

## Project 1:5

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### Jeremiah 1:4-8 (ESV)

- Today, in honor of our Project 1:5 Sunday, I want to keep our series on the book of Hebrews on pause for one more week, and focus on the passage that we base this project around.
- If you have your Bibles, go ahead and turn with me to the book of Jeremiah, chapter 1.
- And even though, in this passage, God is speaking to one man specifically in the Old Testament, I think we can gain a lot of encouragement and insight to how God looks at us and calls us
- And this coincides with our Hebrews series because at the beginning of the Book of Hebrews the writer says, ***“Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, but in***

### ***these last days he has spoken to us by His Son” -Hebrews 1:1-2a (ESV)***

- One thing that we need to understand about the difference between the Old Covenant and the New Covenant that we are living in today is that in the Old Testament times, God’s Spirit and anointing was limited to certain Kings, Prophets and Judges at different times for different purposes
- However, the prophet Joel prophesied, when the Lord spoke through him saying: ***“And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions. Even on the male and female servants in those days I will pour out My Spirit.” -Joel 2:28-29 (ESV)***
- And we see this prophecy come to fruition in Acts chapter 2, at the day of Pentecost and Peter even quotes this prophecy in his sermon.

- So I do not think that it is a stretch to say that in a similar way that God called the prophet Jeremiah all of those years ago, Jesus is calling you and I today as well.
- ***“Now the word of the Lord came to me, saying, “Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you; I appointed you a prophet to the nations.” Then I said, “Ah, Lord God! Behold, I do not know how to speak, for I am only a youth.” But the Lord said to me, “Do not say, ‘I am only a youth’; for to all to whom I send you, you shall go, and whatever I command you, you shall speak. Do not be afraid of them, for I am with you to deliver you, declares the Lord.” -Jeremiah 1:4-8 (ESV)***
- So I’m going to do something a little different this morning, I am going to give you all three points up front today: And the three points I hope we leave here understanding are:
  - **GOD KNOWS YOU**

- **GOD SET YOU APART INTO HIS FAMILY**
- **GOD HAS APPOINTED YOU TO REPRESENT HIM**
- PRAY
- For those of you who aren’t as familiar with my story, I was born in Northern Ireland, whenever I was 5 we moved to Philadelphia. Go Birds. Now my parents wanted to get us out of Philadelphia as fast as possible, so after only being there for about a year, we moved to Dauphin, PA then after a couple years we moved to Harrisburg, PA. Then after 9/11 dad joined the army as a chaplain so from there we went to Germany for 3 years, then back to PA for 1 and then I finished out high school in Virginia.
- After High school I thought to myself, “Finally, one place for 4 years...” but no...I ended up going to 3 different colleges! I started at Liberty University, then went to Columbia International University and then eventually North Greenville University

Sunday, March 10, 2024

- And while I was in school my parents were in Columbia, SC then Seattle WA, then Columbus GA, back to Columbia SC
- And then shortly after I graduated College, I moved to Shelby, NC and was there for 8 years before I moved here to Hickory
- And every time I move to a new place, people ask, "Hey where are you from?" I DON'T KNOW!!
- That's a loaded question!
- But I had to learn very early on the tips and tricks of assimilating into a new place
  - And I learned that the best way to do so, was to just let people notice you.
  - You know, you go to where people are, but you don't be obnoxious, you don't throw yourself in peoples faces...you just kind of do your thing.
  - So especially when I was younger, I would just go find a basketball court somewhere,
- play some pick up, and would let others notice me and get to know me
- However, whenever I was in high school it was a little different. I spent my last two years at Prince George High School in Virginia, and it being my junior year I really wanted to be careful how I made a first impression.
- And within the first couple of weeks at this brand new school I still hadn't really gotten to know anyone yet. But I was going to get to drive to school for the very first time
- And I was already off to a bit of a rocky start because I was driving my mom's Ford Winstar mini-van...but I was cool with it, it beat taking the bus
- And this being a brand new school, I didn't know what all of the rules were so when I got there I just picked a parking spot and went into school
- After school I went out to find a ticket on the car because I had parked in another students designated parking spot....and to make

matters worse, I had left the lights on, and the car was dead as a doornail.

