



Growth Group Questions
March 29, 2026
“Resilience”

CONTEXT

Jeremiah was known as the “weeping prophet.” He had to endure watching the nation of Judah fall further and further away from God as he tried to call them back to God. Chapter 17 contains a collection of messages that seem to be unrelated, but they do have a common purpose. They speak of a people (Judah) who have sinned and therefore must deal with God’s judgment. The themes of the heart (verses 1, 5, 9, 10) and object of one’s hope/trust (verses 5, 7, 13) unite verses 1-13.



Torrey Pine Tree by Diane Dammeyer
Torrey Pines State Natural Reserve July 7, 2006

Jeremiah 17:5–8 reveals two ways of living that can also be seen in Psalm 1. One person trusts in human strength and leans on themselves and things of this world and in so doing turns away from God. Outwardly this may look like a good plan, but in the end, Jeremiah says that it leads to a life of desolation and isolation. You end up like a desert shrub - dry, isolated, and unable to flourish.

To trust in flesh is not simply to rely on people, but to place ultimate confidence in human ability rather than in God. We come to believe that our own strength is enough, and that we do not really need the Lord’s help. In covenant terms, it is a turning aside from God and a rejection of His faithfulness.

In contrast, Jeremiah says the one who trusts in the Lord is blessed. Jeremiah compares that person to a tree planted by water, sending its roots deep into the stream. Heat and drought come, but they do not have the final word, because this life is rooted in a deeper source. The leaves remain green and the tree bears fruit. There is a steady resilience even in hard seasons.

It is likely that these four verses reflect the spiritual journey of Jeremiah. He had known dry times and yet God had been faithful and sustained him. True life is found when we allow God to “plant” us by the water so that our roots can stretch out toward the river when drought and heat come.



SCRIPTURE

Jeremiah 2:13

¹³“My people have committed two sins: They have forsaken me, the spring of living water, and have dug their own cisterns, broken cisterns that cannot hold water.”

Jeremiah 17:1

¹“Judah’s sin is engraved with an iron tool, inscribed with a flint point, on the tablets of their hearts and on the horns of their altars.”

Jeremiah 17:5-8

⁵This 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.”

John 12:12-19

¹²The next day the great crowd that had come for the festival heard that Jesus was on his way to Jerusalem. ¹³They took palm branches and went out to meet him, shouting, “Hosanna!^[a]” “Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!” “Blessed is the king of Israel!”

¹⁴Jesus found a young donkey and sat on it, as it is written: ¹⁵“Do not be afraid, Daughter Zion; see, your king is coming, seated on a donkey’s colt.” ¹⁶At first his disciples did not understand all this. Only after Jesus was glorified did they realize that these things had been written about him and that these things had been done to him.

¹⁷Now the crowd that was with him when he called Lazarus from the tomb and raised him from the dead continued to spread the word. ¹⁸Many people, because they had heard that he had performed this sign, went out to meet him. ¹⁹So the Pharisees said to one another, “See, this is getting us nowhere. Look how the whole world has gone after him!”

Colossians 2:6-7

⁶So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live your lives in him, ⁷rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness.

QUESTIONS

1. In Jeremiah 17:5-8, we are presented with two options. The first is to “trust in man.” What are some modern examples of how we might “trust in man” rather than in God?
2. Why is a “shrub in the desert” an effective analogy for someone who trusts in man rather than in God?
3. How do I know if I am putting my trust in man rather than in God? What are the signs?



4. The second option in Jeremiah 17:5-8, is to “trust in the Lord.” God said that those who trust in Him will be “like a tree planted by the water.” What does that mean to you?
5. What does it mean to be “rooted in God”?
6. The title of this week’s sermon is “Resilience.” What are the characteristics of someone who is “resilient”?
7. There are many people in the Bible who were resilient. Identify one or two of them. What made them resilient and how does their resilience inspire you to trust more deeply in God?
8. Pastor Paul said that Jesus thirsted so we will never have to thirst. What does that mean to you?

PASTOR PAUL’S SERMON QUESTIONS

1. Where have you been putting down roots recently?
2. How will you prepare yourself for Easter this week?

