

GROWTH GROUPS
WEEK 1
WEEK OF JUNE 7



Growth Group Summer 2020

Being Known

Week 1 – June 7, 2020 - Jeremiah 1:1-5

Growth groups are one of the best and easiest ways to find community at a church. In this time of Corona19 and “social distancing” please don’t meet in person, but do continue to check in with each other. If your growth group would like to meet online or if you are aware of needs that the church can help fill, please let us know at connect@ljpres.org. Thank you for loving and caring for each other.

Setting the Context

Jeremiah is born around 640 BC, right around the end of the reign of Manasseh, who was probably the worst king Judah had ever seen. He reigned for 50 years and destroyed almost any sense of worship of the God who had led them into the Promised Land. After his death, Amon became king, but he was soon murdered and an eight-year old child by the name of Josiah became the next king of Judah. You can read more about Josiah in 1 Kings 22.

The one nation that God had brought forth, that was known as Israel, had been divided into two kingdoms after the reign of Solomon. The northern kingdom retained the name of Israel and the southern kingdom was named after the tribe of Judah. This is the tribe from which we trace the genealogy of Jesus.

Jeremiah was called to prophesy during turbulent times. The northern kingdom of Israel had been overthrown in 722 BC, by the Assyrians, and the southern kingdom of Judah was under constant threat from Egypt and Babylon. It would eventually fall, in 587 BC, and Jeremiah contains numerous prophecies about the impending fall of Judah if the people do not repent.

Jeremiah is descended from a priestly family, but the book gives us little more detail on his life. He would have grown up under the reign of Josiah and been introduced to the book of Deuteronomy, after Josiah had brought reforms to the temple. What we will discover, though, as we read through the book of Jeremiah, is that even though religious reforms were talked about, there was very little transformation of people’s hearts.

Jeremiah 1:5 gives us three important statements about Jeremiah. He is known, set apart and appointed. God has known Jeremiah from the beginning of time, and God knows the work that he had been set apart to do. God wanted Jeremiah to know, from the very beginning, that the ministry he was being called to was all a part of God’s larger plan, and God would be with him. This serves as the commissioning of Jeremiah.



Exploring the Text

Read Jeremiah 1:1-5

¹ The words of Jeremiah son of Hilkiah, one of the priests at Anathoth in the territory of Benjamin. ² The word of the Lord came to him in the thirteenth year of the reign of Josiah son of Amon king of Judah, ³ and through the reign of Jehoiakim son of Josiah king of Judah, down to the fifth month of the eleventh year of Zedekiah son of Josiah king of Judah, when the people of Jerusalem went into exile. ⁴ The word of the Lord came to me, saying, ⁵ “Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I set you apart; I appointed you as a prophet to the nations.”

Questions

If you are answering these questions alone, we would urge you to try journaling. Rather than just pondering the answers, try writing them out along with a prayer to the Lord.

- 1) Is there any significance to the name that your parents gave you, or to the names that you gave your children?
- 2) What do you know about the prophet Jeremiah? What do you know about the Babylonian Exile?
- 3) Jeremiah grew up in a faithful household. How have people in your family/life helped to grow your faith?
- 4) What do you think the first part of verse 5 means, when God says, “before I formed you, I knew you?” What is the theological significance of this statement? What does this tell us about the sovereignty of God?
- 5) Have you ever struggled with the idea that you are known by God?
- 6) Share about a time in your life when you felt that God was calling you to do something for him.
- 7) Jeremiah was a voice for God in his society, when many things looked hopeless. How can you be a voice for God in your present circumstances? What do you think God might be asking you to say or do?