

Advent 2020
Honesty Makes Way For Hope.
Jeremiah 1:1-19
Nov. 29, 2020

I. The CALL of a PROPHET (v.1-16)

- A. Real PEOPLE, real PLACES, DIFFICULT times. (v.1-3)**
- B. Jeremiah's FEELINGS of INADEQUACY. (v.4-6)**
- C. Clinging to SOVEREIGNTY, WORD, and PRESENCE. (v.6-10)**
- D. LOOKING, LISTENING, and LEARNING. (v.11-16)**

The season of Advent starts today. It's a time to prepare for our celebration of the coming of Jesus, both the past coming to that manger in Bethlehem, and the future coming we all long for. Our focus today is hope. Hope is desperately needed in a world of political turmoil and a pandemic. Jeremiah's calling might seem like a strange place the start, but sometimes the road to hope takes a surprising direction.

1. Kid's question: When have you felt scared about what might happen?
2. How do you identify with Jeremiah in his response to the call? What would you have said in his situation?

II. RESPONDING to the present CRISIS. (v.17-19)

- A. PREPARE to be COURAGEOUS. (v.17)**
- B. SPEAK what God GIVES. (v.17)**
- C. Do not GIVE way to FEAR. (v.17)**
- D. Be WHO God MADE you to be. (v.18)**
- E. TRUST in His PRESENCE. (v.19)**

Jeremiah was facing a national crisis. He was going to have things to say that would be hard to hear. Life was not how people wanted it to be. But God gives him direction, and in that we can find direction as we live through our own periods of crisis, both large scale and personal.

3. Which of the steps of response listed do you feel God may be calling you to take now and why? How might that step look in your life?
4. How might "speaking what God gives" look differently than just quoting scripture in a given situation?
5. If you had to state "who God made you to be", what would you say and why?

III. What do you SEE this ADVENT? (v.11,13)

- A. Seeing the FOREST and the TREES. (2 Cor. 10:3-5)**
- B. Painful HONESTY makes way for HOPE. (v.17-19; Jer. 29:11)**

- C. Hope is not LIMITED by our SITUATION. (Hab. 3:16-19)**
D. HOPE rests in God's SOVEREIGNTY. (v.6; Ps. 71:5)

God says to Jeremiah, "What do you see?" That's a good place to start as we come into Advent. What do we see? Can we bring an honest perspective to our need to God and allow Him to meet us there? There is no place too dark for His light to transform. Sometimes the first step is just to truthfully acknowledge the darkness.

6. Is it hard for you to be honest about your own situation? If so, why? How does the community of believers help with that?
7. Can you think of areas where you are avoiding the truth about your own life? How might you respond to that in a different manner?
8. Share a situation with someone else where you feel that you need hope. Allow them to share one with you. (Due to COVID this may require a phone call). Commit to praying for each other in the coming weeks.