

## **Our Mission:**

*To share Christ with the world  
and grow disciples for Jesus*



## Loving God and Loving Neighbor as Ourselves

### **Background:**

The Kingdom of Judah is collapsing, as King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon is about to breach the walls of Jerusalem. Yet Jeremiah, a prisoner of his own king, agrees to buy land from a relative. In other words, Jeremiah is purchasing a piece of God's future. His purchase, which would not be recognized by the Babylonians, is an expression of confidence that Judah will one day be restored.

### **Theology Connection:**

We are told in Hebrews 11.1 that hope that can be seen is not hope. While we think of the prophets as messengers of doom and gloom, their message is always one of hope. Whatever Judah is experiencing Jeremiah's message is that it is part of God's design to heal and make new. Throughout history, God has allowed false religiosity to die, in order to rekindle true faith. God's ultimate goal is to recreate and to restore humanity so we might live in harmony with God, the world, and one another.

### **Application:**

As we emerge out of this pandemic, there are many who would suggest that the church has been severely wounded. Yet, as people of faith, might we trust that God can use this event to reshape and restore the church to its original mission. Our mission is not to make members, but to announce Good News. Each of us is uniquely gifted, but we share in one mission, to make God's unconditional love known as we graciously love our neighbors as ourselves.

### **The Text: Jeremiah 32: 1-3, 6-15**

This is the word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord in the tenth year of Zedekiah king of Judah, which was the eighteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar. <sup>2</sup>The army of the king of Babylon was then besieging Jerusalem, and Jeremiah the prophet was confined in the courtyard of the guard in the royal palace of Judah.

<sup>3</sup>Now Zedekiah king of Judah had imprisoned him there, saying, "Why do you prophesy as you do? You say, 'This is what the Lord says: I am about to give this city into the hands of the king of Babylon, and he will capture it.

<sup>6</sup>Jeremiah said, "The word of the Lord came to me:

<sup>7</sup>Hanamel son of Shallum your uncle is going to come to you and say, 'Buy my field at Anathoth, because as nearest relative it is your right and duty to buy it.'

<sup>8</sup>Then, just as the Lord had said, my cousin Hanamel came to me in the courtyard of the guard and said, 'Buy my field at Anathoth in the territory of Benjamin. Since it is your right to redeem it and possess it, buy it for yourself.'

"I knew that this was the word of the Lord; <sup>9</sup>so I bought the field at Anathoth from my cousin Hanamel and weighed out for him seventeen shekels of silver. <sup>10</sup>I signed and sealed the deed, had it witnessed, and weighed out the silver on the scales. <sup>11</sup>I took the deed of purchase—the sealed copy containing the terms and conditions, as well as the unsealed copy— <sup>12</sup>and I gave this deed to Baruch son of Neriah, the son of Mahseiah, in the presence of my cousin Hanamel and of the witnesses who had signed the deed and of all the Jews sitting in the courtyard of the guard.

<sup>13</sup>"In their presence I gave Baruch these instructions:

<sup>14</sup>This is what the Lord Almighty, the God of Israel, says: Take these documents, both the sealed and unsealed copies of the deed of purchase, and put them in a clay jar so they will last a long time. <sup>15</sup>For this is what the Lord Almighty, the God of Israel, says: Houses, fields and vineyards will again be bought in this land.'

## ADULT

We know people who are constantly growing closer to God, seeking to follow in the footsteps of Jesus. On the other hand, we know people who are growing apart from God, seeing nothing relevant in this faith. How do we, like Jeremiah, help people grasp the hope we have in Christ? How would you express that hope to another?

## YOUTH

Please read Jeremiah 32: 1-3, 6-15

“Hope often comes in the middle of judgment. Belief and courage become most pronounced in the face of despair”. I love this. Hope is such a powerful word. What does hope mean to you? In this text, how did Jeremiah’s seemingly irrational actions concerning a piece of property serve to illustrate what God was revealing?

If you thought, the world was ending tomorrow, what purchases would you make? What do you think that crime rate would be?

And finally, I challenge you to think about what area of your life could benefit from believing the truth that nothing is too hard for God?

Let us pray:

Dear God, help us keep hope in our hearts and our hearts open to your word. In Jesus’ name we pray. Amen.

## CHILDREN’S

There are going to be times in our lives when we serve God, but do not see the results of our efforts. There are times when God asks us to do something, and we don’t understand why. Therefore, our relationship with God is so important! When He tells us something or asks us to do something, what we do next reveals what we believe about God. Do we really trust Him and what He asks us to do?

If we don’t trust God with everything in our lives, then we know that we need to strengthen our relationship with Him. We will have ups and downs in our life as we serve God. We can see from Jeremiah’s life that his relationship with God had its ups and downs. God called Jeremiah to be a prophet and to speak His message. Even when we are called and know that we are called, our walk can be difficult. During our walk, God uses the difficulties to build our character, so we will serve Him more fully.

1. What did you learn?
2. What are some ways that you can strengthen your relationship with God?
3. Has God ever given you a special job? What was it? How did it make you feel?

Remember:

Our responsibility as Christians is to remain faithful to our Father in Heaven. How can we remain faithful?

Pray:

Dear Lord,

Please help us to stay faithful in our relationship with You. Thank you for all of the wonderful things that You bless us with. Amen!