

Urban Renewal

Scripture Reading — Zechariah 8:1-8

“I will return to Zion and dwell in Jerusalem.”

Zechariah 8:3 —

During my training to become a pastor, my wife and I lived for a year in Gary, Indiana, learning about urban ministry. We encountered many of the troubles plaguing cities around the country: poverty, homelessness, broken families. I came to understand how society's ills are symptoms of our sinful hearts. Hunger, for example, can result from poor stewardship or from indifference on the part of those who have more than enough. Sin leads to societal decay.

This was true for the city of Jerusalem. For years, Judah had turned their backs on God. So God allowed his people to be taken over by invaders. And the city became a desolate ruin.

But then God promised urban renewal! God would forgive his rebellious children, and his presence would return to Jerusalem. The city would come alive with sounds of laughter as children played and the Lord enjoyed renewed fellowship with his people.

This is our hope too. Jesus has restored our relationship with God, and one day we will live in the New Jerusalem with the Lord himself (Revelation 21:15). In the meantime, we seek his kingdom by showing that sinful people find forgiveness in Jesus. As God changes sinful hearts, our communities experience renewal.

What can you do to seek God's kingdom in your neighborhood today?

Prayer

Lord, help us to live for you in our cities and towns so that our neighbors may experience your healing mercy. May your kingdom come! Amen.

Devotion topics: [Bible](#), [Books of the Bible](#), [Minor Prophets](#)

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