Accountability Questions

- **Did you spend 5 minutes a day at least 5 days last week reading the Bible?**
- **Did you share a God story with a non-believer this week?**
- **Did you have spend time alone with God this week?**
- **Have you kept your New Years spiritual goal?**
- **What is the Holy Spirit saying to you?**



Christian Faith Fellowship

- We are not a perfect church

-We are not a perfect people

-We are here because we know we need God's help and He has provided this help through Jesus Christ our Lord!

- In the O.T. the people of God had kept the Lord's name attached to them and usually included Him in their worship but with a divided heart!
- God is not ok with being part of someone's spiritual life and or being included in their belief system!
- For this regular rebellion and rejection of His word the people were taken into captivity (after repeated warnings and call for repentance thru the prophets)
- Jerusalem fell to Babylon 606 B.C. and the Temple & city were destroyed in 596-97 B.C. upon further rebellion of the people.

- In spite of continuous warnings from the Prophets the people thought it would never happen to them… it did – just as God said it would!

Jeremiah 25 2 Jeremiah the prophet said to all the people in Judah and Jerusalem, 3 “For the past twenty-three years—from the thirteenth year of the reign of Josiah son of Amon, king of Judah, until now—the Lord has been giving me his messages. I have faithfully passed them on to you, but you have not listened. 4“Again and again the Lord has sent you his servants, the prophets, but you have not listened or

even paid attention. 5 Each time the message was this:
‘Turn from the evil road you are traveling and from the
evil things you are doing. Only then will I let you live in
this land that the Lord gave to you and your ancestors
forever. 6 Do not provoke my anger by worshiping idols
you made with your own hands. Then I will not harm
you.’ 7 “But you would not listen to me,” says the Lord.
“You made me furious by worshiping idols you made
with your own hands, bringing on yourselves all the
disasters you now suffer. 8 And now the Lord of
Heaven’s Armies says:

Because you have not listened to me, 9 I will gather
together all the armies of the north under King
Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon, whom I have appointed as
my deputy. I will bring them all against this land and its
people and against the surrounding nations. I will
completely destroy you and make you an object of
horror and contempt and a ruin forever. 10 I will take
away your happy singing and laughter. The joyful voices
of bridegrooms and brides will no longer be heard. Your
millstones will fall silent, and the lights in your homes
will go out. 11 This entire land will

become a desolate wasteland. Israel and her neighboring lands will serve the king of Babylon for seventy years.

- God's prophetic word thru Jeremiah became reality and everything was destroyed!
- God's prophetic word also became reality when Babylon was defeated and Cyrus became the King – God had promised thru Isaiah that Cyrus would release the people to return to Jerusalem and rebuild!

Isaiah 44 25 I expose the false prophets as liars and
make fools of fortune-tellers. I cause the wise to give
bad advice, thus proving them to be fools. 26 But I carry
out the predictions of my prophets! By them I say to
Jerusalem, ‘People will live here again,’ and to the
towns of Judah, ‘You will be rebuilt; I will restore all
your ruins!’ 27 When I speak to the rivers and say, ‘Dry
up!’ they will be dry. 28 When I say of Cyrus, ‘He is my
shepherd,’ he will certainly do as I say. He will
command, ‘Rebuild Jerusalem’; he will say, ‘Restore the
Temple.’”

- This prophecy of Isaiah took place 150 years BEFORE any of this would happen!
- God promised judgement but even in the judgment offered hope of redemption!!
- This hope for redemption would take place – again, exactly like God said it would

2 Chronicles 36 22 In the first year of King Cyrus of Persia, the Lord fulfilled the prophecy he had given through Jeremiah. He stirred the heart of Cyrus to put this proclamation in writing and to send it throughout

his kingdom: 23 “This is what King Cyrus of Persia says: “The Lord, the God of heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth. He has appointed me to build him a Temple at Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Any of you who are his people may go there for this task. And may the Lord your God be with you!”

- Now let’s look at those who responded to this fulfillment of God’s promise in returning to rebuild God’s house…

Ezra 3 10 When the builders completed the foundation of the Lord’s Temple, the priests put on their robes and took their places to blow their trumpets. And the Levites, descendants of Asaph, clashed their cymbals to praise the Lord, just as King David had prescribed. 11 With praise and thanks, they sang this song to the Lord: “He is so good! His faithful love for Israel endures forever!” Then all the people gave a great shout, praising the Lord because the foundation of the Lord’s Temple had been laid.

12 But many of the older priests, Levites, and other leaders who had seen the first Temple wept aloud when they saw the new Temple's foundation. The others, however, were shouting for joy. 13 The joyful shouting and weeping mingled together in a loud noise that could be heard far in the distance.

- Those who had been in captivity had been told of God's faithful promise of return!! THEY WERE LIVING God's promise!!!
- In the moment of truth there are 2 groups.

- The 1st group is shouting for Joy as the reality of God's word is evident before their eyes!
- The 2nd group are those weeping- They saw the new foundation laid out and it was much smaller - having seen the amazing wealth & all that Solomon had put into the 1st Temple - saw this new one as 'less'
- Here's the issue – the looking back to the Temple's size or appearance had nothing to do with Who God was! This was the very thing that had caused them to go into captivity – losing sight of Who God Was!!

- The people of Judah had held onto the Temple – the holy city and other things as to their identity and their right to be there -They allowed the secondary aspects of their relationship with God to be their entitlement of a better tomorrow!
- This brings us to where we are today: On what are we basing our relationship with God?
- Do we see God's promises as something that shows us Who He is – or - what He can do for us?
- Do we view our salvation and relationship with God as a "get out of jail (hell) free card?"

- If you are saved and have a relationship with God – God wants something more from you than eternity together… He wants NOW together!
- He wants to reach out through you to a lost world!
- **Christian… is this "title" what separates you from the world or does your daily living do that?**
- In what direction are the churches best days: behind or before?

Jeremiah 29 10 This is what the Lord says: "You will be in Babylon for seventy years. But then I will come and do for you all the good things I have promised, and

I will bring you home again. 11 For I know the plans I have for you,” says the Lord. “They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope. 12 In those days when you pray, I will listen. 13 If you look for me wholeheartedly, you will find me. 14 I will be found by you,” says the Lord. “I will end your captivity and restore your fortunes. I will gather you out of the nations where I sent you and will bring you home again to your own land.”

- Own God’s promise - not in comparison to the past but in light of the God He is – the God of tomorrow!!