

# THE PROPHETIC WORD TODAY

## The Call Of God

TEXT: Jer. 1:1-10

INTRODUCTION: We have been looking at the word God sent through His servants the prophets, and we have seen that the message they brought was one not only for the day in which they lived but one that endures for our day as well. While we have talked of Hosea and Amos, Jonah and Nahum, or as we studied on Sunday nights Elijah and Elisha, have you ever paused to wonder, “How did they become prophets?”

When we look across the pages of Scripture, we certainly see a lot of variety in the way God called people out to serve Him. Elisha was plowing a field. Matthew was collecting taxes, Peter and John were fishing. Nathanael was sitting in the shade of a fig tree.

We begin today to look at the prophetic word God began to send through a teenager. And interestingly, this teen tells us more about God’s call upon his life that made him a servant of the Lord than anyone else in all of the Bible. His name is Jeremiah. Let’s read what he says.

Jer. 1:1-10 <sup>1</sup> The words of Jeremiah the son of Hilkiah, of the priests who *were* in Anathoth in the land of Benjamin, <sup>2</sup> to whom the word of the LORD came in the days of Josiah the son of Amon, king of Judah, in the thirteenth year of his reign. <sup>3</sup> It came also in the days of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah, until the end of the eleventh year of Zedekiah the son of Josiah, king of Judah, until the carrying away of Jerusalem captive in the fifth month. <sup>4</sup> Then the word of the LORD came to me, saying: <sup>5</sup> “Before I formed you in the womb I knew you; Before you were born I sanctified you; I ordained you a prophet to the nations.” <sup>6</sup> Then said I: “Ah, Lord GOD! Behold, I cannot speak, for I *am* a youth.” <sup>7</sup> But the LORD said to me: “Do not say, ‘I *am* a youth,’ For you shall go to all to whom I send you, And whatever I command you, you shall speak. <sup>8</sup> Do not be afraid of their faces, For I *am* with you to deliver you,” says the LORD.

<sup>9</sup> Then the LORD put forth His hand and touched my mouth, and the LORD said to me: “Behold, I have put My words in your mouth. <sup>10</sup> See, I have this day set you over the nations and over the kingdoms, To root out and to pull down, To destroy and to throw down, To build and to plant.”

Although there are some things about God’s call upon a person’s life, male or female, that change from person to person – the place, the circumstances, the details of ministry. There are some things that are always the same. We see those four characteristics of the call of God in the testimony of Jeremiah.

## I. THE CALL OF GOD CHANGES PREVIOUS PLANS.

A. Jeremiah was born into a family of priests.

*Jer. 1:1 The words of Jeremiah the son of Hilkiah, of the priests who were in Anathoth in the land of Benjamin,*

His father was Hilkiah, a noble and godly high priest who served the Lord during the reign of good king Josiah. Everyone “just knew” that Jeremiah would take up his father’s mantle.

But God had a change of plans.

B. My testimony – my plans: physics or law; college chosen

Karen’s plans: not a teacher or preacher

First, God called her; then God called me.

All the plans had to change.

## II. THE CALL OF GOD COMES IN GOOD TIMES AND BAD.

A. Called during the reign of King Josiah – national revival (does God really need a prophet now?)

B. Called to continue during reigns of Jehoiakim, Jehoiakin, and Zedekiah, all of whom were exceedingly wicked and led Judah into deeper and deeper sin. During their days, nobody wanted to hear a prophet, and no one believed his words.

## III. THE CALL OF GOD COMES IRRESPECTIVE OF PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES.

A. Jeremiah protested that he was only a youth, and he was not a good speaker.

*Jer. 1:6 Then said I: “Ah, Lord GOD! Behold, I cannot speak, for I am a youth.”*

B. God said He chose Jeremiah before he was even born.

1. God does not look at what you are like and then decide whether to call you for His service.

2. God decides to call you for His service, and He makes you like He wants you to be.

a. God said to Moses, “Who made your mouth?”

