

The First Don

Ezra 4

When doing what you know God has told you to do, there is no room for compromise.

1. Look at the situation (Ezra 3:6-13)

2. Look at the issue (2 Kings 17:24-41)

3. Look at the choice (Ezra 4:1-4)

4. Look at the consequences
 - a. There are consequences for being faithful

 - b. There are consequences for compromise

 - c. Not all compromise is bad

FOR FURTHER THOUGHT:

1. Consider the following scenarios:
 - a. Your six-year-old has a bedtime of 8pm. A special TV show he wants to watch ends at 9. What do you do?
 - b. The raise you get at work will help you pay off some outstanding debts over the next year. Your spouse wants to spend the money on leasing a new car. What do you do?
 - c. Your boss asks you to sign some records that will make your numbers look good to headquarters, though the numbers are exaggerated. What do you do?
 - d. Your alcoholic husband tells you to call the boss and tell him he's sick. You know that if you don't, he's likely to get violent. What do you do?
 - e. Co-workers invite you to join them for a few drinks after work, a practice they engage in every day. You know it would get you on their good side if you did. What do you do?
 - f. Is compromise always bad? Name some areas where compromise is a good thing. When is it a bad thing?
2. What happens when you compromise on a moral issue? What do you lose?
3. Read Ezra 4:1-5. For background, you might want to look at 2 Kings 17:24-41. Why did Zerubbabel turn down the offer of help? What did it cost him?
4. What is one quality of a worshiper that God is looking for in Psalm 15:4? How does this relate to the issue of compromise?
5. What are the areas in which you are likely to be asked to compromise this week? (Think of such things as your entertainment habits, your representation of Christ at work or school, your devotional life, etc.)
6. James defines sin in James 4:17 to say "Anyone who knows the good he ought to do and doesn't do it, sins." How does that passage help you get a handle on sinful compromise? In what things do you need to be more consistent?
7. "The Evangelical Free Church is ecumenical in spirit though not in structure." What does that mean? How far can we go ecumenically? When does cooperation in the cause of Christ become compromise?