

Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. (2 Cor 1:3)

Jeremiah 1:4-10

⁴The 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.”

⁶“Ah, Sovereign LORD,” I said, “I do not know how to speak; I am only a child.”

⁷But the LORD said to me, “Do not say, ‘I am only a child.’ You must go to everyone I send you to and say whatever I command you.

⁸Do not be afraid of them, for I am with you and will rescue you,” declares the LORD.

⁹Then the LORD reached out his hand and touched my mouth and said to me, “Now, I have put my words in your mouth. ¹⁰See, today I appoint you over nations and kingdoms to uproot and tear down, to destroy and overthrow, to build and to plant.”

Introduction:

As human beings, you and I experience a variety of emotions or feelings. Maybe you experienced several this past week ranging from joy to sadness. Sometimes our emotions can feel like a rollercoaster soaring high and plummeting low. However, one feeling you and I would rather not experience is the feeling of being alone. Certainly, there are many ways in which we can feel alone. Yet, one of the hardest is when a spouse dies. It is one of the hardest because you lived with that person for many years. You loved each other. You did everything together. You helped each other through sickness and trouble. And now life seems to have come to a sudden stop. You no longer have your spouse in your life, and because of that fact life seems impossible. Questions are rushing through your mind of, “How are you going to get by? Who are you going to talk with? Who is going to change the light bulb you can’t reach? Who will cook the Christmas dinner?” The feeling of being alone can be difficult feeling to live with.

Sometimes when it comes to our faith and witnessing our faith, we can also feel alone. However, God reassures you and me to Understand you are not alone 1. When you are called and 2. When you are sent.

Part 1:

Here in our text for today we see a young Jeremiah, who is being called by the Lord to the prophetic office. The Lord came to Jeremiah saying, **“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.”** The almighty Lord who created all things, even Jeremiah, had selected Jeremiah for a

particular task of being a prophet to the nation of Judah. According to the Lord, Jeremiah was the man for the job.

However, Jeremiah had a different opinion. How could he be the Lord’s guy? Jeremiah described himself as being a נָעַר, which in Hebrew means **“the time between infancy to manhood.”** He was just a **“young boy”** after all. He had been studying to be a priest up to this point, and had little practical experience in that, let alone this prophetic job the Lord was calling him to. Jeremiah perceived he was not the best person for the job. He told the Lord, **“Ah, Sovereign Lord, I do not know how to speak, and I am only a child.”** Jeremiah thought the Lord had simply made a mistake.

So, Jeremiah came up with another excuse the Lord shouldn't pick him. He told the Lord he was unable to speak. Does Jeremiah’s excuse of not being able to speak well sound familiar? It should! Think of when the Lord appeared to Moses in the burning bush. The Lord was asking Moses to lead his people out of Egypt. However, Moses gave several excuses why HE was not the man for the job. One of those excuses was, **“O Lord, I have never been eloquent, neither in the past nor since you have spoken to your servant. I am slow of speech and tongue”** (Ex. 4:10). Just like Moses, Jeremiah questioned God’s judgment of whom he selected.

Have you ever questioned God’s judgment in calling YOU? It is beneficial to understand, God has called each and every one of us to do ministry, maybe not as a pastor, teacher or staff minister, but he has called us to spread his word to all nations. But when God tells us to do this, how often do we react like Moses and Jeremiah did? How often do we look at our abilities with skepticism? We might say, “How can I talk about the Bible when I don’t know enough about it?” “I’m not good with people,” or even say, “There are so many other people that can do it at Mount Olive.” We can easily relate to Jeremiah and his excuses. I know I can too. I think my reading, writing, and memory are insufficient for this kind of work. When we say or think, these things we are are just like Jeremiah. Isn’t it easy to look at what we believe are our weaknesses, and try and avoid the work God is calling us to do? We question God in thinking he has it all wrong. Who are you and who am I to say God does not know what he is doing? Our sinful nature wants to find ways to get out of spreading His saving Word.

When you think about it, is spreading the message really that difficult? I mean we had children from the grade school here sing, speak, and share God’s Word this Christmas. Why can you and I not do it? And does the work really depend upon our skill? The answer is, we cannot do it by ourselves, not even children can because we are imperfect. It is by God’s grace that he calls us and goes with sinful creatures like you and me to spread his

message—a message of Jesus Christ. A message of Christ's love to buy us back from sin and the devil. This message is not rocket science, but a simple message that even a child can share, and so can you.

Part 2:

God has not only called us as his witnesses, but he also sends us. Perhaps you have heard the phrase, “the Glory years!” What a phrase! The Romans used a similar phrase “Pax Romana,” “The peace of Rome.” What they were saying was they wanted to go back to the good old days of peace, and great wealth. Sound familiar? If you like him or dislike him as a politician, Trump’s statement of “We will make America great again” rings loudly and proudly in our American ears. There have been past politicians who have said similar things, and Trump will certainly not be the last. We want peace and prosperity like the good old days.

The time of Jeremiah was no exception! It was far from the “Golden years” of King David and Solomon. The temple was now destroyed, and Judah had lost all its power. They were now treated as the little brother being pushed and shoved around by the Assyrians, Babylonians, and Egyptians. In addition to all this, the people of Judah were no longer following the Lord. They were worshipping false gods such as Asherah and Baal. And the Kings were killing off God’s prophets.

Now the Lord was telling Jeremiah to go into this world to proclaim his message of repentance and destruction. Thoughts that Jeremiah may have had were, “What? What do you want me to do? Speak to people who have turned away from you? Go and talk to people that would want nothing to do with me? Go to people who would want to kill me?” Jeremiah must have feared he had to go alone. Fear of what was going to happen to him and fear of how people would take the message Jeremiah was to bring to them.

Fear of being alone when spreading God’s message is seen once again in Moses, and God tells him he won’t be alone. First, he sent Aaron, Moses’s brother, with to be supportive. But most importantly God goes with Moses himself. God gave Moses the ability to perform many miracles before Pharaoh. He protected Moses and his people, by separating the sea. Moses was not alone!! There was no chance that God was going to leave his servant and the same goes for Jeremiah.

God tells us to go into our communities and tell others of our Savior. We are even told to tell people at work and in our families about the saving message we have. However, we have some of the same fears as Jeremiah. Fears of going out alone. Fears of going into a world where people want nothing to do with us. A world we think that would rather have us dead.

But, why can we have boldness? Why can we have the confidence to share God’s Word even in adverse conditions? The reason is, Our Savior who conquered death and sin, will be with those he has sent. Jesus promised his disciples **“Go and make disciples of nations baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, and surely I will be with you always to the very end of the age”** (Mt. 28:). When God says he will be with us to the very end of the age, he means it. God says that each day when you go out into the world to spread His saving message, he will be there. When you feel alone, take comfort you are never alone. When you feel the world is attacking you, and you are the last Christian standing, know God says, **“8 Do not be afraid of them, for I am with you and will rescue you.”** So speak your faith. Share your Savior. And then let God, your companion, your partner, do the rest!

The feeling of being alone is not fun, whether it is experienced from the loss of a loved one, moving away from home for the first time, or even when we are called and sent by God. When we feel we are inadequate to spread God’s Word and to share it with others, Don’t let those feelings and thoughts fool you. When you feel alone, know you are never alone. Amen.

The peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. (Ph 4:7)