



DISCUSSION GUIDE

Sermon Series: Dark Prophet Part 3

Sermon Title: How to Relight the Fire

Speaker/ Date: Armin Sommer/ February 3, 2019

Big Idea: Personal revival is a choice. Choose revival.

How do you relight the fire of your spiritual life if it has gone out? Jeremiah tells us. He outlines several decisions we must make.

Decision #1. Identify & Abandon Your Idols

Jeremiah 2:11b–13

The most disastrous period for the nation of Judah began under the reign of a king named Manasseh- an evil king who even burned his own son alive as an offering to a powerful spiritual entity named Molech. God's people became addicted to what those entities offered. God was fed up. **2 Kings 21:12, 14**

But then Manasseh's grandson Josiah becomes king, and God calls Jeremiah the prophet. God sends Jeremiah a message to deliver. **Jeremiah 2:11b.13** He rebukes them, but also invites them to return. **Jeremiah 3:22**

An idol is anything that holds my attention or fascination more than the LORD God. What has distracted you? **Psalms 119:37**

The 1st step in choosing personal revival is to identify and abandon worthless things (idols).

II. Change your mind. Repent.

Jeremiah 4:1–3

King Josiah probably heard the preaching of Jeremiah for 5 years before it hit home. The first decision he makes is to clean up the Temple. In the process he discovers the Bible (Deuteronomy), which hasn't been seen in over a generation. **2 Kings 22:11,13**

Josiah takes radical steps to cleanse the land of idolatry- and God speaks to him. **2 Kings 22:18, 20**

Even though Josiah cleansed the land of idols- the hearts of the people are still far from God. They have become religious, but still crave idols.

Personal revival is not simply a matter of cleaning up your act. Rather, it's cleaning out your heart. It's not a matter of religion, but repentance. Jeremiah describes true repentance as plowing (**Jeremiah 4:3**). The only way to establish good seed is to break up the unplowed ground. In similar fashion, we need to break up the stubborn sod of a idolatry that chokes the Word.

To repent means I take note of and name the things that I value more than God, and surrender them to God. I reorder my values & priorities.

III. Commit to a Long Obedience

Jeremiah 7:2b-8

Everybody was showing up for church. But then the rest of the week they lived like the devil (**Jeremiah 7:9-10**). God doesn't care about flash-in-the-pan worship experiences; Real worship is a long obedience.

Jeremiah takes them on a field trip to a place called Shiloh. **Jeremiah 7:12** Shiloh was the original holy site in Israel when they came into the land. Joshua had set up the tabernacle there. It had a great beginning. But had gone to the dogs... a place of rocks and weeds. The reforms didn't hold the people's hearts for long. It was like what too many couples experience when they marry. There's the rush of excitement on the wedding day. A week of passion on the honeymoon. But then the thrill fades. Because they have no clue yet that 40 yrs of a good marriage are the result of 40 years of diligent attention to the other. A wedding takes 30 minutes, give or take. A marriage requires year after year of alert communication with the one to whom you have pledged your love.

Josiah's reforms were the wedding. But Jeremiah's preaching was about a marriage. The Christian life begins with a wedding of sorts, pledging your life to Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. But many folks soon get over the initial experience and descend into the boredom of a mediocre marriage.

How do you regain what you've lost? Do what you did in the beginning.

Revelation 2:5

Identify and abandon the idols. Repent. Change the way you think.

You commit to a daily obedience. What has lapsed that you need to restart. Conclusion: Maybe you need to start at square one. Salvation.

Discussion Questions:

- What about the sermon stuck with you this week? What part challenged your thinking?
- Do you find that the fire of your spiritual passion is stronger now or when your faith first began?
- Psalm 119:37 says Turn my eyes away from worthless things. Are there worthless things in your life from which you must turn your eyes?
- Have any idols crept into your life that you need to deliberately remove?
(Diagnostic question: What thing, if you lost it, would drain significance and value from your life – Whatever that thing is, it's a idol... counterfeit god.)
- What things did you do in the beginning of your spiritual life for spiritual enrichment? What things have you continued doing? What things did you stop doing?
- God calls the Israelites to repentance- yet they refuse to obey. Are there instances today where God is calling His followers to repent- yet the church refuses? Explain.
- God is going to bring judgment upon Israel for their disobedience, yet he protects Josiah because of his repentance. Have you ever seen an obedient follower of Jesus be spared judgment while the culture around him or her is being judged?