



TRUTH FOR TROUBLED TIMES "The Reluctant Prophet" Jeremiah 1:1-19

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Jeremiah ministered for more than forty years at a critical time in Judah's history. Despite feelings of inadequacy, loneliness, and violent rejection, he faithfully fulfilled his mission. We can learn much from his message and his approach to ministry in troubled times.

I. The Prophet's Call.

- A. The divine initiative: "The Word of the Lord came to me saying..."
 - 1. A divine creation: "formed."
 - 2. A divine relation: "knew."
 - 3. A divine intention: "set apart."
 - 4. A divine commission: "appointed."
- B. The human response: "Ah Sovereign Lord, I said..."
 - 1. A confession of inadequacy: "I don't know how to speak."
 - 2. A claim to unsuitability: "I am only a child."
- C. The divine reaction: "But the Lord said to me..."
 - 1. A gentle rebuke: "Don't say..."
 - 2. A powerful command: "You must go...send...command."
 - 3. A reassuring promise: "I am with you...will rescue you."
 - 4. An enabling action: "I have put my words in your mouth."
 - 5. A reiterated commission: "uproot, tear down, destroy, build, plant."

II. The Prophet's Confirmation.

- A. Confirmation of God's watch care.
 - 1. Almond blossom common to Anathoth and harbinger of spring.
 - 2. Almond (*shaged*) and watching (*shoged*).
 - 3. God will watch over His Word and His man.
- B. Confirmation of God's intentions.
 - 1. A boiling pot tilting away from the north: a sign of impending trouble.
 - 2. A prediction of a military attack against Jerusalem.
 - 3. An explanation: the attack is God's judgment on apostate Judah.
- C. Confirmation of God's presence.
 - 1. Jeremiah must take a stand and speak out what he is told.
 - 2. Jeremiah will be attacked in a terrifying way, but will not be defeated.
 - 3. Jeremiah must be assured the Lord will make him strong.

Point to Ponder: Does the church have a prophetic role in contemporary society?