



## river west church

Following Jesus, Good Shepherd and Risen Lord

Zechariah 10

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Before our two month study on prayer began, we had worked our way through 9 chapters of Zechariah. Zechariah is God's word of encouragement for all those who have answered God's call to build. This has been powerful in our lives and in our church, because this is exactly what we are doing in our lives; we are answering God's call build. God is the initiator. We are not in the lead, God is. God is on a mission in this world through Jesus Christ. He has a master plan. This is at the very center of the message of the Gospel. Jesus came to save. He came to redeem us. That means He saves us from both the guilt and the power of sin. He accomplished this through His death and resurrection. But that's not the end of the matter, it's actually the beginning! Jesus the risen Lord intends to build a redemptive community to shine the light of Gospel truth and to do the hands on work of the Gospel. He is a builder. He calls us to build with and for Him. We are answering that call

Our study in prayer has been the perfect counterpart for our study in Zechariah. It is not enough for us to learn about God's master plan or to learn principles of doing Christ's kingdom work. The most important thing we can do is to actually pray. So now, we learned some practical things about prayer. We have begun to grow stronger in our life of prayer. This is at the heart of answering God's call to build!

This is why we are going to return to the conclusion of Zechariah, chapters 10-14. As we do, we are going to be immersed once again in God's master plan. It's a plan that always focuses like a spotlight on Jesus. And the themes that we encounter in these chapters will be especially powerful for us as we enter into the Easter season, focusing on the death and resurrection of Jesus. My prayer is that these studies will prepare our hearts to encounter Christ in powerful ways.

### **Good Shepherd and Risen Lord**

Chapter 10 opens with a theme that is repeated through the rest of the book – the contrast between the false shepherds who are misleading and destroying the people, and the true shepherd, the Messiah, Jesus our Lord. In these chapters, Zechariah paints a picture of Jesus that is masterful and compelling. As you read through the rest of Zechariah, always be on the alert for this theme of the shepherd (both the good and the bad). Much of it is highly symbolic, so we will have to stretch our thinking a bit. We will also have to tune into other portions of the Bible that will bring more clarity to this theme.

The bottom line in all of this is true leadership. Who or what will we follow and why? Who are the false shepherds and where will they lead us? Why do we fall prey to their "influence" in our lives? Chapter 10:2 is a key warning, "For the household gods utter nonsense, and the diviners see lies; they tell false dreams and give empty consolation. Therefore the people wander like sheep; they are afflicted for lack of a shepherd."

How is the leadership of Jesus different in our lives? What is the character of Christ's leadership? How can we hear His voice and follow His lead? Throughout these chapters we have incredible descriptions of Jesus as the true leader and shepherd of our lives. Our aim is to explore all that this means as we put our faith in Christ, as we follow Him daily, and as we answer His call to build. So now let's do at least three things in the coming weeks:

- 1) Let's look deeply into scripture and find the truth of Jesus – Gospel truth that will change our lives
- 2) Let's answer Christ's call to build His kingdom
- 3) Let's pray, everyday!