

The Shining Light

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I. Introduction.

- A. Text: Nehemiah 8.
- B. The re-building of the walls is a picture of rebuilding of the life damaged by sin.
- C. The current text brings re-instruction. We need to change the way we think about ourselves and about life.
- D. This text corresponds to Romans 12:2.
- E. The instrument for change is always the Word of God.

II. The people were so hungry for spiritual answers that they listened to the Word of God from daybreak until noon.

- A. It was predicted that there would be a famine in the land for the Word of God.
- B. When the Word of God is opened up, people begin to understand themselves.

III. The priests made the meaning of the Bible clear so that the people could understand it.

- A. The business of Christians is to understand His Word and to think His thoughts after Him.
- B. The Levites were likely breaking the people down into small groups where they could ask questions and answer them.

IV. The people wept because the Word of God revealed the wrong within them.

- A. They saw that they had been the cause of all the ruin around them.
- B. Evil was caused by their arrogance.
- C. Folly reigns when the church is not responsible for itself. (Mark 7)
- D. Only when one opens the book of God can he see the source of the terror around him.
- E. One of the most terrible things is the lack of a sense of sin.

V. Weeping is not the final word--the joy of the Lord is the strength of those who hear God's Word.

- A. Forgiveness brings joy and restoration.
- B. God restores to wholeness by exposing people to His Word.
- C. The ministry of the Word of God is to heal us.

VI. The celebration of the booths was to be a reminder of the Israelite's time in Egypt--this was to teach them that they were pilgrims in the world.

- A. The great treasures of life have not yet been had.
- B. The believer is to hold material goods lightly.
- C. Reading the Bible is seeing things as they really are.

Application questions:

1. Who has been a model for you of practicing consistent Bible study? How do they make sure that they are in the Word on a regular basis?

2. When has the Word of God surprised you by revealing that the problem was within your own heart?

3. Why should guilt not be the result of sin exposed by the Word of God? Explain.
