

## ***Crashing Through Quitting Points! Wearied Ineffectiveness Jeremiah 15:15-21***

*Today we are going to meet another giant of the faith who lost his battle of the mind and came to his quitting point...*

*The prophet Jeremiah was a powerful man of God who was called by the Lord to preach a message of repentance to wayward Israel...*

*For years he preached with no positive results...*

*As a matter of fact, his preaching was not only ignored by many, but was ridiculed by the leaders...*

*The constant ridicule and continual ineffectiveness finally got the best of him and he caved...*

*He lost the battle of the mind and reached his quitting point...*

*As a result, he becomes overwhelmed by his utter ineffectiveness and unleashes THREE COMPLAINTS...*

### ***Complaint #1 – His Undeserved Suffering***

*Jeremiah 15:10 (ESV) — Woe is me, my mother, that you bore me, a man of strife and contention to the whole land! I have not lent, nor have I borrowed, yet all of them curse me.*

### ***Complaint #2 – His Unrewarded Obedience***

*Jeremiah 15:16–17 (ESV) — Your words were found, and I ate them, and your words became to me a joy and the delight of my heart, for I am called by your name, O Lord, God of hosts. I did not sit in the company of revelers, nor did I rejoice; I sat alone, because your hand was upon me, for you had filled me with indignation.*

### ***Complaint #3 – His Unanswered Prayers***

*Jeremiah 15:15 (ESV) — O LORD, you know; remember me and visit me, and take vengeance for me on my persecutors. In your forbearance take me not away; know that for your sake I bear reproach.*

*Jeremiah 15:18 (ESV) — Why is my pain unceasing, my wound incurable, refusing to be healed? Will you be to me like a deceitful brook, like waters that fail?*

*Listen again to Jeremiah's final statement...*

*Jeremiah 15:18b (ESV) — ... Will you be to me like a deceitful brook, like waters that fail?*

*The NLT...*

*Jeremiah 15:18b (NLT) — ... Your help seems as uncertain as a seasonal brook, like a spring that has gone dry.*

*Listen to the way the Message translates Jeremiah's final complaint...*

**Jeremiah 15:18 (The Message) — But why, why this chronic pain, this ever worsening wound and no healing in sight? You're nothing, GOD, but a mirage, a lovely oasis in the distance—and then nothing!**

**Jeremiah lost the battle of the mind and as a result opened the door to the enemy's deceptive lies...**

**As a result, Jeremiah blamed the Lord for being unfaithful!**

**Jeremiah had become confused about God's responses and called into question God's character!**

**What is God's response?**

## **1. RETURN to your First Love**

**Jeremiah 15:19a (ESV) — Therefore thus says the LORD: "If you return, I will restore you, and you shall stand before me.**

**Revelation 2:2–5a (ESV) — I know your works, your toil and your patient endurance, and how you cannot bear with those who are evil ... I know you are enduring patiently and bearing up for my name's sake ... But I have this against you, that you have abandoned the love you had at first. Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent, and do the works you did at first...**

**What did Jesus say is the first and greatest commandment?**

**Mark 12:30 (ESV) — And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.'**

**Is Jesus your first love?**

**Do you love Jesus with all your heart?**

**You may ask, "How can I know? I think I do, but how can I know?"**

**Yesterday I read this verse in John chapter 3...**

**John 3:36 (ESV) — Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life; whoever does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him.**

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**So, what does that have to do with loving Jesus?**

**John 14:21 (ESV) — Whoever has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me. And he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him."**

**Again, do you need to return to your first love?**

**John 14:23–24 (ESV) — Jesus answered him, "If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. 24 Whoever does not love me does not keep my words. And the word that you hear is not mine but the Father's who sent me.**

## **1. RETURN to your First Love**

## **2. REJECT negative thinking**

**Jeremiah 15:19b (ESV) — ... If you utter what is precious, and not what is worthless, you shall be as my mouth. They shall turn to you, but you shall not turn to them.**

**When we lose the battle of the mind, the enemy plants a multitude of deceptive lies in our minds...**

**If we don't recognize and remove them, they will begin to form ARGUMENTS and OPINIONS against the Lord...**

**We will find ourselves asking the same question Jeremiah asks the Lord...**

**Jeremiah 15:18b (ESV) — ... Will you be to me like a deceitful brook, like waters that fail?**

**We must REJECT all these negative and errant thoughts against the Lord!**

***“Arguments are disputes against the truth; reasons to believe the lies.”***

***“Opinions are beliefs held with confidence but not substantiated by knowledge.”***

**We must remove the negative thinking by taking our thoughts captive!**

**2 Corinthians 10:5 (ESV) — We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ**

**Some of you may be saying, “How can I know if a thought is wrong?”**

**John 16:13a (ESV) — When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth ...**

**Then we must ALSO begin filling our minds with the right thoughts!**

**Philippians 4:8–9 (ESV) — Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. 9 What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me—practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you.**

