



EXPLORE THE BIBLE.

Jeremiah; Lamentations Sermon Series
Supports Session 2: Judges
Sermon Title: “Got My Eyes Set on You”
Passage: Jeremiah 2:1-33

Connection to Session 2

Jeremiah provided powerful motivation for Judah, and us, to guard against drifting into sin and away from the Lord.

Introduction/Opening

As sad as sin is, we must take it seriously. Leonard Ravenhill said, “There are no mild cases of sin anymore than there are mild cases of cancer. They’re all deadly.”

The Lord recounted Judah’s sins and urged the people to return to Him. The same could be said of us. The Lord knows all our sins and possesses all righteousness. Everything He does stems from a complete knowledge of us and results in His righteous actions toward us. Because of His love and righteousness, He corrects in us what needs correction and calls us to faithfulness.

Outline

- 1. Our Rebellion is Painful (Jer. 2:14-28)**
 - a. The Lord emphasized the damage of Judah’s sin. Judah’s sin both hurt the Lord personally and made Judah vulnerable to sin’s consequences.
 - b. Sin is far more horrifying than the culture sees it and more horrifying than many churches see it. One sin that is not accompanied by confession and repentance can desensitize us and blind us.
 - c. If Judah had the opportunity to sit with us today and warn us of our sins, she might say, “My sins took me further than I wanted to go, cost me more than I wanted to pay, and kept me longer than I wanted to stay.”

- 2. Our Efforts to Become Righteous are Ineffective (Jer. 2:22).**
 - a. It happens to me nearly every Christmas season—my family will gift me a shirt or sweater I have wanted. I’ll wear it a week or two, and then I stain it. I have ruined many new shirts or sweaters. Stain remover of any brand cannot remove the stains. It’s disappointing!
 - b. In the middle of this sorrowful description of Judah’s deep sinfulness, the Lord emphasized the hopelessness of their efforts to cleanse themselves. He warned, “Even if you wash with

bleach and use a great amount of soap, the stain of your iniquity is still in front of me” (v. 22). The people of Judah could do nothing to wash their sins away.

- c. One hymn writer wrote, “Not the labors of my hands/can fulfill thy law's demands/could my zeal no respite know/could my tears forever flow/all for sin could not atone/Thou must save and Thou alone.”¹

3. Our Repentance will be Met with Blessings (Jer. 3:6-18).

- a. The Lord made great and precious promises to Judah if she returned to Him. If they repented, He would provide competent leadership: “I give you shepherds who are loyal to me, and they will shepherd you with knowledge and skill” (v. 15).
- b. In addition, He promised power over their own hearts: “They will cease to follow the stubbornness of their evil hearts” (v. 17).
- c. Finally, He promised reunification of all of Israel’s tribes in the end times: “In those days the house of Judah will join with the house of Israel, and they will come together” (v. 18). We understand this final promise as a promise for the end times.
- d. When we have drifted from the Lord, the best thing we can do is return to Him immediately. The Lord activates His promises when we do, but they remain deactivated if we don’t. Just as the Lord called the people of Judah to return to Him in repentance, He calls us to do so as well.

Conclusion

In his book, *The Cost of Discipleship*, Dietrich Bonhoeffer wrote, “When Christ calls a man, He bids him come and die.” Real discipleship costs disciples personally. We should embrace this cost of discipleship quickly. While following Jesus incurs costs, refusing to follow Him costs more. It means we miss out on the Lord’s leadership we need to navigate life. We miss out on the power of a changed heart. Finally, we miss out on unity with those who know the Lord.

Returning to the Lord will take us further than we thought we could go. It will keep us as long as we would like to stay. It will cost us less than if we strayed. The Lord’s promises are far better than our sins and self-righteousness. He makes great and precious promises to those who forsake their sin and return to Him (Jer. 6:16; 17:7-8; 31:4). The most urgent thing anyone can do after drifting from the Lord is to return.

¹ Hymn “Rock of Ages” written by Augustus Montague Toplady

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