C. God did not call me because of any particular talents or abilities I possessed.

1. I was not the brightest nor the most popular.

2. Although I was in debate and theatre, I never won Outstanding Speaker in a tournament nor best actor in a play.

3. Sadly, I was not even the most spiritual student in our church youth group.

But God called me, not because of what I had to offer but because of His sovereign choice. There is nothing for me to brag about in being called. It is just that God created me for a certain purpose, and I am greatly blessed to be living in that purpose.

Students, listen. **It is God who has determined the unchangeable features of your life.** Your looks, your intellect, your personality, your talents, your abilities, your spiritual gifts, your parents, your siblings, the circumstances of your life. The one thing about all of us He did not cause is our sin and the results of it. But everything else is His design. And it is right, maybe not for our purposes, but for His. And even the sin which God did not choose nor cause, He can forgive and transform to use for His glory.

So a murderer becomes the Law Giver in a man named Moses.

A captive becomes a Prime Minister in a man named Daniel.

A persecutor of Christians becomes the greatest evangelist of all times in Paul.

If you hear the call of God, do not worry about who or what you are.

**Jer. 1:5 “Before I formed you in the womb I knew you; Before you were born I sanctified you; I ordained you a prophet to the nations.”**

God says, “I formed you in the womb.” I made you what I want you to be.

#### **IV. THE CALL OF GOD IS A CALL TO DELIVER THE WORD OF GOD.**

**Jer. 1:7 & 9 <sup>7</sup> But the LORD said to me: “Do not say, ‘I am a youth,’ For you shall go to all to whom I send you, And whatever I command you, you shall speak. <sup>9</sup> Then the LORD put forth His hand and touched my mouth, and the LORD said to me: “Behold, I have put My words in your mouth.**

- A. Every call is not to be a pastor or preacher as we use those terms, speaking of offices within the church.
- B. But every call of God is to be a disciple maker, and an indispensable part of being a disciple maker is to teach all that the Lord has commanded. That means proclaiming, delivering the Word of God.
  - 1. Whether youth minister
  - 2. Ed. Minister
  - 3. Minister of Music
  - 4. Administrator
  - 5. Children’s Director
  - 6. Preschool Director
  - 7. Missionary
  - 8. Evangelist

Or whatever God calls you to do, you are a deliverer of the Word of God.

- C. But remember this. If God calls you, He does not call you to be original or clever; He calls you to be faithful in delivering His Word, which is forever settled in heaven.

Now he may allow, even lead, you to declare his Word in original ways. God had Jeremiah put a yoke on his neck and wear it as a visualization of the yoke God was sending to His people. God told Ezekiel to lie on his side for weeks at a time to deliver the message visually to people.

I am not saying you have to be dull, but I am saying you do not need to try to give people a new word. People don't need a new word. They need God's Word.

And you will never exhaust the Word of God. I have been preaching this book since I was seventeen years old. There are still more chapters in the Bible that I have not preached than those I have.

## V. THE CALL OF GOD IS A DEFINITE CALL.

Jer. 1:1-2 <sup>1</sup> The words of Jeremiah the son of Hilkiah, of the priests who were in Anathoth in the land of Benjamin, <sup>2</sup> to whom the word of the LORD came in the days of Josiah the son of Amon, king of Judah, in the thirteenth year of his reign.

- A. How did the word of the Lord come to Jeremiah? We do not know, but Jeremiah knew it did.  
B. So did I.  
C. And so will you if it happens. That does not mean it will be easy to say yes, but you will know.

CONCLUSION: Jeremiah did. I did. Many others in this church do and have said yes.

Right now we have a couple in N.O. seminary and serving in a church, who left here to follow God's call. We have others here called to the mission field that are in the midst of making preparation. We have college students that God has called and they are getting training and starting to serve the Lord in all kinds of capacities. We have so many God has called, I am afraid to name names, because I might forget someone.

But God has more He is going to call, and some of those are here today.

Don't surrender until He calls, but when He calls, don't wait.