

JEREMIAH'S STAIRCASE OF DESENSITIZATION

Joshua Welch, adapted

The “weeping prophet” Jeremiah spoke to a destruction-bound, rebellious nation in his ministry. It was a difficult work. The nation was idolatrous, morally degenerate, and uninterested in God’s message of truth. They had become desensitized to sin. Such desensitization is encapsulated in the words *“Were they ashamed when they had committed abomination? No! They were not at all ashamed; Nor did they know how to blush”* (Jeremiah 6:15). What were the steps that led downward to this desensitization?

#1: Rejection of the Word of God. *“Behold, the word of the Lord is a reproach to them; they have no delight in it”* (6:10). When we lose touch with God’s Word, we will lose out on its transformative power in our lives.

#2: Selfish People. *“Because from the least of them even to the greatest of them, Everyone is given to covetousness; And from the prophet even to the priest, everyone deals falsely”* (6:13). When self-satisfaction and self-gratification become more important than self-sacrifice and self-denial, then truth is rejected in favor of self-will.

#3: Lying Leaders. The *“prophets”* and *“priests”* were guilty of *“Saying ‘Peace, peace!’ When there is no peace,”* Jeremiah said (6:14). Selfish people want people who tell them to “follow their own truth” and offer a false sense of inner “peace” that is detached from God. Since some leaders know it pays well to cater to our inner narcissism, they lie to be liked..

What would be the steps out of this desensitized state back to God?

#1: Go Backwards. Jeremiah said, *“Stand in the ways and see, and ask for the old paths, where the good way is”* (6:16). Sometimes progress means asking for directions to find out where we went wrong and getting back on the right path. Leaving God is where we go wrong. Go back to Him and His Word.

#2: Live What You Learn. Jeremiah goes on to say, *“...and walk in it; then you will find rest for your souls”* (6:16). Start walking with God instead of away from Him!

#3: Listen to the Watchmen. Jeremiah adds, *“Also, I set watchmen over you, saying, ‘Listen to the sound of the trumpet!’”* (6:17). Listen carefully as there are people sounding the trumpet in our lives—parents, preachers, elders, but are we listening so we might be saved?

A GODLY MAN IN WICKED SURROUNDINGS

Bill Hall

Elijah was a man who reached true greatness in the Lord's service. He was always ready to go where God would send him (1st Kings 18:1; 19:15); to pray whenever prayer was needed (1st Kings 17:20, 21; 18:36, 37), and to confront evil whenever confrontation was necessary (1st Kings 18:17-24; 21:17-19). He was translated without seeing death, and he, along with Moses, was chosen to appear with the Lord on the mount of transfiguration.

The remarkable thing about Elijah is that he attained this greatness while living in a wicked and hostile environment. Had he lived in Judah during the righteous reign of Hezekiah or Josiah, we might not be surprised at Elijah's attainments. But he lived instead in Israel during the wicked reign of Ahab. He was subjected to the cruel intents of Jezebel. He was under constant harassment and threat of death. He became so discouraged at one point that he asked to die, but he never denied his God.

In this wicked environment Elijah was able to influence others. The widow of Zarephath was blessed through Elijah (1st Kings 17:8-24). The multitudes on Mount Carmel were led to cry, “The Lord, He is God!” through his courageous efforts (1st Kings 18:39). Elisha, his successor, must have been greatly influenced by him. And even Ahab was brought to humility on one occasion, clothing himself in sackcloth as a result of Elijah's rebuke (1st Kings 21:27-29). The message of Elijah is clear. You can live a godly life and influence others for good in a wicked and hostile environment.

When one hears the excuses people make today, it is obvious that Elijah's message is badly needed in this generation. People excuse their failure to teach others the gospel with, “People are so prejudiced around here they just won't listen,” when the truth is little effort has been made. If they are approached about their ungodly conduct, they explain that “You just don't know how terrible the people are that I have to work around every day.” If their children go astray their explanation is, “Our children are faced with pressures that we didn't have growing up.” Such statements, repeated often enough, become to many a license to do wrong and a salve to soothe their troubled consciences.

We must throw aside our excuses and make up our minds to do right. Elijah could serve God in wicked surroundings. And so can we.

**"WHAT MUST I DO
TO BE SAVED?"**

ACTS 16:30

LEARN THE GOSPEL

John 6:45; Romans 10:17

BELIEVE IN CHRIST

Hebrews 11:6; John 3:16

CONFESS CHRIST

Matthew 10:32-33; Romans 10:9-10

REPENT OF SIN

Acts 3:19; 17:30

BE BAPTIZED INTO CHRIST

Mark 16:16; Romans 6:3-6

REMAIN STEADFAST

1st Corinthians 15:58; Revelation 2:10

**"THE ASSEMBLING OF
OURSELVES TOGETHER"**

HEBREWS 10:24-25

SUNDAY

Worship @ 10:00 a.m.

Studies @ 11:45 a.m.

WEDNESDAY

Studies & Worship @ 7:00 p.m.

75 Sherrod Boulevard
Belén, New Mexico

Seekers Welcome.
Members Expected.

**"IF A MAN IS OVERTAKEN IN
ANY TRESPASS...
RESTORE SUCH A ONE"**

GALATIANS 6:1

CONFESS TRESPASSES

James 5:16; 1st John 1:9

REPENT OF SIN

Acts 8:22

PRAY FOR FORGIVENESS

Acts 8:22

REMAIN STEADFAST

1st Corinthians 15:58; Revelation 2:10

**"A WORD FITLY SPOKEN IS
LIKE APPLES OF GOLD IN
SETTINGS OF SILVER"**

PROVERBS 25:11

"Darwin denies God as an agent, but then gives Mother Nature all the qualities of God. You will see Mother Nature 'choosing,' 'selecting,' 'deciding,' 'having wisdom,' etc. It is simply a bait and switch."

– Billy Dyer

"WHOLE COUNSEL"

ACTS 20:27

VOLUME 2, ISSUE 43

OCTOBER 27TH, 2024

PROCRASTINATION

Pat Donahue, adapted

Are you thinking about becoming a Christian but are waiting for a more *"convenient season"* like Felix (Acts 24:25)? You are carelessly risking your soul.

Have you once *"known the way of righteousness,"* but turned *"from the holy commandment delivered unto"* you (2nd Peter 2:21) and now say *"I'll straighten out one of these days"*? Your procrastination is likely to cause you to spend an eternity with the devil.

If you're saying, *"I'm going to be faithful to the Lord, but first I am going to do this,"* Jesus says you are not *"fit for the kingdom of God"* (Luke 9:62). We never know if we're going to have even one more day here on this earth. *"Boast not thyself of tomorrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth"* (Proverbs 27:1). *"Go to now, ye that say, Today or tomorrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain: Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away"* (James 4:13-14).

If you are putting it off, you are gambling you will still be alive at some future point in time. Your gamble is a silly one because you have everything to lose and nothing to gain. If you lose the gamble, you lose your soul. If you win the gamble and live until the day you become faithful to God, your waiting has not gained you a solitary thing. Won't you obey now before it is too late?

RIO GRANDE VALLEY CHURCH OF CHRIST

505-864-0282

rgvcoc@gmail.com

Box 989, Belén, NM 87002

www.RGVChurchOfChrist.org

75 Sherrod Boulevard

Facebook.com/RGVChurchOfChrist