- So here I am, brand new to this school, I stole another kids parking spot, and I'm standing next to a dead minivan.
- So at this point I'm praying no one notices me, but I also have no idea what to do!
- But then a couple of guys do notice me. And these were two seniors who are stars on the baseball team...one of them went on to win a world series playing center field for the Red Sox. THESE are the guys that notice me in this predicament
- NOT THE IMPRESSION THAT I WANTED TO MAKE
  - But you know what? They were gracious to me and helped me, and it eased my fears and the pressure I was putting on myself to make a good first impression.

- And I share all of that because I want us to think about the great lengths that we go to, to get people or someone specific to notice us.
- Whether if its at a new school, a romantic interest, even members of our own family...we try everything we can to get someone to notice us in a positive manner
  - Because the hope is that if they would just notice us, then they would get to know us, and then they would accept us
- And in turn, a lot of us tend to take that same approach in to our relationship with God. We feel like we need to do some good deeds, attend a few services, or give some tithes, and then God will take notice of us
- And on the flip side, if we're not doing any of those things, we kind of hope that God isn't taking notice of us
- But the reality is, God has already taken notice of you, and He meets you with more grace than you could ever imagine

- Because its not that He just takes notice of you....He already KNOWS you!
  - He knows all of the intrinsical aspects of who you are because He was directly involved in your formation.
  - He knows you, long before you ever know Him
  - He tells Jeremiah, ***“Before I formed you in the womb, I knew you...” Jeremiah 1:5a (ESV)***
- A couple of things here: We cannot overlook or causally move past the fact that HE FORMED YOU.
  - You do not exist merely because your parents fell in love, or had an oopsie...you exist because God made you
  - You were His idea.
- That’s why David said, ***"I praise You because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; Your***

***works are wonderful, I know that full well.”***  
***-Psalm 139:14 (ESV)***

- David is saying that he knows how wonderful the works of God are, and since he was made by God, that means he must be a wonderful work of God as well.
- Not because of what David made of himself, but because God made David
- Furthermore, Paul says in Ephesians 2:  
***“For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.” -Ephesians 2:10 (ESV)***
  - That word **Workmanship (poiēma)** means: **that which has been made; a work of God as creator**
  - Could also say, “A Product.”
  - Therefore, the very fact that you were conceived in your mother’s womb means that you are a product of God Himself.

Sunday, March 10, 2024

- Now, I am not an art connoisseur by any stretch, but I came across some **pictures of paintings** this past week.
    - And these are nice paintings, however, I would take them to be the work of some talented middle schoolers that have entered an art contest.
    - Honestly, to my eyes, I have seen much more impressive work than these by local kids in local schools
      - However This one was sold in **1987 for \$40 Million**
      - This one **\$54 Million** the same year
      - This one for **\$62 Million** in 2014
      - And in 2021, this one was sold for a whopping **\$71 million** dollars....
  - Why? Because all of these painting were products of an artist named Vincent van Gogh.
    - *The product is so valuable because of the one who produced the work*
- In the same way, your life has so much value, meaning, and purpose so far beyond anything you can see on the surface, because you were formed by God Himself.
  - And the other word that we cannot brush over here, is the word “Before”
    - God tells Jeremiah, “Before I formed you in the womb, I knew you, I consecrated you, I appointed you...”
  - Before you were ever even a thought or idea in your parents minds, you were already known by God
    - Like a sculptor standing before a block of clay, God sees the finished product before He even begins the molding
    - And He doesn’t just know you, He has a plan for you, and a purpose for you.
  - However, I believe that it is of vital importance to understand that before God gave Jeremiah his task, God emphasizes the relationship first.

