

Refresh (October 3, 2021)

“Loving Our Community”

OPENING QUESTION:

SERMON DISCUSSION: How were you impacted by the sermon? What new thoughts or lessons did you discover? In what ways did you find yourself challenged and/or encouraged?

READ Jeremiah 29:1-14

1. During the time of the prophet Jeremiah, Jerusalem and the Temple were destroyed, and the Israelites were carried off to Babylonia due to their disobedience and refusal to listen to God’s messengers (2 Chronicles 36:15-23). Jeremiah wrote a letter to reassure the surviving exiles that God had not abandoned them nor forgotten His purpose for them. But God did have instructions regarding how they were to live in this foreign land as resident aliens.

What is the definition of a “resident alien” and how does this fit the Israelite’s situation in Babylon? How might the label “resident alien” apply to believers today (Philippians 3:20-21; Ephesians 2:18-19; 2 Corinthians 5:20-21)?

2. From Jeremiah 29:5-7, list the instructions given to the exiles by God through Jeremiah. Discuss what may have been their response (Surprise? Disappointment? Relief? etc.) What were they told would be the result of their obedience according to verse 7?

3. Find principles evident in each of the scriptures below. How would the application today of these principles result in believers contributing to the “welfare of the city” (Jeremiah 29:7)?

Psalms 90:14

Isaiah 41:10

Matthew 5:43-48

Romans 12:18

Ephesians 4:29

1 Timothy 2:1-4

4. Give examples of ways that the body of Christ can “seek the welfare” of their cities, counties, states, countries? Name something you would like to see SPEP do to bless the surrounding area? How could you contribute to the good of your community?

5. What warning was given to the exiles that is also a warning for us today (Jeremiah 29:8-9; 2 Timothy 4:3-4)? Give examples of types of false “prophets” that people might listen to in our culture? How can you best heed this warning?

6. Describe the message of hope given in Jeremiah 29:10-14. In what ways do you find this message hopeful?