

Real Life Downloaded & In the World

For May 18, 2025

Lesson Focus: Worship in the midst of fear and disappointment.

Bible Basis: Ezra 3:1–6, 10–13

Memory (Key) Verse: Ezra 3:11b

Summary (Lesson Title): Worship Is Restored

Step 1

JOY AND SORROW AS A NEW COACH STEPS UP

After three decades at the helm of one of the NBA's most successful franchise teams, Gregg Popovich is stepping down as the head coach of the San Antonio Spurs. Three times he was chosen as the NBA Coach of the Year after he led the team's rebuilding, following a disastrous 1996 season. Among many innovations and pioneering changes, Popovich is known for his move to hire the first female full-time assistant NBA coach, the shattering of a gender barrier. The Spurs' managing partner, Peter J. Holt, commented that "Coach Pop's extraordinary impact . . . is profound. His accolades and awards don't do justice to the impact he has had on so many people." At the same time that players are seeing the departure of their coach, many are eager to see what the new head coach, Mitch Johnson, will be able to accomplish.

JOY AND SORROW AT THE DEDICATION OF A NEW TEMPLE

When the Israelites who had returned from Babylonian exile laid the foundation of a new temple in Jerusalem, some of them shouted for joy. But those who had experienced the former temple wept bitterly. Those born in captivity rejoiced to have a new place that would be dedicated to the worship of the Lord. But those who knew what had come before felt sorrow. Weeping and joy intermixed.

Questions

1. When have you ever felt joy and sorrow together?
2. At the end of your career, what would you want to be known for accomplishing?
3. Why do you think the older Israelites wept at the foundation for the new temple?

Additional Links

Any videos or web materials are for your personal use.

If you play any media files in class, be sure to have the necessary rights to do so.

1. Contemporary Worship Weekly
<https://open.spotify.com/playlist/4Gkwp5ZDf5Eww31SGcF4n?si=63d4fa10ddfa47aa>

2. Echoes Worship Weekly
<https://open.spotify.com/playlist/2psN0hA48H9lyh6vJc5KKb?si=3ef5bb07ee15409e>
3. Traditional Worship Weekly
<https://open.spotify.com/playlist/2utAcyXMWglyBYmM6iBLfi?si=26c938e689ad4d1f>
4. Gregory L. Cuéllar's "Commentary on Ezra 1:1–4; 3:1–4, 10–13"
<https://www.workingpreacher.org/commentaries/narrative-lectionary/rebuilding-the-temple-2/commentary-on-ezra-11-4-31-4-10-13-3>
5. Rachel Wrenn's "Commentary on Ezra 1:1–4; 3:1–4, 10–13"
<https://www.workingpreacher.org/commentaries/narrative-lectionary/rebuilding-the-temple-2/commentary-on-ezra-11-4-31-4-10-13-2>
6. Tim Mackie's "Overlooked: Ezra-Nehemiah—Not the Leadership Lessons You Expect"
<https://bibleproject.com/articles/overlooked-ezra-nehemiah/>

You can find **Steps 2 and 3** in your teacher's guide. For upper elementary, middle school, and high school your Step 4 appears below. For adult, use the Step 4 in your teacher's guide. To purchase a teacher's guide, please visit: Bible-in-Life or Echoes.

Step 4

You can find Step 4 of this lesson in your teacher's guide, which you can purchase by visiting Bible-in-Life or Echoes.