Sunday, March 10, 2024

- God emphasizes to Jeremiah the amount of love, intentionality, and importance that God has placed on His life
- Letting Jeremiah know that God Himself took the time to Form him and Know him
- When Jalisa first sent me the song that we sang right before this sermon, I just kind of mediated on the truth that we were going to sing together, singing to God...YOU KNOW MY NAME
- And it took me back to John chapter 10, when Jesus is referring to Himself as the Good Shepherd and at one point He says, ***“The sheep hear His voice, and He calls His own sheep by name and leads them out.” -John 10:3 (ESV)***
- He KNOWS His sheep and calls His Sheep BY NAME!
  - He knows who they are, individually, uniquely
- Can you imagine a shepherd with hundreds of sheep in his fold, and yet he still knows each of them by name??
- That would be mind boggling!
- Idk, if you’re like me, but I’m so bad at remembering names
- And I try so hard at it!
- Because I absolutely HATE the feeling, whenever I meet someone, and then the next time I see them I have to ask them their name again
- You can almost see an immediate deflation of the relationship, because “Oh, you don’t remember my name...”
- It makes me feel like such a jerk, because it’s like I couldn’t care enough to learn and remember the most basic but the most personal information about a person
- But thank God I’m not the GOOD SHEPHERD
  - Because He never forgets a face or a name

Sunday, March 10, 2024

- He knows you by name, and He calls you by name
- Jesus does not call a crowd, He calls individuals
- And why is He so intentional about pointing out the fact that He knows you by name?
  - Because, especially in the Hebrew culture, there was great importance placed on the naming process
  - God was intentional about having Adam name all of the animals at creation
  - Because naming gave significance to every living creature
    - *That's why on farms, whenever there is an animal that they know is going to be eaten by the family one day, the farmer won't let his family name that animal because he doesn't want them to form that personal attachment to something that their going to digest soon*
- How many times throughout scripture, whenever God was doing a great work in or through someone, would He give them a new name?
  - You see, Jesus want's you to know that He KNOWS YOU BY NAME, because He wants you to know that He places significance and value on your life
  - He knows who you are and He defines who you are
    - And He is the only one who can bring significance to your life because He's the one that gave you life in the first place!
  - So before we get caught up in what we need to do for God, we first need to understand who God is to us, and what He has done for us
  - And in the beginning of verse 5, we saw that God is the intentional, relational Creator...and in the next phrase we see what He has done for us.



- He says, “**...before you were born I consecrated you,**” -**Jeremiah 1:5b**
- Even before you were born into this world, God had a plan to Set You Apart. That’s what the word consecrate means: To set apart
- The question is, set apart to what?
- Simply, most importantly, He set you apart to His family.
- Paul says in Ephesians that before the foundation of the world, God predestined us to be adopted into His family
- Colossians 1 says, “**He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son**”  
-**Colossians 1:13 (ESV)**
  - Now, to be clear, the first part of verse 5 of Jeremiah is for everyone. God has personally formed and personally knows each and every individual human being
- However, the next two parts of the verse are only true for believers.
  - Now, God’s family invitation is available to all!
  - Jesus said, “For God so loved the WORLD that He gave His One and Only Son, that Whosoever would believe in Him would not perish but have everlasting life.” (John 3:16)
  - Peter plainly says, that God is not willing that ANY should perish but ALL would come unto repentance (2 Peter 3:9)
- However, we know that ALL will not come to repentance...not everyone will accept Him
  - But that does not mean that the invitation is not extended to them, just as it has been to us who have accepted
- And like we saw in Hebrews chapter 3, God had a predetermined purpose for that first generation of Israelites to enter into the promised land, but because of their unbelief and the hardness of their hearts they did not

walk in the promises and plans that God had prepared for them to walk in

- And Paul explains in Romans 8, that because God does not exist within the confines of our timeline, God knows who will and who won't accept Him
  - And based on His foreknowledge of those who would accept Him, He predestined them to be conformed to the image of His Son
- That's why, John 1:12 says: ***"But to all who did receive Him, who believed in His name, He gave the right to become children of God," -John 1:12 (ESV)***
- And once we accept His invitation to be a consecrated part of His family, we can exclaim as John did in his epistle saying:
- ***"See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God!" -1 John 3:1 (ESV)***
- Furthermore, Paul tells us: ***"So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are***

***fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God," -Ephesians 2:19 (ESV)***

- The NLT says you are members of the Family of God
  - So the truth of the Gospel is, that once you accept Jesus, you are no longer associated with your past mistakes, you are not defined by your sins and your struggles, you are not bound by your upbringing or a product of your environment
  - You have been consecrated and set apart as a member of God's family and your status of a child of God is now what defines your life.
- That word consecrate can also be translated to be made pure.
- Again, Paul says in Romans 8, ***"For those whom He foreknew He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, in order that He might be the firstborn among many brothers. And those whom He***

***predestined He also called, and those whom He called He also justified, and those whom He justified He also glorified.” -Romans 8:29-30 (ESV)***

- That word Justified, is very easy to remember...when you are Justified, that means that God looks at you, “Just as if you have never sinned”
- Even though we will never be perfectly pure and sinless on this side of eternity, again, God is not bound by our timeline, therefore He can already see you as you are in your glorified state in heaven
- Furthermore, Colossians says that when we come to Jesus, our lives are Hidden in Christ...that means when God looks at you, He doesn't see your sins and your faults and your failures, He's sees the perfection of His Son
- *Therefore you are made pure because you are washed by the blood of Jesus*

- You are Justified in God's sight...and Paul says that those He justifies, He also glorifies
  - That word glorify in this context means:  
***Glorified (doxazō): to exalt to a rank or condition***
  - Now I know from growing up as a military kid, whenever my dad would get promoted to a new rank, there were new and often greater responsibilities that would come along with that rank
- So, once you come to an appreciation for all that God is to you and for you, once you appreciate the relationship that He offers and you reciprocate that relationship, once you become a set apart member of His family, there is responsibility that comes with that new position that you have been given.
- And God tells Jeremiah the responsibility that he has been given. In the last part of verse 5, God tells Jeremiah ***“I [have] appointed you a prophet to the nations.” -Jeremiah 1:5c (ESV)***

- So God knows you, He formed you, He has set you apart into His family, and He has a purpose for you to carry out
- Now, you may not be a prophet to the nations in the context that Jeremiah was...but He has still appointed you to a similar work as well
- That word, Prophet means: **Prophet (nābī')**: **Spokesman, speaker**
  - Now I know that we have a lot of different vocations represented here in this room
  - However, whenever you take a new job you become a spokesperson for that company or place of work
  - Often times you sign a code of conduct agreement because everything you do or say is a reflection of the company that you are a part of
- Now, it is not a perfect analogy, however, whenever you come into the family of God you are called to represent Him, He appoints you to be a spokesperson on His behalf to this world and the community around you
- *Like we've said before, your relationship with God is meant to be personal, but is never meant to be private*
- That's why Paul says, ***"Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God."*** -2 Corinthians 5:20 (NKJV)
- ***"But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for His own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light."*** -1 Peter 2:9 (ESV)
- It's a beautiful aspect of the Gospel that we overlook so many times.
- Because wayyy too often we stop the Gospel at forgiveness.

- However, Forgiveness is not the Gospel...  
Forgiveness is the avenue in which we can live out the Gospel
  - Because when God saves you, when God forgives you, when He redeems you: That is just the beginning!
  - He consecrates us, sets us a part into His family, and THEN makes us a part of the family business!
  - He gives us real responsibility in proclaiming Him and the Gospel that has completely transformed our lives!
- However, like Jeremiah that task can seem a bit daunting
  - Jeremiah says, “Lord I don’t know how to speak! I’m too young! I’m too inexperienced! I’m not talented enough! I don’t know enough!”
- And God responds telling Him, **“Do not say, ‘I am only a youth’; for to all to whom I send you, you shall go, and whatever I command**

***you, you shall speak. Do not be afraid of them, for I am with you to deliver you, declares the Lord.” -Jeremiah 1:7-8 (ESV)***

