

Study Questions for the September 20, 2020 Sermon:
“Everybody Praise Him!”
Nehemiah 11-12

1. Pastor Paul made the point that Christians are different from unbelievers because of the God we serve. If there was an idol in your life (for example: money, romance, popularity) that you have rejected, and now submit to God in that aspect of your life, share how rejecting the idol and embracing God has changed you.
2. Verse 11:1 says that the people cast lots to determine who would live in Jerusalem. Pastor Paul made the point that God can work through the randomness of casting lots:
 - a. If we agree, do you believe it is OK to make a decision by flipping a coin or something similar?
 - b. If your answer to “a” was “sometimes”. When is it OK to leave a decision up to chance?
3. Pastor Paul emphasized that callings are not necessarily spiritual; God may be calling you to carry out a secular responsibility. He asked us to ponder: *What is God's calling on my life?* and *What sacrifices must I make to carry out my calling?* If you believe that you are carrying out God's calling, please share what you are doing and what sacrifices you have made.
4. 1 Peter 2:9 refers to believers as a “royal priesthood”. A priest is regarded as someone who has a more direct and intimate relationship with God than do common people. Share a verse that affirms believers have a direct and intimate relationship with God and need (apart from Jesus) no intermediary.
5. Verse 12:30 says the priests “purified themselves, and they purified the people and the gates and the wall.” Pastor Paul urged us, when reading the Old Testament, to think about what has changed in the New Covenant, and what carries over from the Old Covenant. Give an example of one thing that carries over, and one thing that has changed.

6. Note from Verse 12:30 that the priests first purified themselves. Here is a note from the David Guzik commentary: *Without purity, we can't worship God in spirit and in truth, as Jesus commanded us to (John 4:24). Psalm 24:3-4 asks, Who may ascend into the hill of the Lord? Or who may stand in His holy place? He who has clean hands and a pure heart... How do we purify ourselves, so that we can participate in worship?*

7. Pastor Paul asked the congregation to pray joyfully, loudly, and daily this week. If you did that, please share your experience.