with grief and hatred of his sin, turn from it unto God with full purpose of and endeavor after new obedience.” - Westminster Shorter Catechism, Question 87.

“To become that which you are not, you must go a way in which you are not.” - St. John of the Cross

“Bear fruits in keeping with repentance!” - Luke 3: 8

Themes and Questions to Guide Reflection and Response:

- What from the Scripture passage or the sermon made an impression upon you? Are there lingering questions to be answered or rabbit trails to be followed for you?
- Ask folks in your group to consider the quotations above. What does it spark in them?
- Are you suspicious of the word “obedience”?
 - How are obedience as a response to grace and legalism distinct and different?
 - What is your experience with legalism? What are its lasting effects in your life?
 - Lewis’ quotation above seems to assert that assured of grace we are liberty to stop doing certain things and/or begin practicing things.
 - Is that too simplistic?
 - Can Christians really just start obeying and stop sinning?
- What are specific areas of life or actions that you wish to see God’s grace transform for you?
 - How do you want to move beyond vague resolutions and generalities for Christian growth?
 - What stands as an obstacle to you enjoying union with Christ? What would it take to name, surrender, and get rid of it?
- Why are our covenants and pledges never enough?
 - How does the promise of heaven soothe us and motivate us in that regard?