- He says, you don’t have to worry about your fears and insecurities
  - Where you go, isn’t as important as the fact that I am sending you
  - How you speak, isn’t as important as the fact that I told you to speak
  - And you don’t have to worry about how other people respond, because that isn’t as important as the fact that I AM WITH YOU
- How many of us think and feel the same exact way that Jeremiah thought and felt whenever God called Him
- Thinking about being a part of a work of God more often than not just leads us to think how inadequate we are
  - But the reality is we need to get over ourselves

Sunday, March 10, 2024

- We need to stop focusing on our weaknesses, our shortcomings, and our track record, and start focusing on His power, His greatness, and His track record
- Because I do not care if you have been following the Lord for 20 years, 2 months, or 2 minutes...if you are a believer in Jesus Christ, God has put His Spirit within you and blessed you with every spiritual blessing that you need to live out this faith
  - And it's less of the fact that you can do it! And it's more so the fact that He can do it through you!
  - He loves to take the young, broken, inexperienced, and train wrecks...and do great things with them
  - And He wants to do great things through you.
- But the number one excuse we come to when thinking about this truth is: "God, I'm too bad...the people you would have me share this faith with are the same ones that have seen the way I used to live!"
  - "I've done too much, I messed up too much, I've made too many mistakes"
  - And we in turn devalue our lives, that God values so much
  - They say that something is only as valuable as what someone is willing to pay for it
  - And Paul tells us in 1 Corinthians that you were bought with a price
  - Jesus places so much value on your life that He paid the highest price imaginable when He poured out His blood on that cross
    - So that we ALL could have the opportunity to be set apart into His family and be a part of what He is doing
  - And the sad reality is, is that there are so many people out there that do not know how much value God puts on each individual life

- And that is why we will always come along side Kingdom workers like the amazing staff at the Pregnancy Care Center of Catawba Valley who are tirelessly working as God's spokespeople to let a young girl in the most terrifying season of her life, know that her life still has value
  - To let them know that the new life growing within them is of infinite value to God
  - To let them experience, first hand, the love and care of Christians that love because He first loved us, and support these young girls when no one else will.
  - To help equip young men to become God-Fearing Fathers that CAN raise their children in the way that they should go
  - To let them know that their life isn't ruined, because that what the enemy meant for evil God can turn for good!
- And for those of us that are still struggling with what our personal worth is to God...let me give you one last illustration

- *Here I have a \$100 bill*
- *Why is it worth \$100? Because the US Department of Treasury created and designed this specifically to be worth \$100*
  - *Now if I were to say, "You know what, I think this is only worth \$50..." Does its worth actually change?*
  - *You know, it's got some deficiencies...Nah, this is worth \$40. Does my opinion actually change its value?*
  - *If someone were to come up to me and say, you know that bills been passed around a lot of hands, it's probably only worth \$20 now....does its worth change?*
  - *What if I were to crumple it...how much is it worth now?*
  - *What if it get's throw down, step on, and kicked around...it's worth doesn't change!*
- *This has happened to some of you...some of you have felt crumpled up, stomped on and kicked around by this life and this world*

Sunday, March 10, 2024

- *But there's only One Person that can determine what you're worth*
  - *And it's not your parents, not your family, not your friends, not your enemies, not your mistakes, and DEFINITELY not even YOURSELF*
- *There's only One. And He's the One who created you and designed you specifically.*
- *The One who formed you in the womb. Who says you're fearfully and wonderfully made*
  - *He died so that you could live in the context of your full worth.*
  - *He died so you didn't have to be defined as anything less than what He created you to be*
- *And you may feel like you've been crumpled up, beaten down, and even stepped on..*
- *BUT ONLY GOD DETERMINES YOUR WORTH*
- *He says you're His Child, He says you're Holy, Righteous, Redeemed*

- *And we need more believers that are willing to stand in the truth of what God says about us, set the bar for our lives based on how He sees us, and unapologetically proclaim the Goodness and Grace of God that has completely redefined who we are and what we're capable of through His Holy Spirit!*