

## Living with Godly Purpose

Jeremiah 1:1-10

2/9/03

### Intro

- Pray for the families of those lost in the shuttle accident.

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Jeremiah was one of the great prophets of the Old Testament, though he was not the greatest. That distinction would go to Isaiah. Nor was he the most mysterious, that distinction goes to Ezekiel. Nor was he the most successful, that distinction goes to Jonah (at his preaching a whole city was turned to God).

**But Jeremiah was the most courageous.** These were troubled times for the nation of Judah. The people were deeply entrenched in idolatry and worldliness and the people were not responding to his message.

In fact, the other prophets turned on him and had him placed in stocks, he was thrown into a cistern and left to die, when he took his life's work to the king, he cut it up with a knife and threw into the fire.

**Jeremiah** lived a time of great world change. During his lifetime he saw Assyria, the great and mighty world power, be crushed, and Babylon rose to have total world domination. He saw Egypt humiliated before Babylon under Nebuchadnezzar.

Today, Saddam Hussein envisions himself as the next Nebuchadnezzar and has wanted to cause Iraq to become as great as during the time of Jeremiah.

Jeremiah was a **reluctant prophet**, but he is in good company; so were Moses, Isaiah, Gideon, and Jonah.

He was the **son of a priest**, Hilkiah. Which Hilkiah it was is not certain. Could it be the same Hilkiah that was rummaging through the Temple and found an old copy of the Law (things had gotten so bad that they had no working copies of the Law). This caused a revival under Josiah the King, but only lasted until Josiah's death. The nation continued their worldly path soon after.

In the verses we will be studying today, Jeremiah first understands that the Lord has a purpose for his life. And that is where we gain great insight as well, because God has called each one of us to have a purpose in our lives. Maybe we are not given the same calling as Jeremiah, but God wants each of us to live with purpose.

### I. **God prepared your life in advance.**

#### A. Before I formed you in the womb, I knew you.

- First off, it's encouraging to know that God is the One who forms us.

**Ps 139:13-14 "For You formed my inward parts; You wove me in my mother's womb. I will give thanks to You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; wonderful are Your works, and my soul knows it very well."**

- Second, God says "He knew us." (He had a relationship with us in advance.)

#### B. Before you were born I consecrated you.

- In other words, God had a purpose in mind for us before we were even born.
- He worked through Jeremiah's parents and circumstances.
- **This is the preparation of God.** God prepared our lives in advance for the purpose which He called us.
- **Each one of us is unique.**

C. I have appointed you for my purpose in your life.

- Though we may not be called to be a prophet to the nations, God does have a purpose for each of us.
- And we are being used of God as preparation for those that come after us.
- What influence are we having on them?

**II. Where God guides He provides**

A. Why do many people shrink back?

- Because we see our inadequacies.

**Illus – Jeremiah was not alone in this; there was also, Moses, Gideon, Isaiah, Jonah.**

- God does not give us everything we need to complete the purpose He has given us.
- Why? Because...

B. God is the greatest provision of all

- He doesn't give us everything we need because He gives us Himself.
- "I am with you," God said to Jeremiah.

**Matt 28:18-20** "And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, 'All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit,

teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

- **God doesn't call the qualified**, he qualifies the called.

**Illus – My friend, Jim Fisher who played the piano.**

**Illus – I told a friend that I felt called into the ministry and he said, "Man that would be so great." I asked if he had every considered it.**

**He said, "With my background?"**

**There was another reason he couldn't respond... he didn't want to let go of the world.**

**III. Is God's purpose wonderful?**

A. God loves you and has a wonderful plan for your life.

- Repeatedly Jesus would challenge people with the words, "Have you not read...?"

B. It takes courage to go for God's purpose

- Because God's purpose is the opposite of the world's purpose for your life.
- Jeremiah's words did not fall on ready ears.

**Illus – Jesus asked, "Is a servant greater than his master?"  
John 15: 18-21**

**Conclusion**

**"Without a vision the people perish." God loves us, He formed us, He has a godly purpose for each one of us, He has prepared our lives in advance. May we not shrink back.**