



July 19, 2020 - The Return Journey
Ezra 1-2 Kevin Sneed

1. The book of Ezra is about a journey from exile to renewal. Describe a time when you felt exiled (separated) from God or from your church family? How?
2. How might you personally relate to the disorientation of exile today? A sense of personal failure? Disillusionment over your own sin? A distance from God and other believers? The separation due to the pandemic?
3. Read Ezra 1:1-4. What do you think the Israelites were feeling after they heard Cyrus' edict? What can we learn from this example of God using a pagan king to accomplish his sovereign purposes?
4. Read Jeremiah 1:10; 29:10-11 and Ezra 1:5. How have you come to understand that God's grace initiates every journey from exile, to rebirth and restoration?
5. How is God's grace stirring you toward a journey of restoration?
6. Read through the census in Ezra 2. How might God be inviting you to uproot and change your status quo?

7. Read Ezra 2:1. Since the journey is a hope in process, what must you keep in mind to maintain focus in the journey? What tempts you to lose focus as you move from exile to restoration?

8. Share with your small group where you see yourself in the journey right now.
 - Are you at the beginning currently in exile?
 - Are you responding to God's invitation to move and change your status quo?
 - Are you a hope in process on the journey but trying to stay focused?

Share with the rest of your small group a positive next journey step for you.