

**“NO EXCUSES”**

**Pastor Mike Corwin**

**TEXT:** JEREMIAH 1:4-10

**GOD’S WORD:** PSALM 71:1-6

**I – NO EXCLUSIONS:**

What if I was to stand here in the pulpit this morning and look out over the congregation and then make some decisions about who is and who is not welcome here this morning to worship with us? For instance...\_\_\_\_\_ you’ll have to leave because you’re just getting to old to hear what we have to say here. Or \_\_\_\_\_ I’m sorry you’re too young to be here with us because you won’t be able to grasp what the lesson is today. Pastor Becky I’m not sure we appreciate your Southern Belle attitude here so I guess you can leave. I don’t like the way \_\_\_\_\_ looks so they can leave too. All you musicians like \_\_\_\_\_ aren’t needed unless they can play the Lute or tambourine like King David did. And I could stand up here and make a reason why each and every one of us could be excluded from our church.

But the question is would I be right to do any of this? Are there individuals or groups of people who should be forbidden from entering and worshipping in the house of God? According to the teachings of Jesus, would we be justified in telling anyone they can’t be covered by his blood and God’s grace? The answer is a resounding NO! Not only is everyone invited to the love and grace of God, they are encouraged to find it, embrace it, and live it. I MEAN COME ON! That’s God’s love 101. God wants them all...no exceptions.

**II – OBLIGATIONS:**

But here’s where it gets a little tricky. If you agree with this then you must also agree with the fact that God can call anyone to serve him, without exception. No matter how young or how old you are...God can call you to service. White, Black, Male, Female it doesn’t matter. God can call you to serve him in some ministry...in some capacity.

Matter of fact...sometime in your lifetime God has or will call you to serve him somewhere...somehow. You will be called to help build the Kingdom of God.

This church exists because of the work done and the money given by the older folks in our congregation. I would point out the first addition to this building was classrooms, an elevator, and bathrooms to make their worship experiences worth their effort to come. Video enhancements and sound solutions are an ongoing endeavor to serve this population better. The present building project is aimed at the opposite end of the spectrum. It's being done to enhance the ability to reach our younger ones. To make space for them to learn in and be disciplined in. We have youth Sundays so the next ages up know this is their church too.

We have plans for new classes and new ministries to touch the lives of people who haven't been touched before in a meaningful way with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. And each and every one of you is expected to help, to participate, to vision and implement whatever it takes to make it happen and to continue the Kingdom building here.

### **III – TEXT:**

I see this played out in the text for this morning. This text speaks to me in a special way because I consider it my call Scripture. How God spoke to me when I was called into the Pastoral Ministry.

#### **Jeremiah 1:4-10 (NLT)**

<sup>4</sup>The LORD gave me this message:

<sup>5</sup>“I knew you before I formed you in your mother’s womb.  
Before you were born I set you apart  
and appointed you as my prophet to the nations.”

<sup>6</sup>“O Sovereign LORD,” I said, “I can’t speak for you! I’m too young!”

<sup>7</sup>The LORD replied, “Don’t say, ‘I’m too young,’ for you must go wherever I send you and say whatever I tell you. <sup>8</sup>And don’t be afraid of the people, for I will be with you and will protect you. I, the LORD, have spoken!” <sup>9</sup>Then the LORD reached out and touched my mouth and said, “Look, I have put my words in your mouth!

<sup>10</sup>Today I appoint you to stand up  
against nations and kingdoms.  
Some you must uproot and tear down,  
destroy and overthrow.  
Others you must build up  
and plant.”

Jeremiah is believed to be the ripe young age of 20 when he received this call from God. He didn't have a vision, didn't dream, he heard the divine Word of God. The call shows us 4 actions of God towards his new prophet. 1- He knew Jeremiah, he had a relationship with him. 2- This relationship predated all the others Jeremiah ever had. 3- God had consecrated him (chosen) before he was born. 4- He was appointing Jeremiah to a worldwide ministry.

Jeremiah is taken aback a little. Hey God you were there when I was born so you know I'm only 20. The magnitude of your call kinda strikes fear into my heart. Not only am I young but I'm inexperienced too. And a prophet needs to have public speaking ability and the gift of eloquence isn't one of mine. But God lets him know that he doesn't make mistakes. He has nothing to fear because God will be with him through it all. Even when he is mercilessly persecuted and oppressed, God will be there.

And God never calls us to work without empowering us to do the work. Here God reaches out and touches Jeremiah's mouth and puts his words into it. Jeremiah's words would truly be God's truth. He will be the truthful mouthpiece for God the Almighty. Whether God sends him to tear something down or build something up he will give him the words to do it. God's power would allow the prophet to accomplish his God given objectives.

#### **IV – NO EXCUSES:**

We are in the process of praying about and filling the various committees in the church. Those who will be the leaders for this congregation. If you're asked it's because you've been prayed over and others think you're capable of the task. If you are asked it's because God has laid it on our hearts that you are the one for ministry. So we're not really asking...God is calling.

There are new ministries on the drawing board such as a Sunday School class for behaviorally challenged youth. Different visions for VBS, other outreach ideas. New membership care and marketing endeavors. If you're asked then you should pray about it and seriously consider it.

You're never too old. Remember what I've showed you – retirement may be a man idea, but it's not a God idea. You're never too young either. I remember the kids praying over me before my surgery. I heard Paige Sheldon helped you worship by singing. I know Corbin Spalding is in the wings waiting to do it someday himself. Last Sunday you watched the youth as we blessed their backpacks and then promoted them to different classes. They are on the rise and already involved in leadership for God's Kingdom. Those in between are not exempt because they have busy life's – they too can be called by God to help.

#### **V – TODAY'S LESSONS:**

Just like the scripture you heard this morning concerning Jeremiah, if you are called God does not want excuses. He wants obedience. If God has called you then you are the best suited for his purpose and no excuse is good enough. God doesn't fly by the seat of his pants, God has a plan, and if you are called then he has chosen you to accomplish his plan.

The lesson we find in Jeremiah's interaction with God are:

- God knew you before you were born, watched you being formed in your mother's womb. He already had a relationship with you
- God has created us all for a purpose & will call us to fulfill it in his time.
- That purpose is to please God...Not people.
- Being Timid or Fearful shows a lack of trust in God.
- God won't call you without equipping you and empowering you.
- THE ONLY ACCEPTABLE ANSWER WHEN GOD CALLS IS, "YES LORD."

May you answer well.

AMEN

