

The Price of Faithfulness

Luke 14:26-33

The Price of Faithfulness

- 1. Israel and Judah had fallen into *idolatry* and *immorality*.
- a. God punished their sins with captivity (**Deuteronomy 28:45-48**); **2 Chronicles 36:15-21** (586 B.C.).
- b. Remnant was allowed to return in 536 B.C. and the temple was finally restored in 516 B.C. (**Ezra 6:14-15**).

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- 2. Ezra returned to Jerusalem about 60 years later (457 B.C.) to revive the worship and purity of the people, **Ezra 7:6-10**.
- a. Led by their rulers, Israel had fallen into sin by marrying pagan women, **Ezra 9:1-2** (**Deuteronomy 7:1-6**).
- b. Ezra was dismayed at the people's sin, **Ezra 9:3-4**.

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- 3. Ezra calls on the people to repent of their sins and turn back to God (**Ezra 10**). From it we learn what it means to deny ourselves in order to be right with God (**Luke 9:23**).

I. PUTTING AWAY SIN.

- A. We can Never be Right with God when Sin is Present in our Lives, **Isaiah 59:1-2**; **2 Corinthians 6:17-18**.
- 1. Sin is deadly, **1 John 3:4**; **5:17**; **Ephesians 2:1-3**.
- - Certain marriages were sinful in Israel **Ezra 9:2, 14**; **10:10**.

I. PUTTING AWAY SIN.

- B. Christians must Put Away Every Kind of Sin (**1 Thessalonians 5:22**)
- 1. The old man of sin, **Ephesians 4:22-24**; the flesh, **Colossians 3:5-9**.
- 2. Israelites had to put away their foreign wives, **Ezra 10:3**.
- 3. Like ancient Israel, one must put away a spouse in a sinful marriage, **Matthew 19:9-12** (**1 Corinthians 7:10-11**).

II. WHAT IT TAKES TO PUT AWAY SIN.

- A. The Sacrifice of Precious Things.
 - 1. Wives and children, **Ezra 10:3, 10-11, 44.**
 - a. The sinful nature of these marriages did not mean there was any less pain associated with repenting of them.
 - b. This keeps many from ending sinful marriages.
 - 2. Jesus is our example of sacrifice, **Philippians 2:5-8.**

II. WHAT IT TAKES TO PUT AWAY SIN.

- 3. A price will be paid to be a disciple of Jesus, **Luke 14:25-33.**
 - a. You must love Jesus more than your family. **14:26**
 - b. You must love Jesus more than your life. **14:26**
 - c. You must count the cost and pay the price! **14:28-33**

II. WHAT IT TAKES TO PUT AWAY SIN.

- 4. Some refuse to sacrifice for salvation, **Mark 10:17-22.**
 - a. Some in Israel refused to pay the price, **Ezra 10:15.**
 - b. What about us: A job? Friends and family? Acceptance?

II. WHAT IT TAKES TO PUT AWAY SIN.

- B. Self-Denial is Proof of Devotion to God, **Galatians 2:20; Philippians 3:7-8.**
 - - Self-denial shows we love Christ most, **Matthew 16:24-27.**

CONCLUSION

- 1. Israel could still obtain mercy and forgiveness through repentance; and most did, **Ezra 10:10-12.**
- 2. Christians can repent and do the first works by putting Christ first and putting away every sin, **Revelation 2:5.**
- 3. Offer yourself as a living sacrifice that God accepts, **Romans 12:1.**