

Living Water Fellowship

13th Sunday after Pentecost
22nd August 2021
COME TO JESUS

PRE-SERVICE MEDITATION REVIVAL ANTHEM (Rend Collective) CCL Licence 384660
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4mheM17ZRWM>

WELCOME and PRAYER OF THE DAY: Psalm 63 (NLT) READ IN UNISON

O God, you are my God; I earnestly search for you. My soul thirsts for you; my whole body longs for you in this parched and weary land where there is no water. I have seen you in your sanctuary and gazed upon your power and glory. Your unfailing love is better than life itself; how I praise you! I will praise you as long as I live, lifting up my hands to you in prayer. You satisfy me more than the richest feast. I will praise you with songs of joy...through Jesus Christ, our Lord... Amen.

GROW IN HIS GRACE

BIBLE READING: Nehemiah 8:1-12

FAITH CHAT:

1. Today...what is one thing for which you are incredibly thankful?
2. What is something you have recently learned from God's Word that is shaping how you live?
3. "The joy of the Lord is your strength." How are you finding this true at this time?

SONG: THY WORD (Amy Grant) CCL Licence 384660
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a6LC8cu03lg>

THE MESSAGE: ROAD TO RECOVERY: RESTORE COMMUNITY

PRAYERS:

The Communion:

Words of Institution & The Lord's Prayer:

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, & the glory are yours now & forever. Amen.

Worship during Communion: Jesus Strong & Kind CCL Licence 384660
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T5Y8s-Sz_ac&list=RDT5Y8s-Sz_ac&start_radio=1

GO IN HIS POWER

BLESSING: † _____, (Name), † child of God, the Word of God is alive & active in you!
Amen.

Announcements:

SONG: GREAT ARE YOU LORD (All Sons & Daughters)-CCL Licence 384660
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qCH1e3JgBjk>

SHOW HIS LOVE

NEHEMIAH 8:1-12

¹ All the people assembled with a unified purpose at the square just inside the Water Gate. They asked Ezra the scribe to bring out the Book of the Law of Moses, which the Lord had given for Israel to obey.

² So on October 8 Ezra the priest brought the Book of the Law before the assembly, which included the men and women and all the children old enough to understand. ³ He faced the square just inside the Water Gate from early morning until noon and read aloud to everyone who could understand. All the people listened closely to the Book of the Law.

⁴ Ezra the scribe stood on a high wooden platform that had been made for the occasion. To his right stood Mattithiah, Shema, Anaiiah, Uriah, Hilkiah, and Maaseiah. To his left stood Pedaiah, Mishael, Malkijah, Hashum, Hashbaddanah, Zechariah, and Meshullam. ⁵ Ezra stood on the platform in full view of all the people. When they saw him open the book, they all rose to their feet.

⁶ Then Ezra praised the Lord, the great God, and all the people chanted, "Amen! Amen!" as they lifted their hands. Then they bowed down and worshiped the Lord with their faces to the ground.

⁷ The Levites—Jeshua, Bani, Sherebiah, Jamin, Akkub, Shabbethai, Hodiah, Maaseiah, Kelita, Azariah, Jozabad, Hanan, and Pelaiah—then instructed the people in the Law while everyone remained in their places. ⁸ They read from the Book of the Law of God and clearly explained the meaning of what was being read, helping the people understand each passage.

⁹ Then Nehemiah the governor, Ezra the priest and scribe, and the Levites who were interpreting for the people said to them, "Don't mourn or weep on such a day as this! For today is a sacred day before the Lord your God." For the people had all been weeping as they listened to the words of the Law. ¹⁰ Nehemiah continued, "Go and celebrate with a feast of rich foods and sweet drinks, and share gifts of food with people who have nothing prepared. This is a sacred day before our Lord. Don't be dejected and sad, for the joy of the Lord is your strength!"

¹¹ And the Levites, too, quieted the people, telling them, "Hush! Don't weep! For this is a sacred day." ¹² So the people went away to eat and drink at a festive meal, to share gifts of food, and to celebrate with great joy because they had heard God's words and understood them.

Group Bible Study/Discussion:

1. Read Nehemiah 8:1-12. What questions immediately come to mind? What do you hear God say to you as you read it a few times to yourself? What do you find most important in this text? Why?
2. Under what circumstances might people need to be reminded of their central mission? Why is it sometimes difficult to "rally the troops"? What, in general terms, was the focus of Ezra & Nehemiah's work in Jerusalem beyond the rebuilding of the wall & the Temple? How is that reflected here?
3. In chapter 8, the phrase "the people" is repeated 13 times. God has brought them from their surrounding communities to be gathered in the square. What do you think is significant about this?
4. Now that the wall has been rebuilt, what is the request of the people who are now feeling restored AS A PEOPLE? How does Ezra respond? Why is that crucial? What would the implications be if he had said, "No"? Why is it significant that this event occurs in a place that is central to the daily life of Jerusalem & not simply in the Temple? What is significant about the way Ezra reads the law? How does he make it accessible to all the people? Would that help you?
5. How can the Word of God pierce our hearts in such a way that we are overwhelmed with sorrow? But once that happens, what should happen next? Read 2 Cor 7:9-10 to help you see more deeply here. How can realizing the gravity of our sin overwhelm us such that it overshadows Jesus being greater than our sin? What do we do to regain a proper perspective of the greatness & completeness of the forgiveness & restoration we have in Christ? How would you share that with someone who is not yet a disciple of Christ?
6. What is the *joy of the Lord*, and how is it our *strength*? How can we take our emotions under control, & choose to rejoice in the Lord even when we do not feel like it?
7. What other words or voices have influence in your life? How do they shape your identity & daily living? How do you discern what is truly from God over against what is merely of this world...or worse?
8. Why is it so important to keep the daily study of God's Word & applying what we learn to our lives as a primary focus in our relationship with Jesus? How is God's Word (hearing & obeying) such a crucial piece of our being disciples? How well would you say you are carrying out that part of your relationship with Jesus? What assistance could you use to get stronger there?
9. How does God's Word, given to his people, link their Exodus from Egypt with their return from exile? How does the study & application of God's Word restore them as a singular community here? How does your study of God's Word reinforce & renew your devotion to the God who has rescued you from sin, death & the devil? How does your study of God's Word reinforce & renew your place in & commitment to God's people at Living Water?
10. What acts of God do you celebrate regularly with great joy as one of God's people? Who can you invite to join you in that celebration & joy?