**1. RETURN to your First Love**

**2. REJECT negative thinking**

## **3. REMEMBER God's promises**

**Jeremiah 15:20 (ESV) — And I will make you to this people a fortified wall of bronze; they will fight against you, but they shall not prevail over you, for I am with you to save you and deliver you, declares the LORD.**

**The Lord had called Jeremiah to be His prophet to the people.**

**The Lord told Jeremiah ...**

**Jeremiah 1:5 (ESV)**

***“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.”***

***Jeremiah was still young, but the Lord assured him...***

***Jeremiah 1:7–8 (ESV)***

***<sup>7</sup> ... “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. <sup>8</sup> Do not be afraid of them, for I am with you to deliver you, declares the Lord.”***

***The Lord concluded His calling of Jeremiah with this promise...***

***Jeremiah 1:18–19 (ESV) — And I, behold, I make you this day a fortified city, an iron pillar, and bronze walls, against the whole land, against the kings of Judah, its officials, its priests, and the people of the land. 19 They will fight against you, but they shall not prevail against you, for I am with you, declares the LORD, to deliver you.”***

***The Lord promised Jeremiah that he would prevail as a prophet.***

***Numbers 23:19 (ESV) — God is not man, that he should lie, or a son of man, that he should change his mind. Has he said, and will he not do it? Or has he spoken, and will he not fulfill it?***

***2 Peter 1:3–4 (ESV) — His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence, 4 by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may***

***become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire.***

***1. RETURN to your First Love***

***2. REJECT negative thinking***

***3. REMEMBER God’s promises***

***4. REST in God’s faithfulness***

***Jeremiah 15:21 (ESV) — I will deliver you out of the hand of the wicked, and redeem you from the grasp of the ruthless.”***

***There is this idea in many parts of the Church in the west that following Jesus is easy...***

- ***We pray a prayer...***
- ***Try to live good...***
- ***And everything will work out...***

***Like Jeremiah, many of us have followed the Lord, but when we reached a place of difficulty, we began to question not simply following the Lord, but the Lord Himself!***

***The Bible doesn’t say that following Jesus will make everything in life work in your favor...***

***In fact, it says pretty much the opposite!***

***The apostle Paul had been stoned and left for dead...***

***The believers gathered around him and prayed over him and he revived...***

***He left that place for a short time, but then returned...***

***When he returned listen to what Paul said to the believer before departing from them...***

***Acts 14:22 (ESV) — ... through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God.***

***But in Christ, we must rest!***

***Hebrews 4:9–11a (ESV) — So then, there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God, for whoever has entered God's rest has also rested from his works as God did from his. Let us therefore strive to enter that rest...***

***So, what did Jeremiah do?***

***He did exactly what the Lord laid out for him ...***

***He Returned to his First Love***

***He Rejected negative thinking***

***He Remembered God's promises***

***He Rested in God's faithfulness***

***Sure enough, the people continued rejecting Jeremiah's call for them to repent and return to the Lord...***

***In 586 BC, the Babylonians destroyed Jerusalem, leaving the city in rubble...***

***Jeremiah was brokenhearted that the people wouldn't listen and repent, but even in Jerusalem's destruction, HE STILL SAW GOD AS FAITHFUL!***

***During this time Jeremiah wrote Lamentations...***

***As he walked among the rubble of his beloved city...***

***Listen to his now famous words...***

***Lamentations 3:19–25 (NLT) — The thought of my suffering and homelessness is bitter beyond words. I will never forget this awful time, as I grieve over my loss. Yet I still dare to hope when I remember this: The faithful love of the LORD never ends! His mercies never cease. Great is his faithfulness; his mercies begin afresh each morning. I say to myself, "The LORD is my inheritance; therefore, I will hope in him!" The LORD is good to those who depend on him, to those who search for him.***

***2 Timothy 2:13 (NLT) — If we are unfaithful, he remains faithful, for he cannot deny who he is.***

***→ STORY – Great is Thy Faithfulness***

***Thomas Obadiah Chisolm (1866-1960)***

- He had a difficult adult life.***
- His health was so fragile that there were periods of time when he was confined to bed, unable to work.***
- Between bouts of illness he would have to push himself to put in extra hours at various jobs in order to make ends meet.***
- After coming to Christ at age 27, Thomas found great comfort in the Scriptures, and in the fact that God was faithful to be his strength in time of illness and provide his needs.***

- ***One day Thomas wrote a poem about God's faithfulness using the words of Jeremiah the we just read.***
- ***He sent his poem to one of his good friends, William Runyan, a relatively unknown musician.***
- ***Runyan found Williams' poem so moving that he decided to compose a musical score to accompany the lyrics.***
- ***Their song was published in 1923.***

***I wanted to close my message this morning with the singing of Thomas Chisolm's poem...***

***Crashing Through Quitting Points!  
Wearied Ineffectiveness  
Jeremiah 15:15-21***

1. \_\_\_\_\_ ***to your First Love***
2. \_\_\_\_\_ ***negative thinking***
3. \_\_\_\_\_ ***God's promises***
4. \_\_\_\_\_ ***in God's faithfulness***