

RL GROUPS

Grace | God-sized Vision | For Every Generation

Ezra 9

1 After these things had been done, the leaders came to me and said, “The people of Israel, including the priests and the Levites, have not kept themselves separate from the neighboring peoples with their detestable practices, like those of the Canaanites, Hittites, Perizzites, Jebusites, Ammonites, Moabites, Egyptians and Amorites. **2** They have taken some of their daughters as wives for themselves and their sons, and have mingled the holy race with the peoples around them. And the leaders and officials have led the way in this unfaithfulness. **3** When I heard this, I tore my tunic and cloak, pulled hair from my head and beard and sat down appalled. **4** Then everyone who trembled at the words of the God of Israel gathered around me because of this unfaithfulness of the exiles. And I sat there appalled until the evening sacrifice.



Questions for Discussion

1. Read Ezra 9.
2. Why might the Israelites have been concerned about the influence of the world around them on their own culture?
3. What was their solution?
4. What might Jesus mean when he says (John 17) that believers should be “in the world” but not “of the world?”
5. How can Christians pursue holiness without alienating people who struggle with guilt?
6. Jesus was regularly in conflict with the Pharisees, religious teachers who wanted to be separate from outsiders. How do we reconcile Jesus’ holiness and Jesus love?

Take time to pray for for one another.