

## **The Bible is the Answer**

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Intro:

- A. Humpty Dumpty is an interesting parallel to our times.
  - B. Our society is broken and nothing can put it back together.
  - C. What kind of man can be effective in our times?
  - D. Ezra shows us a man who prepared his heart to serve the Lord in his times.
    - a. Objectives determined outcome.
    - b. People need a lifelong ambition.
    - c. A man told me recently that he climbed the ladder of success only to discover later that his later was against the wrong wall.
    - d. I don't fear we will fail; I fear we will succeed in doing the wrong thing.
  - E. What is the historical setting of Ezra?
- I. Let's look at the man Ezra.
- A. Between chapters 6 and 7 there is a 58 year gap.
    - 1. God was grooming a man to be used in his generation.
    - 2. The contours of Ezra's commitment provide a model for us today.
  - B. Ezra prepared his heart to seek the word of God.
    - 1. We cannot impart what we don't possess.
    - 2. We need to understand what God has said.
    - 3. He had a passion for truth.
    - 4. To seek is a verb that pictures an animal looking for food for its young.
    - 5. This should be a picture of us.

4. Tozer wrote the Knowledge of the Holy saying what God declares the believing heart confesses without the need of further proof.
  - a. To obtain proof is to render faith superfluous.
  - b. To seek proof is to give place to doubt.
  - c. I believe Christ died for me because it is incredible; I believe that he rose from the dead because it is impossible.
  - d. The scholar is to guarantee the purity of the text; to discover the true meaning of the text.
  - e. He cannot sit in judgment on what is written, however, whether the word is scientific or unscientific.
  - f. He cannot bring the meaning of the word before the bar of reason.
  - g. The word judges the scholar, not visa versa.
  - h. That was the attitude of Abraham who offered his only son as a sacrifice.
  - i. He could not bring this decision to the bar of his reason.
  - j. Hebrews tells us that God saw he believed in the resurrection.
5. God wants to communicate with you in this century.
6. If one tenth of what we believe is true we should be ten times more excited than we are.
7. Most of us are not excited by the truth; we're embalmed by the truth
8. We are not under the word of God not in the word.
9. Being under the word is no substitute for being in it.

10. We cannot fall in love by proxy.
11. The answer to motivation is to back people into the word of God.
12. Backing a person in to 10,000 volts of electricity gets attention.
13. Human argumentation will not convince people.
14. We need to explode the word in the lives of people.
15. When I came to Dallas Theological Seminary some of my friends scoffed saying, that's a glorified Bible college.
16. I make no apology for my profession.
17. The psalmist said, "How I love thy Law."

C. Ezra prepared his heart to do the word of God.

1. He had a passion for truth and for life.
2. Knowledge alone leads to pride.
3. Experience alone leads to spiritual perversion.
4. Revealed truth understood produces a radical lifestyle.
5. James said be doers of the word not hearers only.
6. Evangelicals are often overexposed and underdeveloped.
7. The Lord is never impressed with how much I know about the Bible.
8. Knowledge is merely the produce of what he reveals; he is impressed with how much we are conformed to the image of Christ.
9. Obedience is the acid test of spirituality.
10. This generation is weary of words but starving for reality.
11. Only the word understood and obeyed can bring reality into experience.

D. Ezra prepared his heart to teach the word of God.

1. Communicating the word that transformed his own life was his goal.
2. What qualifies a teacher?
  - a. One who knows something.
  - b. One who has experienced something.
  - c. To teach means to cause someone to learn.
  - d. Teaching is measured by what others do as a result of your teaching.
  - e. Teaching another launches a process that does not end.
  - f. Some of the greatest teachers of our generation never bear the title in a seminary; they are men and women influencing others.
  - g. I love to ask people what their spiritual gifts are.
  - h. Lay ministers can minister to people that professionals can't reach.
  - i. Super Bowl XI was boring but the previous night two born again believers, George Beeler and Dave Rhodes.
    - a. They wondered how they would respond if they won the Super Bowl.
    - b. They prayed and committed this opportunity to God.
    - c. CBS talked to Dave who gave precedence to his new birth over winning the Super Bowl.
    - d. Some players are committed to reaching the NFL with the Gospel of Christ.

e. People need to meet someone who knows something and who have experienced something.

3. I used to say technique is the key to teaching but now I know it's passion.

a. Years ago I was at a convention and met a 83 year old woman who told me she taught junior high boys.

b. She had 13 boys and attended this convention because it's the first time the convention came close enough for her.

c. She came to find something to help her become a better teacher.

d. There are 84 young men in ministry today from her Sunday school class.

e. What sphere has God placed you in this last quarter of the 20<sup>th</sup> century?

f. God places us uniquely in our spheres of influence to impact others.

g. You are God's choice for this task.

II. Conclusion; the Bible is the answer.

A. Do you seek truth?

B. Have you had an experience with the God of truth?

C. Are you ready to teach the truth to others?

D. Then you are part of an increasing core of men and women who are making an impact on this generation for Jesus Christ.