

Mid-Week Devotion

Doing it Again



Read Jeremiah 29:1-14 “...I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord.”

Usually after each Lord’s Day worship, I greet everyone as they are leaving. I ask, “How was your week?” Almost without exception I hear answers like fine, ok, same old same old, or no sense complaining. Now what I gather from responses like these is that for the most part, people have simply settled for just another week. In other words, it seems that instead of living our lives with a sense of joyous expectation, we instead exhibit little hope of things to change.

The prophet Jeremiah in proclaiming the Word of the Lord said, “For surely I know the plans I have for you, say the Lord. Plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future filled with hope.” We often see these words on greeting cards and plaques, especially when it comes to graduations or times when our beloved children grow up and move out to live on their own. It is a great verse; however, I wonder how many really understand its context.

Jeremiah told the people this while they were exiled in Babylon! Nebuchadnezzar had leveled Jerusalem, destroying their hopes and dreams. After being taken captive, the Hebrews became bitter and angry with not only their new surroundings but also with their captors. This was not where they wanted to be and it surely wasn’t the life they had envisioned. This is however, what makes Jeremiah’s prophecy so arresting. God told them to settle in to their new surroundings, build houses, take wives and husbands, and have children. They were told to plant gardens, to work and play. Then came their hardest challenge of all, “Seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the Lord on its behalf!” This meant praying for their enemies! Now there’s a novel idea, imagine loving your neighbor (even if he or she is your enemy) as yourself! It seems that I have heard that somewhere before.

The Hebrew’s future belonged to God, so does yours. If we truly believe this, then we are free to live our lives with great expectation, joy, and hope. It also means that we live lives free of the anxiety of the day. In reality, it means living each day as though it was a precious gift, in which anything can happen and usually will. It means being free to love everyone, even those who have hurt you; their future also is in the hands of the Almighty. The point of Jeremiah’s prophecy is not that we should just settle for another day or week, but rather we should live every moment with the eyes of a child. Have you ever done something for a child only to have them repeatedly ask you to do it again? I remember performing a magic trick where I made a penny disappear and reappear in my grandkid’s ear. Do it again Pop-Pop, do it again they would squeal! As long as they couldn’t figure out how it was done, each time was like the first.

None of us has life all figured out, it comes with infinite possibilities. This is what Jeremiah was telling the Hebrews, and this is what Jesus is telling you. To quote MacGyver, “With every new day comes a whole new set of possibilities.” Each of your days holds within them infinite opportunities to allow God to surprise you with His unimaginable creativity. So perhaps the best way to change your weeks from fine, ok, and same old same old, into Wow, Oh My, and I Can’t Believe It, is to end each day on your knees praying, “Do it again Jesus, do it again!”

Blessings, Pastor Ed