

PREACHING LIKE JEREMIAH!

By Keith Greer

A congregation is looking for a preacher. Some names are submitted by the members. Men are contacted and come to "try out" on a given Sunday. How does the congregation decide on which man gets the job? What makes a "**good preacher**"?

While the answers will vary, depending on who is asked the question, the Bible gives us some insight into arriving at some conclusions. Let me make a suggestion. What about a preacher like Jeremiah?

Jeremiah, sometimes called the "weeping prophet," was also a preacher with a vital message. Repent or be destroyed! Judah had watched her sister nation go into captivity, and now they themselves were headed down the same path. Notice the charge Jeremiah was given by the Lord.

"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." {Jeremiah 1:10} Before he could build and plant, he had to uproot and tear down! Sadly, this is part of a preacher's job, to undo many things before growth can take place. What kind of man would Jeremiah have to be?

To answer this question, let us look at some of the messages which Jeremiah was commanded to give to God's people.

"For My people have committed two evils: They have forsaken Me, the fountain of living waters, And hewn themselves cisterns; broken cisterns that can hold no water." (Jeremiah 2:13)

"To whom shall I speak and give warning, that they may hear? Indeed their ear is uncircumcised, and they cannot give heed. Behold, the word of the LORD is a reproach to them; they have no delight in it." {Jeremiah 6:10}

"Thus says the LORD: "Stand in the ways and see, and ask for the old paths, where the good way is, And walk in it; Then you will find rest for your souls. But they said, 'We will not walk in it. Also, I set watchmen over you, saying, 'Listen to the sound of the trumpet!' But they said, 'We will not listen.'" {Jeremiah 6:16,17}

"And I will dash them one against another, even the fathers and the sons together, says the LORD. "I will not pity nor spare nor have mercy, but will destroy them." {Jeremiah 13:14}

"And you have done worse than your fathers, for behold, each one follows the dictates of his own evil heart, so that no one listens to Me." {Jeremiah 16:12}

"And I will cause them to eat the flesh of their sons and the flesh of their daughters, and everyone shall eat the flesh of his friend in the Siege and in the desperation with which their enemies and those who seek their lives shall drive them to despair." {Jeremiah 19:9}

Jeremiah had some difficult messages to deliver. How should he do it? "**Let's all learn to love one another and God...**" I'm afraid that approach would get the message God wanted them to hear!

This man never compromised truth, watered down the message, or decided God's way would not work! He stated God's words, then let the nation make up her mind what she wanted to do. Friend, that has not changed.

Any preacher who is not willing to oppose error in any form, should not be preaching. The church today needs men like Jeremiah. Men who will stand squarely on truth and tell it like it is! Men who see the urgency in getting the message out stand firmly and never compromise.

Sadly, many brethren have determined what "kind of preacher" the church needs today. Positive lessons, 20-30 minutes, many stories and illustrations, and don't mention any denominations by name since we might offend them! It might be what they want – but certainly not what they need!!!***