

Confidence
Jeremiah 17:7
Pastor Lester Zimmerman

Welcome to 2020. This is not just the beginning of a **new year** but the beginning of a **new decade**. I always thought Jesus would come by 2020 but we are still here and there is still much work to be done.

I believe Jesus is waiting for us to complete the great commission so that everyone has the opportunity to hear of his love before he returns. I believe we are coming into a season of great harvest which will usher in the return of Christ.

We like to begin each year with a theme to encourage our hearts. A “**God word**” for us to grab ahold of. In light of the times in which we live with the increased opposition to Christianity, the moral compromise of our culture, nations in turmoil, the threat of war and terrorism, and the election year ahead of us,
..... we have chosen the word **CONFIDENCE** as our theme.

Not a human confidence but a “**God confidence**” grounded in the character and promises of God.

Our theme verse is **Jeremiah 17:7 But blessed is the one who trusts in the Lord, whose confidence is in him.**

Let’s read the passage surrounding this verse in Jeremiah 17.

Context: Jeremiah was a prophet during a time of great apostasy and moral decay in the nation of Judah. God used him to urge the people to repent and return to their faith or they would be overthrown by the Babylonians. He also prophesied that God would take a remnant of the faithful and eventually restored the glory of God’s people.

Judah was a lot like America today. But, there is hope if we return to the ways of God.

JEREMIAH 17:5-8

**⁵ This is what the LORD says: “Cursed is the one who trusts in man,
who draws strength from mere flesh
and whose heart turns away from the LORD.**

**⁶That person will be like a bush in the wastelands;
they will not see prosperity when it comes.**

**They will dwell in the parched places of the desert,
in a salt land where no one lives,**

**⁷“But blessed is the one who trusts in the LORD,
whose confidence is in him.**

**⁸They will be like a tree planted by the water
that sends out its roots by the stream.**

**It does not fear when heat comes;
its leaves are always green.**

It has no worries in a year of drought and never fails to bear fruit.” (NIV)

Jeremiah’s warning is an important word for us as we enter a new decade.

- He clearly warns us - -

1. We are not to put our confidence in man.

Vs.5-6 “Cursed is the one who trusts in man, who draws strength from mere flesh and whose heart turns away from the LORD.”

If we put our trust in man, it will turn our hearts away from the Lord. It will bring dryness to our souls.

This election year we will be inundated with messages stirred by anger, fear, guilt, grandiose promises and pressure from the political parties.

Let me say this first. I do believe we should vote as part of our duty as a citizen and as salt and light people of God. I do believe our vote is important and makes a difference in the moral direction of our nation. I vote and encourage you to vote.

- If you don’t vote, don’t complain

But our trust is not in man and a political system. As Christians our primary allegiance, loyalty and trust is in a king named Jesus and his kingdom that is greater than any earthly kingdom.

I am putting my trust in God because with him **all things are possible including an amazing revival in our nation that transforms every arena of our society.**

I am believing for revival for our nation and a genuine move back toward God on all fronts. I believe our American culture is in deep moral decay, but I don't believe it is **irreversible**.

- I'm counting on God! My confidence is in him.

2. Confidence in God creates an inner strength in our lives.

Vs.8 – We will be blessed and like a tree with deep strong roots.

No matter what happens in our country. No matter what political party rules. No matter how morally bankrupt our culture becomes. No matter how dry it becomes or hard the winds of opposition blow.No matter what happens in our personal lives, our health, our jobs, or the economy.....

....We who place our confidence in the Lord will flourish. We will overcome. We will get back up when knocked down. We will thrive and bear fruit.

- We will be ok because in him we are more than conquerors.
- In him we find supernatural inner strength.
- In him we are able to handle the pressures of life.
- In him our leaves are always green. **Read Vs. 8**

This is God's promise for those who put their confidence in him.

Apologist Ravi Zacharias - Faith is confidence in the person of Jesus Christ and in his power, so that even when his power does not serve my end, my confidence in him remains, because of who he is.

We are not fair weather Christians. We are all weather followers of Jesus! We have decided to follow Jesus no matter what. He is our hope and strength.

Hebrews 10:35 So do not throw away this confident trust in the Lord. Remember the great reward it brings you! NLT

3. Confidence in God drives away fear and anxiety.

Vs 8 – When our confidence is in Jesus we do not need to fear when the heat comes. We don't have to let worry consume us about tomorrow.

Despite a **fear based culture** around us, there is a **blessing of peace** for those who put their confidence in God and trust God for the future.

- I know Jesus said in the last days evil will increase.
- I know persecution is increasing.
- I know Jesus said natural disasters will increase.
- I know world economics will be in turmoil.
- I know everything that can be shaken will be shaken.

But I am positive about the future. When things get darker the light shines brighter.

I believe in the midst of the pressures of the world, darkness, and persecution, we will see a great harvest.

A great number of people are becoming disillusioned with false religions, atheism, and corrupt governments and are turning to Jesus - to the one who offers life, hope, peace and a future.

We are coming into one of the greatest moments of world evangelism. This next decade will be amazing.

