

FIRST THINGS FIRST: WORSHIP

NEHEMIAH 7-8
(FOCUS: NEHEMIAH 8:1-18)

REFLECTIONS

Take time to reflect on one thing from your week.

What is worship? How has corporate worship (singing, preaching, corporate prayer, etc.) played a part in your journey of faith?

DIVING DEEPER

- What is the response of the people to the reading of God's Word in v5-6? Why is worship an appropriate response to the hearing of Scripture?
- Why do Nehemiah, Ezra and the Levites tell the people not to grieve but to "celebrate with great joy" (v12)? What is the significance of this?
(Note: point people to the context that the wall has been completed [see 7:1])
- The festival of booths (v14) was one of the three major festivals (alongside the Passover & Pentecost) where Jews would return to Jerusalem. That they didn't know to celebrate this festival is like a Christian not knowing to celebrate on Easter and Christmas. Why are these celebrations (Easter, Christmas, or even baptism and communion) important to the vitality of a Christian community?

APPLICATION CHALLENGE

Are there ways we are called to worship together as a small group? Outside of what we already do, is there a way we can grow as worshippers together?

"True worship is a valuing or a treasuring of God above all things....We worship God authentically when we know him truly and treasure him duly." (John Piper)

Read John Piper's article [HERE](#) as a primer for your discussion.