- In the midst of persecution, **China** is experiencing the greatest revival of human history. There are more Christians in China than any place on earth.
- **Africa** is seeing amazing growth of people coming to Christ. – 8 mil/30yrs
- **Iran**, percentage wise, is seeing the fastest growth of Christianity right now.
- **Muslims** are coming to Christ in increasing numbers since the rise of radical ISIS. Jesus is appearing to many in dreams.

Oppressive governments cannot stop the gospel. The kingdom of God is advancing with increasing speed and the gates of hell or communism, or atheism, secularism, or Islam cannot stop it.

- God is on the move. The Lion of Judah is moving.
- Right now, **Brazil** is the second largest missionary sending country behind America.
- **Chinese, Cuban and other oppressed churches** are sending missionaries into other closed countries. They are used to persecution and don't fear it.
- **The Lion is on the move among the nations.** His church is awakening.

The United States and Europe are experiencing a post-Christian era but that can change quickly. In fact, an amazing move is happening right now.

There are youth movements rising up around the world with a fresh passion for prayer and missions. God is raising up a whole new - on fire - generation of young people with a **missionary zeal of God on them.**

There are still over **2 billion** that have never heard the name of Jesus and this next generation can complete that task.

I want you to know that a new mission's movement is stirring and beginning to burn within the next generation right here in America as well as Europe and South America and other places.

For 18 years, the ministry of The Call filled stadiums, with mostly young people, with a message of prayer and fasting believing that America would turn back to Jesus.

In 2011 the Lord spoke to the leaders of The Call that a shift was coming that would give birth to a new sending movement, in response and fulfillment to their years of prayer and fasting.

In 2016, at a stadium gathering in the LA Coliseum, the shift began as 70,000 people raised their shoes in response to a call to go anywhere for the gospel.

PICTURE #1 This gathering, called Azusa Now, catalyzed a grassroots movement that began activating believers to evangelism and mobilizing missionaries all over the world.

- KC House of Prayer stopped One Thing Events – YWAM mission focus

On February 23, 2019. An event in Orlando Florida was born called "The Send".

PICTURE #2 AND #3- Nearly 60,000 people joined together with 250,000 people online to commit to missions. Each attendee was asked to adopt one of five mission fields and take immediate steps to begin to reach their "mission field."

This momentum is continuing to grow. Brazil just did a huge Send Event filling three stadiums with young people ready to be sent.

In October 2020, 75,000 young people are expected to gather at Arrowhead Stadium in Kansas City to respond to the call to GO. Go with the good news of Jesus into our schools, communities, our nation and the nations of the world.

Lou Engle stated **this could be the beginning of the greatest Jesus movement we have ever seen.** I think that is true. And I want us to be a part of it.

I have experienced 3 significant revival moves of God in my life. I am ready to see this next generation experienced a genuine outpouring of God's Spirit which will release the end time harvest.

I hope some of you Petra young people attend this conference in Kansas City and bring some of that missionary fire back to us. I don't want Petra sitting on the sidelines of what could be the greatest move of God yet.

- I have a sense that this **Send Revival** is a genuine move of God and I am **supporting it**. I believe it can be the catalyst for a fresh wave of evangelism to sweep across America and the world.
- **A goal I have for Petra this year** is to see many rise up with a fresh call to missions locally and globally.

In Closing – Some other goals on my heart for this year: 2020 vision

- Staffing and financial provision – Grace for the transitions
- A renewed focus on discipleship by revamping our small group ministry
- Keep the fire burning in our prayer groups. Various prayer groups meet here at the church pretty much every day of the week.
- Keep the personal reading and public teaching of the scriptures a passion and priority.
- Keep speaking truth to a no absolute culture.
- Keep reaching out with grace and compassion to our broken world and the needs of our community.
- See revival come to our community where Jesus is proclaimed boldly, and lives are changed daily.
- In all that we do, keep leaning on the Holy Spirit's power and wisdom instead of self-effort. Our confidence is in him.

Conclusion:

This is a great time to be alive. God is on the move.

I can't imagine what all this decade holds **but I do know we can walk in faith and confidence that God is in control** and we are about to see the greatest move of God yet in the earth.

Today I stand before you with great confidence. Here is what I know:

I know that God's kingdom will continue to advance in the earth and the powers of hell will not be able to stop it. **Jesus said:**

Matt 16:18 This is the rock on which I will put together my church, a church so expansive with energy that not even the gates of hell will be able to keep it out. --The Message

I look forward to 2020 and this next decade with confidence. God is in control. He is working his plan in the earth and we get to be a part of it.

My confidence says - There's Nothing That Our God Can't Do

Blessing

May God bless you with his breath of freshness this year

Freshness to your prayer life with a deeper intimacy with the father and son

Freshness in hearing the voice of the Holy Spirit and walking in his power and love

Freshness in your bible reading with new revelations of his grace and goodness

Freshness in your marriage and relationships with a new unity and closeness

Freshness in your serving with renewed joy and passion

Freshness in your schooling and employment with renewed purpose and joy

And a confidence in God that creates a deep peace and bold faith to take some risks and do new things.